



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



Training for Trainers (ToT) on Mine Risk Education for Nooristan, Laghman and Kunar Provinces

One of the highest priorities for the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) is educating the new generation of Afghanistan of the risks and threats posed by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). In order to meet that goal, MACCA is working eagerly to empower and build the capacity of Ministry of Education (MoE) staff and teachers.

MACCA mine/ERW risk education team is ensuring that the Government of Afghanistan, and especially the MoE, has the required up-to-date knowledge of the risks of mines and ERW. Experience shows that educating children through schools is one of the most effective approaches for raising awareness of mine and ERW risks in the country.

As part of MACCA's mine risk education programme, training sessions for trainers have been delivered to 91 teachers from 82 schools of Nooristan Province, and three MoE child protection officers in each of Kunar and Laghman Provinces. The training sessions were conducted from 15 to 19 October 2014 in the centres of both provinces simultaneously. The sessions will enable the participants to deliver mine/ERW risk education at their schools and communities.

"This is the first time that we have received such professional and well organised training. It touches the real needs of our province, as Nooristan is currently facing an increasing number of ERW accidents" mentioned a training participant.

At the end of the training sessions, participants were presented certificates of training completion and mine/ERW risk education teacher's handbooks.

The trainings were organised and conducted by MACCA with direct cooperation from the Department of Mine Clearance and the Department of Education.

Two Districts of Baghlan Province Declared Free of all known Mines and Explosive Remnants of War

On 16 Oct 2014, Fring and Guzargahi Nur Districts of Baghlan Province were announced free of known mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). On completion of a mine and ERW impact free community survey (MEIFCS) conducted by HALO Trust with financial support from the European Union, the districts were handed over to government authorities and local communities at an official handover ceremony in Puli Khumri city.

The handover ceremony was hosted by the MACCA northeast regional office and HALO Trust. It was attended by the Baghlan Province Deputy Governor and Head of Sector Services, the Deputy Director of the Department of Education, the Administrative Manager of ANDMA Baghlan Regional Office and representatives local districts and communities.

Long-term armed conflict has left Baghlan as one of the most contaminated provinces in Afghanistan. Even after these two districts have been declared free of contamination, 550 active minefields and 19 battlefields—a total of 569 hazardous areas—will continue to impact on the province. Fring and Guzargahi Nur were initially suspected to be contaminated with mines and ERW, but through the village-by-village MEIFCS, HALO Trust, through engagement with local communities, was able to confirm no presence of known contamination. During the survey, a total of 18 communities including 150 sub-villages were visited, with three items of spot ERW found and destroyed immediately.

Abdul Qadir Khurami, Head of Sector Services of Baghlan Province expressed his gratification for the successful completion of survey operations in the districts. He added, "the goal of the Afghan Government, along with the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA),



ToT Training for teachers and MoE Staff



Districts handover ceremony at Baghlan Province

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.

MAPA is also supported by the following bilateral donors:

Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Government of Afghanistan, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, PATRIP, Sweden, UN OCHA, UAE, UK, and USA.

is to have an Afghanistan free of all mines and ERW contamination, so that the people can live in a safe environment and contribute to the growth, progress and development of the country." He further added, "We are very thankful to the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the international community and donors, who have supported the MAPA and are committed to continue supporting it. We hope they can be with us until achieving the goal of freeing Afghanistan of all contamination. We are also grateful to the de-miners for

He further added, "if MAPA continues to receive further support from the local authorities, the people of Afghanistan and donors, the remaining mines and ERW can be removed in the coming years."

Now that hazards have been removed, cleared villages and districts can be included in the Government's development plan and the cleared lands used for residential housing and other essential needs of the communities such as agricultural activities, health clinics, schools, businesses and roads.

Mawlawi Abdul Qadir, a representative from Guzargahi Nur and Farang districts, expressed his happiness with the successful completion of survey and clearance works in these districts, he explained, "today we are very happy that both districts are free of the secret enemies of human beings and other explosive remnants. This is good news not only for the residents of these two districts but for all people of Baghlan Province. Now we are happy that our children can go to school, farmers can work on their fields and local people can move around without fear of mines and ERW." He added, "we are very thankful to all those who took part in these activities and accomplishments."

UN 21 Awards 2014 and UNMAS is the winner

The UN 21 Awards Programme was established in 1996 by the Secretary-General to recognise staff members for their achievements in the delivery of the Organisation's programmes and services. With the slogan of "honouring outstanding staff initiative", the awards showcase new ways of doing business and honour colleagues who contribute above and beyond the call of duty.

In 2014, 14 awards were granted in the following categories: Innovation, UN Values, Efficiency, Outstanding Vision, and Service beyond the Call of Duty.

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) won this year's Innovation category award for a project entitled "Development of Mobile Weapon Cutting Shear". The project involved long-term collaboration between UNMAS and NGO partners to develop a reli-



UNMAS Team Celebrating the winning of UN 21 Award 2014

Districts Handover Ceremony at Baghlan Province

their hard work. Indeed, they are the real heroes because they sacrifice their lives to save others."

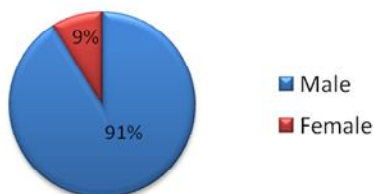
Mr Ziauddin Karimi, Admin/Finance Manager of ANDMA's Baghlan office, commented "Afghanistan is committed to three international treaties, the Anti Personnel Mine Ban Treaty (APMBT), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)." According to these conventions, Afghanistan is obliged to remove all mines from its land by the end of 2023. He encouraged the local authorities to further extend their support to MAPA in terms of security, prioritization and planning both at the provincial and district levels and further encouraged people to provide accurate and precise information to MAPA implementing partners under their area of responsibility.

Eng Sayed Agha Atiq, Area Manager of MACCA regional office northeast region, on behalf of MACCA and UNMAS, expressed his happiness for the successful completion of the survey and of explosive ordinance disposal tasks in the districts. He added, "Baghlan Province still remains to be one of the highly contaminated provinces in the northeastern region, it is also located on the main supply route connecting the north of Afghanistan with central and southern parts of the country, increasing the risk of mine and ERW accidents. From the start of the programme, mines and ERW left 478 casualties in Baghlan Province, with 50 killed and 428 injured. The demining operations in Baghlan Province have to date cleared over 150.34 square kilometers of land, discovering 50,595 anti personnel mines, 1,916 anti-tank mines and 2,811,087 different items of ERW. More than 70% of the mine and ERW threats in Baghlan province have been removed."

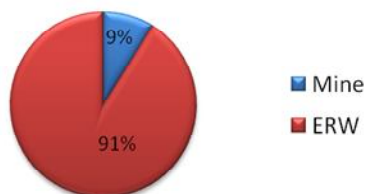
CASUALTIES DURING OCTOBER 2014

During this month, 34 civilian casualties due to mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) were recorded in Afghanistan.

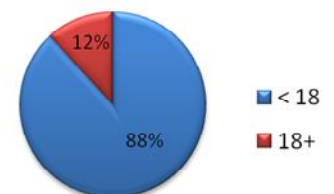
Casualties by Gender



Mine, ERW and AIED Casualties



Casualties by age group



able mobile weapon cutting capacity.

The other nominations for the category were:

- UNPOL (UN Police) Smart System (DPKO)
- gText Project (Global Terminology, reference and translation solutions) by DGACLM/DM
- Global General Services Test (GGST)

UNMAS Director Agnès Marcaillou described the innovative weapon cutting project as an important contribution to peace and security. "Destroying weapons is more than a symbolic gesture in the peace building process, it is instrumental to national recovery and the healing of wounds, and as such the capacity to implement weapon cutting on a nationwide basis, enables communities to participate in a meaningful way in the recovery and peace building process."

Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) was also nominated for UN 21 Awards this year for "Rightsizing UNMAS/MACCA Programme Afghanistan" in the category of Efficiency. The rightsizing programme at MACCA caused efficiency both financially and at the work environment.

Afghan Delegation attending Explosive Ordinance Disposal (Level Two) Training in Tajikistan

In relation to its support to humanitarian mine action programmes around the world, once again the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) conducted second level training in explosive ordinance disposal (EOD) for both the Afghanistan and Tajikistan Mine Action Programmes in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The training was well attended by EOD personnel from both countries.

Similar to the first level, this training was also divided into two parts, a theory section and practical exercises. The theoretical training presentations were delivered by three EOD experts from the US military forces in a very detailed manner. The sessions were held at the Ministry of Defence Military University of Tajikistan, with Practical lessons and exercises conducted in a controlled field environment.

The major advantage of this phase of the training was that the participants were trained on technical identification of different types of explosives and explosive remnants through practical exercises, identification of safe-to-move and unsafe-to-move explosive ordinance, risk management, safety rules & regulations for EOD experts, demolition preparation and safety, and standard practices for conducting demolitions.

The main difference of this training from the last training of the series was that it provided in-depth knowledge on EOD through practical exercises, taught participants how to conduct demolition of different types of ERW at the same time and also how to perform controlled demolitions in any archaeological or civilian residential site.

The training participants were from the Afghan Department of Mine Clearance, the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan, the Afghan Ministry of Interior, and the Tajik Ministry of Defence. The trainings were financially supported by the OSCE.

At the end of the training course, a completion ceremony was organised at the United States Embassy in Tajikistan, where certificates of completion were presented to all of the participants. The Afghan Defence Attaché, a Representative of the OSCE, the Chief Technical Advisor of the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre, the Director of Engi-

neering at the Tajikistan Ministry of Defence and US Embassy representatives all attended the ceremony.

UN Day 2014

The 24th October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948, marking the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter in 1945. The ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, officially brought the UN into being.

In Afghanistan, this year's commemorations were held at Kabul University's Faculty of Law. All UN agencies active in the country participated in an event organised by UNAMA, with MACCA playing a major role. Staff used a display and demonstrations to explain MACCA's crucial work coordinating mine clearance, mine risk education and victim assistance, to a highly receptive audience. During a ceremony at the end of the day, MACCA also received a warm appreciation from UNAMA's Strategic Communications Unit for its active participation in the event.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also published the following message to mark the day: "The United Nations is needed more than ever at this time of multiple crises. At this critical moment, let us reaffirm our commitment to empowering the marginalized and vulnerable. On United Nations Day, I call on Governments and individuals to work in common cause for the common good. "



Celebration of UN Day at Kabul University



Demonstration of Mine Action Services at UN Day Celebration



Participants Celebrating EOD Level II Training Completion

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 October 2014		Resurvey results up to end of October 2014	Current target as of end of October 2014		Hazards processed from April 2013 to end of October 2014		Remaining hazards at the end of October 2014		Progress at the end of October 2014 against current target	
	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Change	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area
	a	b	c	d	e	f (a+c)	g (b+d+e)	h	i	j	k	l (% of a & h)	m (% of b & i)
AP + (AP,AT,ERW mixed)	3,439	266.4	765	44.2	-1.6	4,204	309.0	1,343	66.8	2,861	242.2	31.95	21.61
AT + ERW	1,248	252.1	351	44.3	-11.4	1,599	284.9	497	55.0	1,102	229.8	31.08	19.32
BF	179	33.5	148	17.1	0.5	327	51.2	93	17.0	234	34.2	28.44	33.18
Total	4,866	551.9	1,264	105.5	-12.5	6,130	645.0	1,933	138.8	4,197	506.2	31.53	21.52

Contamination Status of Districts in Afghanistan

