

# MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN

## NEWSLETTER: JUNE 2011



### MINE ACTION PAVES THE ROAD TO DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AFGHANISTAN

Sholukto, Dara Zendan, Qalamajar and Aque Mazar are villages in Samangan province which line the highway that could be described as the arterial supply route connecting Kabul to the Northern provinces of the country. All these villages have serious problems with contamination of landmines and other explosive remnants of war.

“Mines and other explosives left behind from the Soviet occupation and civil war have created massive problems for us. We were not able to use agricultural land, grazing land, attend to our livestock and collect firewood from the contaminated areas or the road for transportation.” said Azizullah one of the residents of Dara Zendan village.

Azizullah has been the witness of many mine accidents in the area: “I remember accidents affecting both people and animals in my village. They were tragic and unforgettable,”

According to Azizullah, the clearance operation has already improved their daily lives. He said: “I used to walk my flock of sheep miles away, so that they could drink water because the areas close by were contaminated with mines, but now I don’t have this problem,”

An obstacle for grazing, agriculture and transportation, the landmines and other explosives caused villagers to spend much of their income buying firewood. Since the start of mine action operations, villagers feel it will have positive impact on their economy. Azizullah said: “Before clearance began, we had to buy all our firewood, but now clearance has started, we can collect wood from the cleared area and this will save us thousands of Afghanis\*”

Not being able to use tractors and drive them along the highway which connects these villages has been another problem. Azizullah said: “The work which could have been done in a hour by tractor takes a day to do by hand and so not being able to use tractors really hampered our development.”

“We are very happy with the mine action operations here, since it has already improved our lives.” He concluded.

The clearance of these villages is part of a project to clear all hazards located within a 100m corridor on either side of the 700 km ring road which connects Kabul to the provinces in the Northern provinces of Parwan, Baghlan, Kunduz, Samangan, Balkh and Jawzjan. The project is a public-private partnership, funded by the International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the Netherlands Government through the VTF and implemented by ATC and HALO Trust. It started in April 2011 and is due for completion in two years.

\* the local currency



*Azizullah (Right)*

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

Canada, European Commission, Australia, Japan, Netherlands, Finland, Spain, Denmark, Austria, Luxembourg, Oman and Lithuania.

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

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# Government of Afghanistan Ratifies the Cluster Munitions Convention

The Cluster Munitions Convention was officially ratified by President Karzai after approval of Afghanistan's Parliament through Decree No. 25 on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2011. The Convention prohibits use, stockpiling, production and transfer of Cluster Munitions. See [www.clusterconvention.org](http://www.clusterconvention.org) for more details on the Convention.

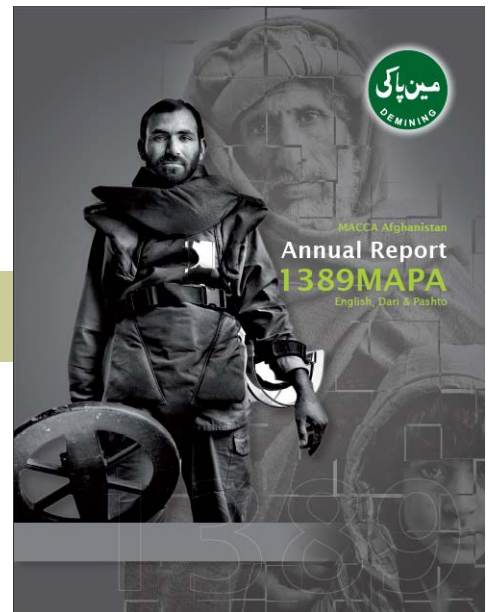
In Afghanistan the Soviet Union used Cluster Munitions during 1979-1989 war; they were then used in the civil war from 1992 to 1996 and by coalition forces against Taliban from October 2011 to March 2002.

According to MACCA's national database, 185 areas have been reported as contaminated with cluster munitions, of which 161 have been cleared by MAPA. Three of these will be cleared this year, 11 next year and the remaining areas which are located in Kandahar and Paktia will be cleared when the security conditions allow.

From December 2001 to June 2011, a total of 206 civilian casualties (40 dead and 166 injured) due to Cluster Munitions were recorded in the national database. The number of casualties has reduced dramatically over the last decade. In 2010, only two casualties were reported compared to 70 in 2001.

## MAPA 1389 Annual Report Launched

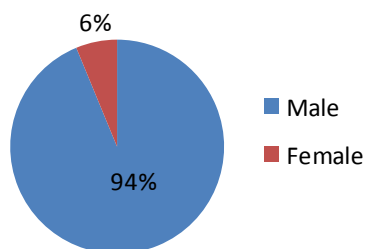
Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) 1389 annual report was published this month. This year's report is published in English, Dari and Pashto and is available on the MACCA website [www.macca.org.af](http://www.macca.org.af).



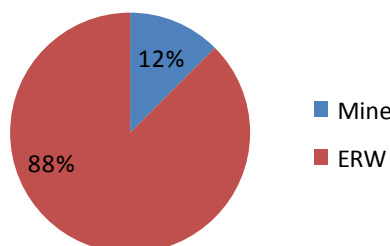
## CASUALTIES IN JUNE 2011

As of July 13, 2011 there were 16 casualties recorded so far in June due to landmines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW). Please be aware that casualty reports take time to come in from the field and so the monthly total tends to increase for some weeks after this newsletter is published. The below charts show a breakdown of these casualties:

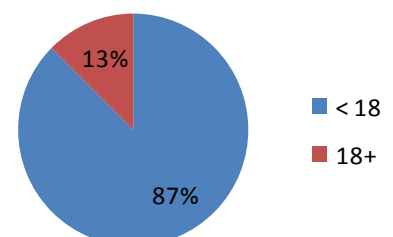
**Casualties by Gender**



**Mine, ERW and AIED Casualties**



**Casualties by age group**



## MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

### Ottawa Treaty:

Clear all emplaced anti-personnel mines by 2013;

Destroy all known anti-personnel mine stockpiles by 2007; and

Provide mine risk education to Afghans and assist mine survivors.

### AFGHANISTAN'S PROGRESS TOWARD MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS (APRIL 2011)

70% reduction of mine/ERW contaminated areas by 2011 and clearance of all known anti-personnel landmines by 2013:

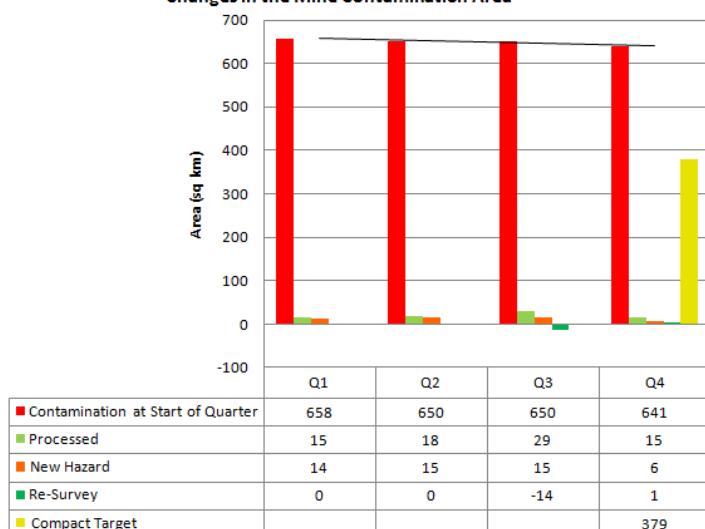
Indicator	Adjusted Base-line	Remaining Contamination	Clearance Processed	Treaty Target of 100% of Hazards	Progress towards Treaty
Number of Hazards	12,884	6,545	6,339	12,884	49%
Hazardous Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	1,284	627	657	1,284	51%

### EXPLANATION ON CHANGES TO BENCHMARK TABLE

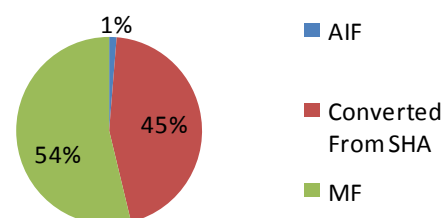
The graph below further highlights that the significant amount of clearance undertaken by the implementing partners is failing to produce substantive progress towards the Mine Ban (Ottawa) Treaty. The Afghan Compact goal (based on a benchmark of January 2006) of removing 70% of all known hazard by March 2011 was not met. The above graph shows that 69% progress towards this goal. The reasons the target was not met are a complex combination of security, funding and previously unknown hazard being added to the database, hence increasing the benchmark.

The pie chart below shows the breakdown of the type of minefield currently remaining on the database. The 45% which is labeled as being converted from Suspected Hazardous Area needs further investigation as it is based on data from 2004.

Changes in the Mine Contamination Area



Mine Contamination Area by Hazard Type



AIF: Abandoned IED Fields  
MF: Mine Field  
SHA: Suspected Hazardous Area

### MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY IN 1390 SO FAR (June 2011)

- \* 7,147 Anti-Personnel mines, 288 Anti-Tank mines, and 221,738 Explosive Remnants of War destroyed.
- \* 51 communities cleared of mines and other explosive remnants of war.
- \* 117,042 women and girls and 163,125 men and boys received Mine Risk Education throughout the country.

