



## MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN (MAPA) NEWSLETTER: JANUARY 2013



### Three Districts of Herat Province are Declared Free of Mines and ERW

Karokh, Chesht-e Sharif and Obe districts of Herat province are cleared from all type of know mine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and were officially handed over to the communities and Government of Afghanistan during a ceremony held in Herat city, on January 16, 2013.

The ceremony, hosted by the Herat provincial authorities, was well attended by the Herat provincial officials, district elders and governors as well as senior representatives of the United States, Canada, the Chargé d'Affaires of the British Embassy, and a delegation from UNMAS and MACCA.

The historical clashes left these lands contaminated with anti-personnel and anti-tank mines as well as ERW, seriously hampering economic and agricultural activities. From the start of the program, mines and ERW left 49 casualties in these districts, 6 of whom were killed and 43 injured. The demining operations in these three districts began in 1989, and made safe for productive use over 706,804 Square meters of land, unearthing 13,927 different types of mines and ERW.



Nic Hailey, Chargé d'Affaires of the British Embassy, speaking at the ceremony, in Herat



Mr. Jami, Herat Deputy Governor, handing over impact free district declaration to the Karokh district Governor

Clearance in these three districts was mainly carried out by the HALO Trust, but also included DDG, MCPA, MDC and Omar; and the majority of the funding was provided by the British Government, the State Department, and the Canadian Government.

Nic Hailey, Chargé d'Affaires of the British Embassy, said "He is 'delighted that the United Kingdom has supported this project and will continue to support many such projects in the future."

Dr. Dayem Kakar, General Director of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), marked his pleasure on the successful completion of clearance works in these districts, he added, "The goal of the Afghan Government is to have an Afghanistan freed of all mines and ERW contamination, so that its people can live in a safe environment, contributing to growth, progress and development of the country." He further said, "We are very thankful to the United Nations Mine Action Service, the international community and donors, who have supported us in very tough situations, we hope they can continue supporting us to finish the job and clear the remaining hazards. We also greatly thank MACCA for their restless efforts and technical expertise in coordinating the activities of mine action program of Afghanistan."

Addressing the gathering, Abigail Hartley UNMAS/MACCA Programme Manager, also said "It gives me great pleasure to know that, Karokh, a beautiful place for weekend picnics is now safe for Afghans to enjoy. The people from Obe, famous for saffron, can work and live free from the impact of mines and ERW; and as a result of mine clearance works, Chesht-e Sharif, a place for the famous Herat marble mines as well as Salma Dam is now declared mines and ERW impact free."

Now that the hazards have been removed, the land will be used for residential houses and other essential needs of the communities such as health clinics, schools, business, and roads, benefiting 8 communities of these three districts directly, and indirectly significantly more people in the region.

#### **MAPA is supported by the following donors to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action administrated by UNMAS:**

Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Japan, Korea, Lithuania, Netherlands, Oman, UAE, UK and USA.

#### **MAPA is also supported by the following bilateral donors:**

Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Government of Afghanistan, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UAE, United Kingdom and USA.

## MAPA PROVIDE MINE RISK EDUCATION SESSION TO A PRIVATE COMPANY WORKERS

On 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013 the Mine Action Program of Afghanistan (MAPA) provided Mine Risk Education session to a private company worker in Silo area, district five of Kabul province which was a battle field during the civil war and was heavily contaminated by Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). This session was conducted by a trainer from Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), one of the implementing partners of Mine Action Program of Afghanistan (MAPA). More than 15 workers were participated in this session.

Mr. Najibullah one of the participants said, "An excavator was digging up an old building when I saw a rocket shell and I shouted on the driver to stop working. Then we stopped the work and informed our team leader to contact someone who has good skills in removing this kind of dangerous things."

The session was delivered for one day through classroom instruction, exhibitions, and group activities. The participants were happy and they appreciated these kinds of sessions very much. It will help those who are not aware from the danger of Mines and Explosive Remnants of War to recognize it well whenever in the future they faced with.



Above: A participant of the MRE session describing a photo to his colleagues

Mr. Najibullah added "I am very pleased for having the opportunity to attend this training conducted by Mine Action. I have learned a lot on recognition of landmines and other explosives, dangerous markings/signs, and how to stay safe during working in mine contaminated areas."

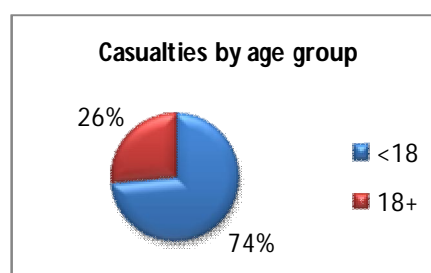
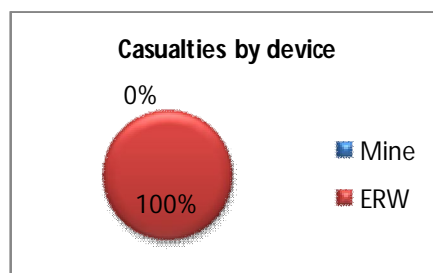
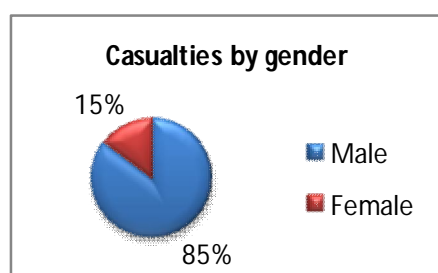
Mr. Musa another participant of this session said, "This session will enable us to share the lessons learned with other people in our area in particular to the innocent children who are the most affected part of the community."

"Unfortunately, the existence of landmines and other explosives has created a lot of problems for our people especially for the children with many casualties every year. I, as a worker will try my best to share the lessons which I learned here about Mine Risk educations with my other colleagues and relatives." He said

He added, "We are very thankful from Mine Action regarding this important session from which we learned lots of life saving points for our future, because before that we were not aware about the risk of mines and other explosives."

## CASUALTIES IN JANUARY 2013

In **January 2013**, there were 34 casualties due to Mine/ERW recorded in Afghanistan (data as of January 2013).



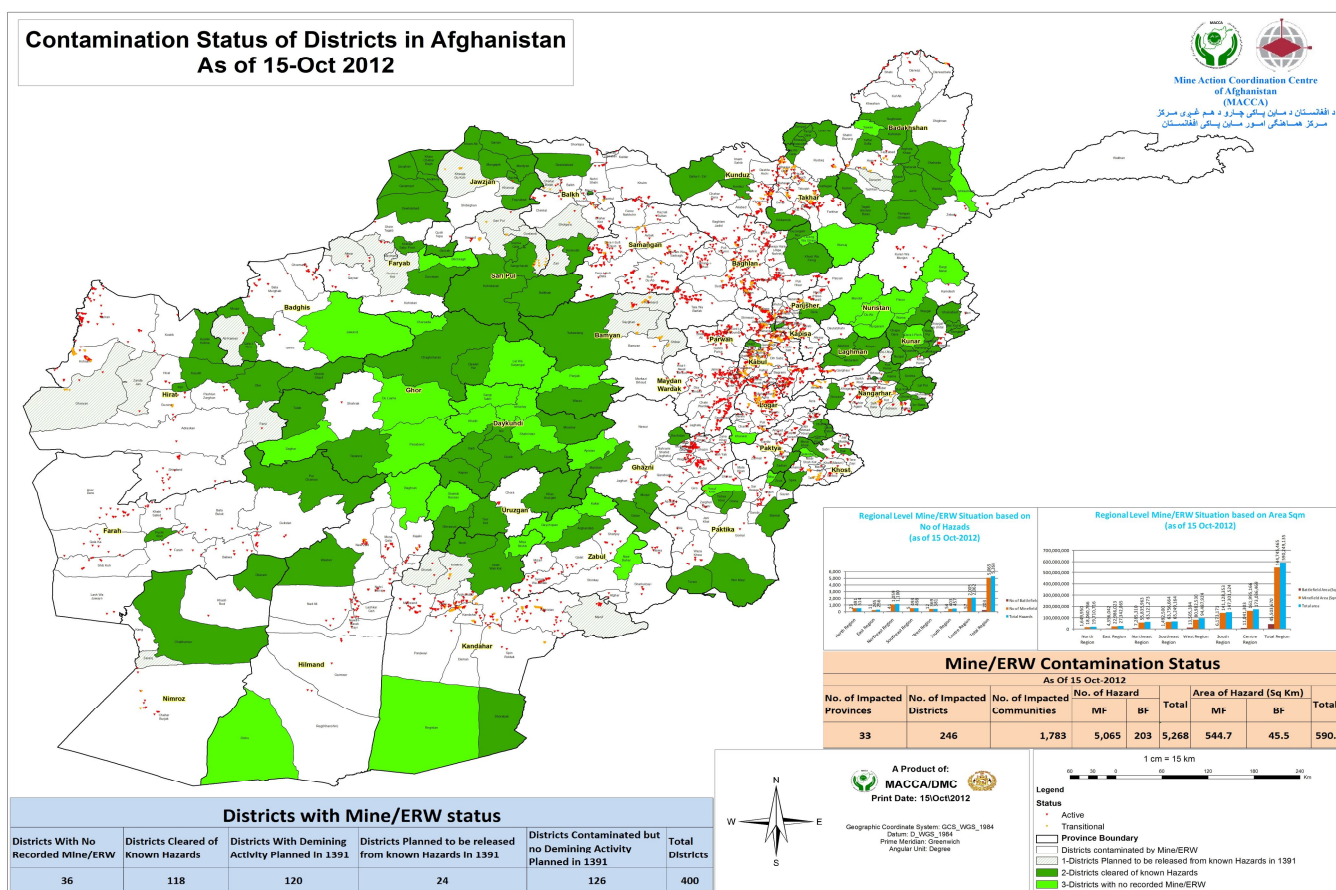
## MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

**Ottawa Convention:**

As part of its obligations under the Ottawa Convention, Afghanistan aimed to clear all emplaced anti-personnel (AP) mines by 2013; destroy all known AP mine stockpiles by 2007; provide mine risk education and assist mine survivors. To note, the Ottawa Convention is about the removal of AP mines, and not of anti-tank (AT) mines or ERW. However it is equally important to ensure that the other hazards are not forgotten whilst the focus is on meeting the Ottawa Convention obligations. In March 2012, the Government of Afghanistan applied for 10-year extension of its deadline to clear all AP mines by 2023. All AP mine stockpiles have already been destroyed.

## BENCHMARK TABLE - JANUARY 2013

	Baseline		New Hazard		Hazard Processed		Progress		Remaining Hazard	
	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	% of Haz-ards	% of Area	Hazards	Area
(AP,AT ,ERW mixed)	9,220	722,931,477	10	479,627	5,741	455,234,880	62.27	62.97	3,479	267,696,597
AT + ERW	5,087	640,446,776	27	2,144,922	3,809	380,475,187	74.88	59.41	1,278	259,971,589
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,307</b>	<b>1,363,378,253</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>2,624,549</b>	<b>9,550</b>	<b>835,710,067</b>	<b>66.75</b>	<b>61.30</b>	<b>4,757</b>	<b>527,668,186</b>



### MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN YEAR 1391 SO FAR (January 2013)

- \* 22,968 AP mines, 1,965 AT mines, and 787,169 ERW destroyed.
- \* 298 communities cleared of mines and ERW.
- \* 252,275 women and girls and 285,125 men and boys received MRE throughout the country.

