



MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN (MAPA) NEWSLETTER: MAY 2014



UNMAS Programme Manager Abigail Hartley departs MACCA after almost six years

Abigail Hartley, former Programme Manager for UNMAS in Afghanistan, has been selected as the new Chief of Policy for UNMAS globally.

Abigail first joined the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), an UNMAS project, in 2008 having worked for many years with the mine clearance organisation Mines Advisory Group (MAG) in Sudan, Sri Lanka and at its headquarters.

Abigail is leaving the Afghanistan programme after almost six years, having successfully overseen the first year of the ten-year Ottawa Extension Request work-plan. After being promoted to MACCA Chief of Staff, Abigail was one of the key staff involved in submitting Afghanistan's Extension Request to the Ottawa Treaty in 2012. The programme exceeded its targets for 1392, the first year of the work plan, and 80% of Afghanistan's contaminated land has now been cleared. Provided donors maintain their funding, the programme is on track to meet its overall objective of ridding Afghanistan of all mines and ERW by 2023.

And the steps taken by the programme are working. In 2001, around 250 people a month, mostly civilians, were killed or seriously injured by mines and ERW. That figure is now down to 39 casualties per month. The programme provides employment to almost 9,000 Afghans and frees up land for development, agricultural and otherwise.

MACCA's Director, Mohammad Sediq Rashid, spoke of the progress made during Abigail's tenure: "Abigail's period as programme manager spanned some of the most productive years of the programme, which has cleared just under 650 sq km and cancelled a further 160 sq km in the past six years. 518 sq km remain. MACCA is now an entirely Afghan entity, with just four international staff members supporting the programme, down from 14 at the end of 2008. Abigail's management and advocacy skills were also instrumental in calling attention to issues such as the clearance of ISAF firing ranges and bases, all of which will now be cleared in the next two years by the responsible nations. Abigail worked extremely hard for Afghanistan; this is what we will all remember."

Others colleagues at MACCA recalled Abigail's leadership

skills, as well as her warmth as a person. Head of Operations, Research and Development, Abdul Qudous: "As a leader, I think Abigail has all the required traits. She succeeded in building trust between top management and staff. Whenever she was leaving the country for a time, she always said to goodbye to each section of MACCA in person. Normally, we only learn that people are out of the country when we receive their out of office reply." Qudous went on to describe Abigail's contribution to capacity building at MACCA: "MACCA is now in a good position in terms of its technical capacity because opportunities were provided to the national staff to take up key positions. I know that the programme can now manage the mine action problem effectively and efficiently, despite the shortage of funds; we have to manage somehow."

Mohammad Shafiq Yosufi, Director of the Department of Mine Clearance, emphasised Abigail's contribution to capacity development, saying that Abigail was a dedicated Programme Manager: "Abigail was very hard working and provided swift solutions to our challenges. She was very committed to the capacity development of national staff and was always excited to her Afghan colleagues producing good results. On behalf of the GfRoA, I would like to sincerely thank her for her work and wish her success."

During her time at MACCA, Abigail occupied three roles: Senior Programme Officer, Chief of Staff and, finally, Programme Manager. Speaking at her farewell gathering at MACCA, Abigail told colleagues: "We have two things to celebrate: the work that we did together and the friendships we have with one another. When I think of the work, I think of being a programme officer, and now that's Akbar's role. I think of being Chief of Staff, and now it's Wakil. In a way, maybe I'm doing less and less, but what this means is that the Afghans are doing more and more, and this makes me so proud of you all. I get so much pleasure from seeing the improvements in the programme and I am so proud to have been part of it. But the friendships are what I will take away from Afghanistan. It has been the best five and a half years of my life and it has been my privilege to serve in your country. I want to say thank you; you are an amazing bunch of colleagues with whom I have been so happy to work."

All of us at MACCA wish her a long life, happiness and every success in her new role. We know we have not heard the last of her.



Ms. Abigail Hartley, former
Programme Manager for UNMAS
in Afghanistan

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

Australia, Canada, EU, Finland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Oman, UAE, and USA.

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Zindajan & Koshki Kohna Districts of Hirat Province are freed of known mines/ERW

On May 20, 2014, two districts of Hirat province were declared free of all known mines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW). The districts were officially handed over to the communities and the district authorities during a handover ceremony held in the Zindajan district conference hall. The ceremony was hosted by MACCA's Regional Office West and MAPA implementing partners, and was well attended by local authorities, district governors, community elders, and civil society organisations.



The Head of MACCA Regional Office West, Mohammad Moqem Noori, warmly welcomed and thanked the local authorities and public for their support and assistance. Noori congratulated the wider population of the two districts for their support in completing the clearance of the known hazards. He said he deeply appreciated the community's continual cooperation with demining personnel with regard to their safety and security. He thanked the implementing partners and briefly explained what MAPA has achieved in the western region, especially in the districts in question.

The District Governor, Dr. Farhad Khadimi, also expressed his appreciation for the achievements of MACCA and its partners. The Governor also cherished MACCA's close coordination and liaison with governmental authorities and community elders.

Representing the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), Mr. Fazal Ahmad Farzan thanked the mine action personnel for their important

achievements in the region in such difficult terrain and insecurity. He also thanked the local community councils (Shuras) and the districts' residents for their support and cooperation with demining personnel in the field.

Movlawe Abdul Karim, the Head of the Hajj and Religions Affairs Department of Zindajan District, also appreciated MAPA's hard work and its valuable service to the people of Hirat and the country in general. He said: "Supporting needy people is a holy and important job, and I - on behalf of this society - thank the countries and organizations who have funded this programme to free our country from the threat of mines and ERW."

Now that the hazards have been removed, these districts will be included in the Government's development plan and the cleared lands of these districts will be used to build houses and other essential services for the communities, such as agricultural activities, health clinics, schools, businesses, and roads, all of which will directly benefit the communities of these two districts, and indirectly the region's wider population.

Afghan deminers visit China

The Government of the People's Republic of China participates in international humanitarian demining by providing training and support to different mine-affected countries. In response to this goodwill, China, through its Embassy in Kabul, informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan that it would like to donate some demining equipment to the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA).

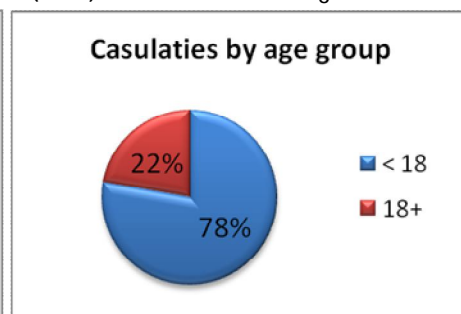
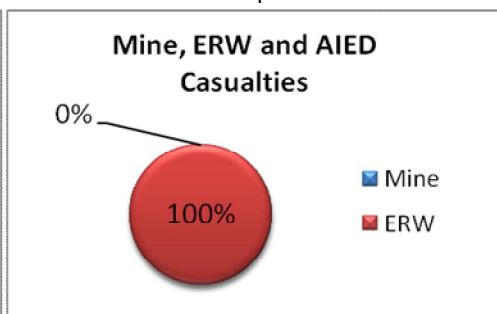
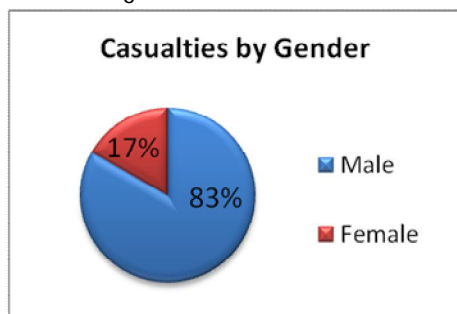
The equipment includes manual metal detectors and personal protective equipment (PPE).



Chinese Officials & Afghan Deminers at Humanitarian Demining Exchange Program

CASUALTIES DURING MAY 2014

During this month, 18 civilian casualties due to mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) were recorded in Afghanistan.



In order for deminers to better use the equipment in the field, the Chinese Government invited Afghan deminers to a three-week training workshop in China. 16 deminers from two different Afghan mine action organisations, Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC) and Mine Detection Centre (MDC), attended the training workshop. In addition, three government officials from the Department of Mine Clearance (DMC) of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) accompanied the deminers to the workshop.

The training workshop also served as a platform to exchange mine action knowledge and experience and was jointly organized by China's Ministry of Defence and DMC. Afghan deminers shared their many years of experience using various types of equipment on unusual surfaces. Chinese experts shared their knowledge of developing many types of demining equipment based on need and demand. Both countries are optimistic about further future cooperation and collaboration in the fight against mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in Afghanistan.

2014 Regional Senior Managers' Course in ERW & Mine Action, Tajikistan

Employee empowerment and awareness have always been a vital part of UNMAS and MACCA's commitment to its staff. MACCA has always felt that in the presence of skilled managers, it can overcome the most difficult challenges.

In fulfilling its commitment, UNMAS/MACCA sponsored six staff to attend the Regional Senior Managers' Course (RSMC). This year the course took place over three weeks in May 2014 at a training facility in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

The RSMC was organized using a modular approach and drawing on the expertise of a number of universities' professors and subject matter experts from the national mine action centre and regional implementing partners.

The curriculum of the three-week course has three main objectives:

- * To develop the personal skills needed by effective managers;
- * To provide training in business management practices and their applications to the field of ERW and mine action; and
- * To enhance managers' Knowledge of ERW and mine action challenges, techniques and requirements.

Alongside the 13 staff members from the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), the 2014 RSMC also included participants from Azerbaijan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Yemen and Tajikistan.

One added benefit of the course was that participants learned not only from the interaction with instructors, but also from the interactions among the participants themselves. The par-



MAPA Participants along training organizers & trainers

ticipants have considerable field experience and had much to share and learn from each other. All members of the training were asked to create a presentation within their country groups to explain their country's mine action programme and to share their particular ERW/mine action technical expertise. The course was organised to promote interaction and build beneficial personal relationships among the participants, course instructors and staff. The course ended with a management case study exercise that challenged the participants to apply what they have learned in the previous weeks.

The Centre for International Stabilization and Recovery (CISR) at James Madison University offered the Regional Senior Managers' Course in close collaboration with Tajikistan's national mine authority, the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (TMAC). This course was funded by the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA) under the US Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.

Second Workshop on Regional Cooperation for Humanitarian Demining at Tehran

The Second Workshop on Regional Cooperation for Humanitarian Demining was hosted by Iran in its capital city Tehran from 18 to 20 May 2014. Titled 'Regional Workshop on Operational Efficiency in Mine Action', the workshop was supported by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and attended by representatives of mine action programmes from Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

The first regional workshop on mine action was organized in Tajikistan in February 2013. Participants at the Tehran workshop discussed regional cooperation in the different facets of mine action and explored ways to strengthen such cooperation.

On the first and second days, representatives from Afghanistan, Iran and Tajikistan delivered some presentations on the following topics:

- * Rules and standards on clearance of hazardous areas from mines and ERW
- * National Mine Action Policies and Standards in Tajikistan
- * Nontechnical Survey in Afghanistan
- * Effectiveness of Nontechnical Survey Operations
- * Freeing hazardous areas from mines and ERW
- * Effective methods in survey and clearance
- * Lessons learned from reporting based on Article 5 of Anti-

Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, which requires the state parties to make their jurisdiction mine-free as soon as possible but no later than 10 years

- * Integrated and synchronized use of technology in mine action (deminers, mine detection machines and dogs) for survey and clearance of mine and ERW affected areas
- * Determining Productivity in Mine Action
- * Efficient use of demining machines in survey and clearance

Eng. Mohammad Shafiq Yosufi, Head of DMC, participated on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, while MACCA was represented by Abdul Qudous Ziaee, Operations and R&D Manager. Both shared their experience related to on the effectiveness of mine action operations with other participants. The Head of DMC delivered a presentation on the lessons Afghanistan learned during the preparation of its Extension Request to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty. Moreover, two more presentations, one on effectiveness of technical and non-technical survey and another on the effective use of demining machinery, were delivered by MACCA's Operations and R&D Manager, which was well received by the audience.

The participants also visited a factory that manufactures a variety of demining machines for mine action entities, contractors as well as the Mine Action Programme of Iran. The machines manufactured include remote-controlled mini demining machines and chain grinders. Given the factory's capacity, the Afghan delegation invited experts from the factory to pay a visit to Afghanistan and assist MAPA in upgrading its mechanical assets based on the recommendations of the Afghan experts and as fit for conditions in Afghanistan (e.g., installing collateral ploughing devices to the mechanical assets currently available in Afghanistan). The experts at the factory expressed their interest in this and promised to send two of their experts, upon request, to Afghanistan to assess the possibilities of modifications to the machinery currently used in Afghanistan.

The Afghan delegation also had a separate meeting with officials from the Mine Action Programme of Iran, during which the Iranians expressed their readiness to deliver management trainings to their Afghan counterparts.

Thanking the Iranians, the Afghan delegation provided their specific recommendations for cooperation between the mine action programmes of the Iran and Afghanistan, with a primary focus on exchanging experiences, technical experience and information on mechanical upgrades.

At the end of the second day, a joint meeting was held between representatives of Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, as well as GICHD. Stressing the need for regional and international cooperation in mine action and the determination of their countries to clear areas affected by mines, cluster munitions and ERW, the parties agreed on the following:

- * Organize regional mine action cooperation workshops on an annual basis periodically based on prior coordination and notification in each of the countries.
- * Sign bilateral and tripartite MoUs on regional cooperation to improve mine action.
- * Launch a joint website on humanitarian mine action. The MoU will be drafted by the Mine Action Programme of Iran and will be shared with Afghan and Tajik officials via diplomatic channels. Once agreed, measures will be adopted to sign the MoU.
- * Support research projects on humanitarian mine action in cooperation with Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.
- * Given that the first regional workshop on mine action was organized from 19 to 21 February 2013 in Tajikistan, it was suggested



Regional Cooperation for Humanitarian Demining at Tehran, Iran

that the third workshop be hosted by Afghanistan with support from with Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and that the date for the same shall be determined and announced at a later date by the host government. The Afghan delegation accepted this requested in principle subject to agreement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

- * Given the historical, cultural and geographical commonalities with countries in central and western Asia, the participants agreed to invite representatives from other countries interested in regional cooperation, to the upcoming workshops.

Quote from the News

The Government of Germany today donated a selection of mine detection and clearance equipment and vehicles to an Afghan non-government organization (NGO) active in the field, the Mine Detection Centre (MDC). "I hope the equipment will serve MDC and Afghanistan to further clear the country from mines and to help build a peaceful, free and economically prosperous Afghanistan," said the German Ambassador to Afghanistan, Martin Jaeger, at the handover ceremony in Kabul. MDC is one of many NGOs working in the United Nations-backed Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), as the country's demining programme is known. Afghanistan has witnessed widespread and indiscriminate use of mines and munitions over more than 30 years of conflict, making it one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. In a report released last October, MAPA said Afghanistan made significant progress by clearing more than 1,900 hazardous areas, covering 112 Sq Km of land, during the year ending on 20 March 2013. It also registered a "tremendous decrease" in civilian casualties as a result of its mine clearance operations which first started 24 years ago."

News Source: UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

Website: <http://unama.unmissions.org>

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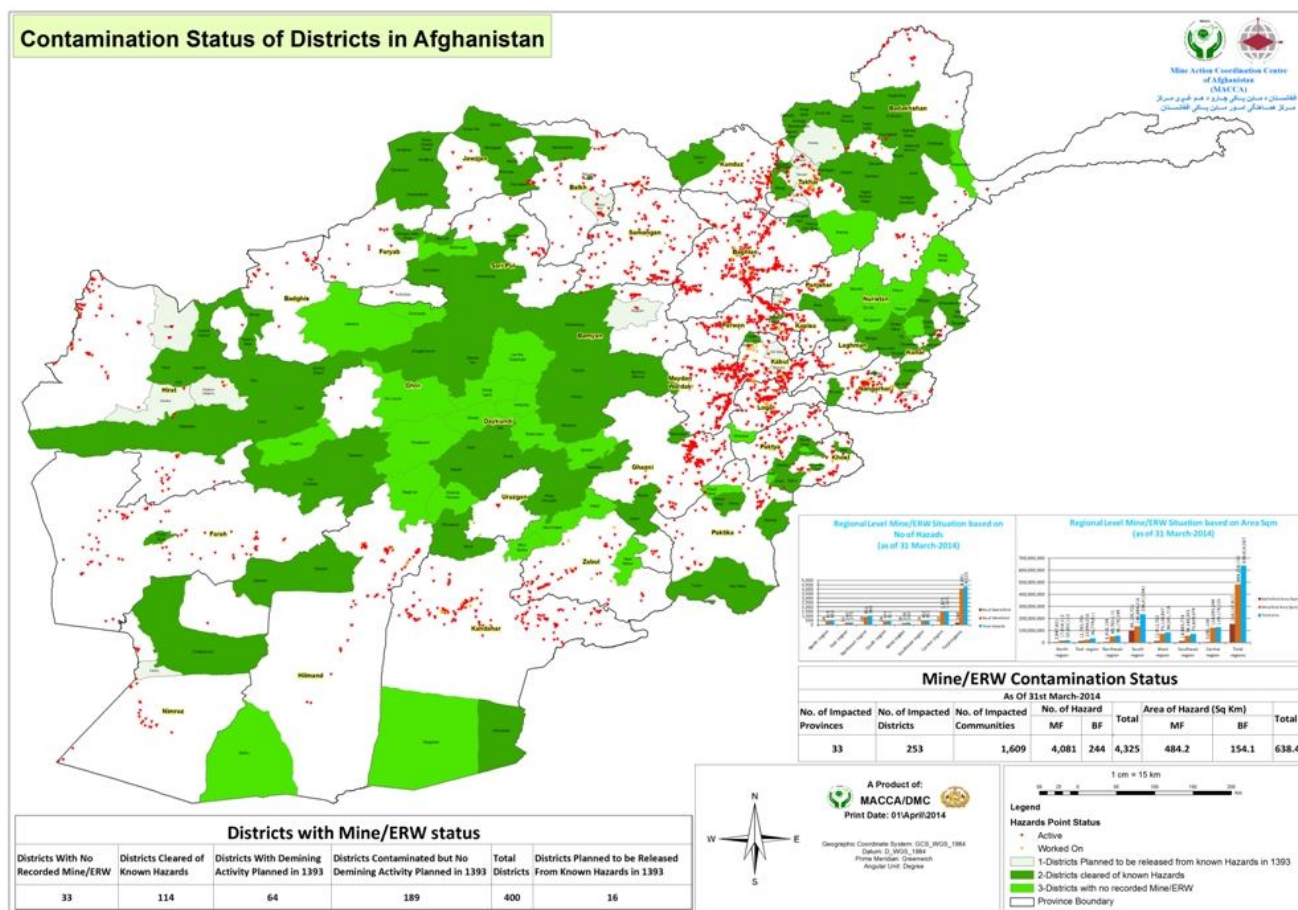


MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

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 other hazards are not forgotten whilst the focus is on meeting the Ottawa Convention's obligations. In March 2012, the Afghan Government submitted a request for a ten-year extension of the deadline to remove all AP mines by 2023. All AP mine stockpiles have already been destroyed. This request was assessed by 10 members of secretariat at the end of November 2012, where all parties accepted the Afghanistan's request. The current baseline and progress is shown in the benchmark table below. In this table "Hazards" represents number of hazardous areas and "Area" represents the area of hazards in square kilometers.

Hazard type	Baseline April 2013		Previously unreported hazards, up to end of May 2014		Resurvey results up to end of May 2014	Current target as of end of May 2014		Hazards processed from April 2013 to end of May 2014		Remaining hazards at the end of May 2014		Progress at the end of May 2014 against current target	
	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Change	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f(a+c)</i>	<i>g(b+d+e)</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>l(%of a & h)</i>	<i>m(%of b & i)</i>
AP + (AP,AT,ERW mixed)	3,439	266.4	615	38.3	-1.4	4,054	303.2	1,066	53.0	2,988	250.2	26.30	17.47
AT + ERW	1,248	252.1	304	39.6	-11.4	1,552	280.3	415	45.3	1,137	235.0	26.74	16.14
BF	179	33.5	114	12.8	0.8	293	47.1	70	13.1	223	34.0	23.89	27.74
Total	4,866	551.9	1,033	90.6	-12.0	5,899	630.6	1,551	111.3	4,348	519.3	26.29	17.65



MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 1393 SO FAR

- * 1,964 anti-personnel mines, 71 anti-tank mines, and 55,235 ERW destroyed.
- * Eight communities cleared of known mines and ERW.
- * 16,528 women and girls, and 19,881 men and boys received Mine/ERW risk education throughout the country.

