



## MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN (MAPA) NEWSLETTER: MAY 2015



### 6th South Asian Conference on International Humanitarian Law

*"IHL: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow"*

The 6th South Asian Conference on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 19 to 21 May 2015. The conference was facilitated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in collaboration with Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was attended by delegations from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The theme of this year's conference was IHL: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.

In general terms the questions such as: what do the laws of war or the laws of armed conflict mean? In which situations do these apply and to whom do these apply? were discussed and deliberated upon. The conference brought together government officials and experts of IHL from South Asian countries and Iran with a view to sharing perspectives on IHL, working together to promote and bring about more awareness with respect to IHL. The sessions included a range of topics such as: Armed conflicts and terrorism, IHL and peace keeping operations, Cyber operations in armed conflicts, addressing the issue of missing persons, Explosive remnants of war, anti personnel mines and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and ensuring respect for IHL.

Explosive remnants of war, anti personnel mines and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas was one of the main agenda items of the conference, for which Mr. Mohammad Sediq Rashid the Director of Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) was invited as a resource person. Mr. Rashid explained that how dangerous the contaminations of populated areas are and how it is difficult for the mine action staff to perform clearance and survey at the populated areas.

Afghanistan is member of Geneva Convention which is the founder of International Humanitarian Law. According to this law Afghanistan Government and its active parties should protect the lives of its civilians under any situations. The participation of MACCA Director at this important conference added the value of learning and understanding on how IHL is related in to the work of mine action which MACCA coordinates and overviews in the country. All the organizations working in the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan are respecting and following IHL parallel to their mine action duties and as MAPA's main goal is to protect the lives of the Afghan civilians from mines and ERW and to mitigate any livelihood blockage which are created by the mentioned threats.



The 6th South Asian Conference Participants on International Humanitarian Law

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

Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Saudi Arabia.

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

ARR Japan, Belgium, DDG Core Fund, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Norwegian Red Cross, PATRIP, Poland, Sweden, UNHCR, UK, UNOCHA, and US DOS.

## Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan's Implementing Partners:

### The Work of Danish Demining Group in Qala-e-Naw, Kabul



Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) is composed of more than fifty humanitarian organizations and commercial companies. These dedicated implementing partners

are the main reason for the success of the MAPA. One of these partners is Danish Demining Group (DDG), which has been working on mine and explosive remnant of war (ERW) clearance and risk education in Afghanistan since 1999.

One recent example of DDG's work is the village of Qala-e-Naw Village in Kabul's Paghman District. DDG has been conducting mine clearance projects, funded by the Danish Government, in Qala-e-Naw since 2013. Qala-e-Naw was heavily contaminated by mines and ERW during the war between 1980 and 1995. The village was often at the centre of the fighting; it was seen as a strategic location by warring parties due to its proximity to Kabul and its location surrounded by high mountains.

Approximately 850 people live in Qala-e-Naw and DDG's MRE-teams have been conducting mine and ERW risk awareness sessions in an effort to inform the local community of the threat in the area.

Furthermore, DDG's survey and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams respond to tasks resulting from calls made by locals to MACCA's hotline and have removed unexploded ordnance from the village as a result. One such task involved the removal of several items of ERW that had been placed in the wall of a family's home. Between February 2015 and April 2015, DDG conducted 67 MACCA hotline tasks and destroyed 188 items of UXO, 10 anti-personnel mines and two anti-tank mines. Afghanistan's war against mines and ERW continues just a few kilometres away from the country's capital.



ERW found and destroyed by DDG Teams

### Stay in touch with the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan

Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) is appreciating the encouragement of its supporters and the programme is welcoming everyone to support us by sharing your ideas and comments:

#### Website:

Visit our website for detailed information on mine action in Afghanistan

[www.macca.org.af](http://www.macca.org.af)

#### Facebook:

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#### Twitter:

Follow us on Twitter for the short news on the programme

[www.twitter.com/MACCA\\_AFG](http://www.twitter.com/MACCA_AFG)

#### Email:

You can contact us directly through our Email address

[info@macca.org.af](mailto:info@macca.org.af)

#### Hotline Number:

You can call MAPA hotline reporting any mines or ERW problems 24/7:

0093-708-60 60 60

#### Newsletter:

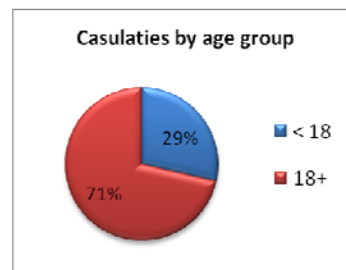
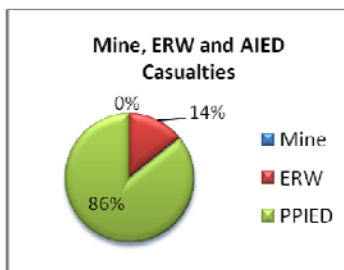
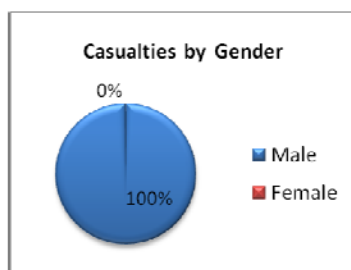
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## CASUALTIES DURING MAY 2015

During May, 7 civilian casualties due to mines, Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and PPIEDs were recorded in Afghanistan.

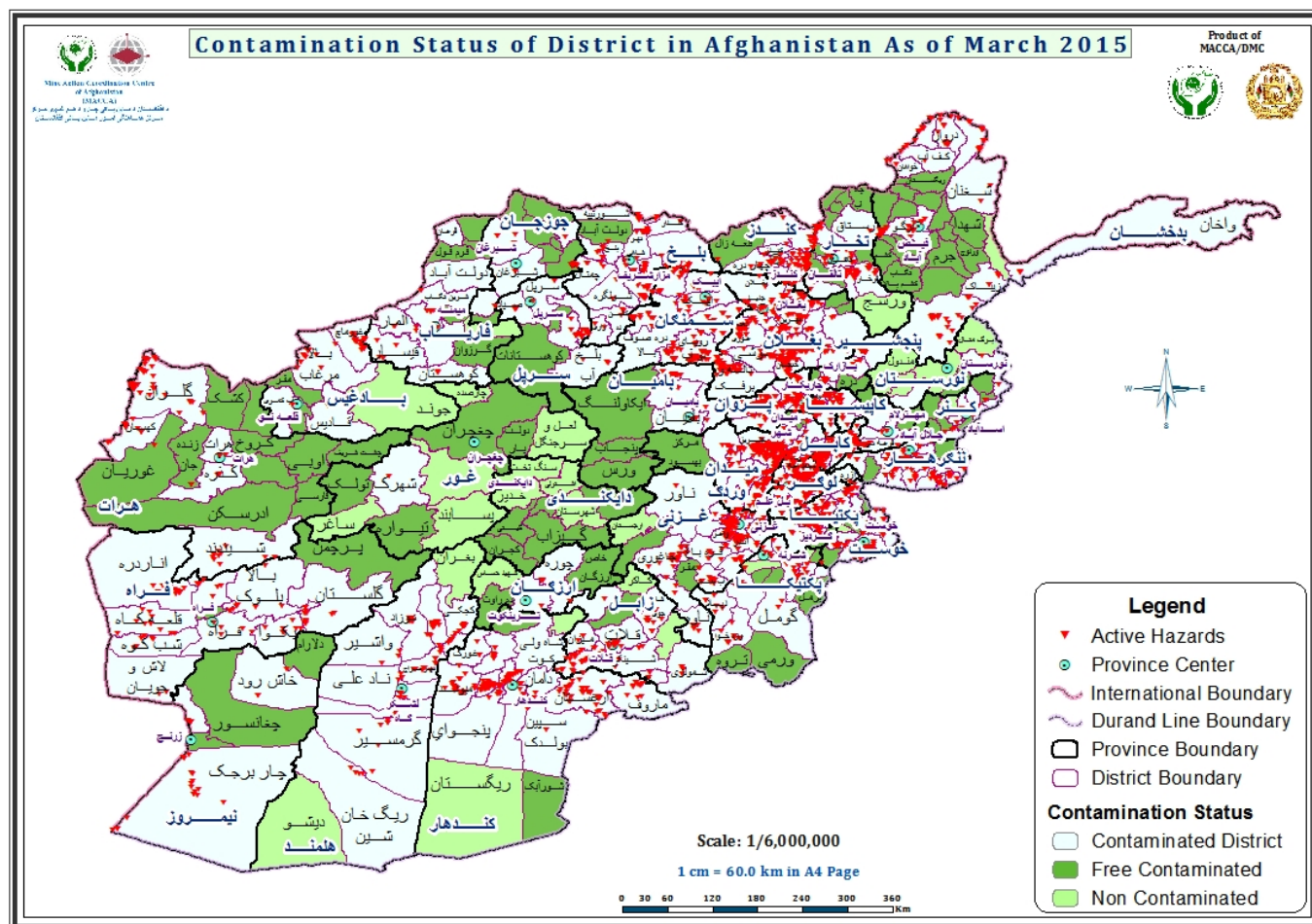


## MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

### 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(Note1)		Previously unreported hazards up to end May 2015		Resurvey results up to end of May 2015	Current Target as of end May 2015		Hazards Processed from April 2013 to end May 2015		Remaining Hazards as end of May 2015	
	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Change	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area
	a	b	c	d	e	f (a+c)	g (b+d+e)	h	i	j	k
AP(+ AT,ERW)	3,439	266.4	1,005	55.5	0.8	4,444	322.7	1,583	81.6	2,861	241.1
AT + ERW	1,248	252.1	553	98.1	-12.8	1,801	337.3	609	73.9	1,192	263.4
BF	179	33.5	193	24.9	0.6	372	59.0	119	22.3	253	36.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,866</b>	<b>551.9</b>	<b>1,751</b>	<b>178.5</b>	<b>-11.4</b>	<b>6,617</b>	<b>719.0</b>	<b>2,311</b>	<b>177.8</b> (24.73%)	<b>4,306</b>	<b>541.2</b> (75.27%)



## MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 1394 SO FAR

- \* 1,016 anti-personnel mines, 146 anti-tank mines, and 64,903 ERW destroyed.
- \* Seven communities cleared of known mines and ERW.
- \* 71,546 women and girls, and 98,517 men and boys received Mine/ERW risk education throughout the country.
- \* 2,168 people received victim assistance and disability activities including Disability awareness & advocacy, Physical Rehabilitation and socio-economical reintegration. (VA Data as per April 2015)

### MAPA Current Donors for the year 1394:

