



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



International Day of Peace

Highlighting the Impact of ERW resulting from the ongoing conflicts

On Thursday 25 September, the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), a project of the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS), celebrated the International Day of Peace at its headquarters in Kabul. The theme for the event was the impact of explosive remnants of war resulting from the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan.

This ceremony was attended by key members of Afghan civil society, school students, including students with visual and hearing impairment, and national media representatives.

Male and female students participated in a painting competition during the event. The aim was to highlight the impact of ERW that are left behind as a result of the ongoing conflict through the students' artistic skills. At the beginning of the ceremony, the students were provided with a brief introduction to the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), MACCA and the remaining challenge of mines and ERW facing Afghanistan.

The winners of the painting competition told the participants and jury that, through their painting, they wanted to show that "in spite of the fact that war and armed conflict has brought misery and disability to the country, peace is eager to embrace the people and country and have it prosper through its presence."

The students' paintings reflected how they viewed the challenge of mines and ERW, as well as the wider challenges facing the country and its people.

MACCA and UNMAS are working very hard with the mine action sector in Afghanistan. The main goal of the sector's joint efforts is to bring both physical and psychological peace and security for the people. As a result of these efforts, people will be able to live, work and travel without any kind of distress regarding the presence of mines and ERW. The existence of mines and ERW in Afghanistan continues to pose a serious threat to the lives of thousands of Afghans and results in an average of 39 casualties every month.



Best Painting of the Day



Mr. Sediq Rashid, MACCA Director, along with Mr Qudos Ziai, Operations R&D Manager, answer questions at a press conference for International Peace Day



Students and their teacher deciding what to draw and how to proceed



Mr M. Sediq Rashid awarding prizes to students.



The jury deliberates on the results of the painting competition.

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

Afghan Delegation Attend Explosive Ordnance Disposal Training in Tajikistan

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) sponsored explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) training in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, from the 17th to the 27th September 2014. Staff members from Afghanistan's Department of Mine Clearance (DMC), the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defence, as well as members of the Mine Action Programme of Tajikistan and Tajikistan's Ministry of Defence attended the training.

The main aim of the training was for participants to be able to better understand explosive ordnance disposal, to recognise different types of explosives, and to research and investigate explosives and safety measures.

The last day of the course was dedicated to a ceremony to award certificates to participants. The ceremony was attended by the U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan, the Afghan Military Attaché, a representative from OSCE, the Head of the Mine Action Programme of Tajikistan, the Commander of Firing Ranges and the Head of the Engineering Department at the Tajikistan Ministry of Defence.

The trainers appreciated the active participation and patience of the participants and congratulated them on their successful completion of the course. Participants in turn expressed their gratitude for the delivery of the course, the training methods and the comprehensive approach of the trainers. Participants also suggested areas for the improvement of upcoming programmes, which was appreciated by the trainers.



Participants attending Explosive ordnance Disposal Training in Tajikistan

Since Tajikistan's Ministry of Defence hosted the training, the first days were held in the engineering centre located 30 kilometres to the south of Dushanbe, where theoretical concepts were taught. Five days of the training were conducted in the military academy and firing range, which was located 20 kilometres away from the Central Demolition Site, located in Dushanbe.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (Level One) Training was conducted by three EOD experts from the US Army employing new techniques in accordance with international standards, with support from two Tajik interpreters. Training was conducted in six working groups, where team leaders explained explosive ordnance disposal (Level One). After the theoretical lessons, participants completed a written test, during which they had to identify different types of mines placed in various places.

The practical tests were conducted in the Ministry of Defence's military academy and firing range. All participants were given the opportunity to use their knowledge and skills to conduct actual explosions using electric charges while taking utmost safety precautions. After the practical tests and the exam, a strong sequential explosion was effected by trainers in cooperation with the participants at the Controlled Demolition Site (CDS), which the participants found interesting.

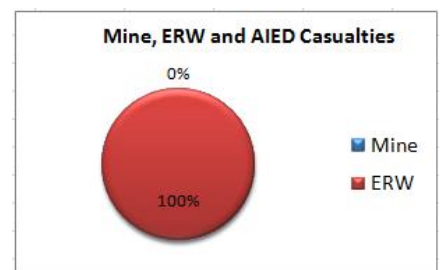
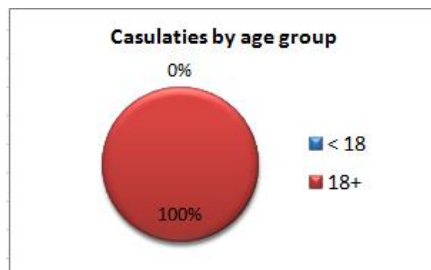
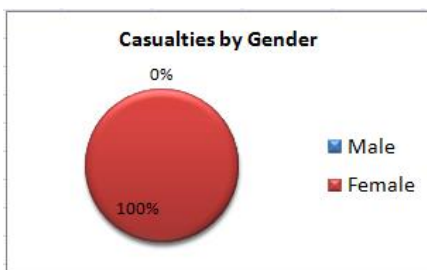
The ceremony was broadcast by a Tajik TV station. The Afghan delegation performed very well in this training. The trainers occasionally requested the cooperation of Afghan representatives and said that the presence of the Afghan delegation in the training proved very useful and helped them to convey the knowledge to the participants easily.



Participants on the field for practical exercises

CASUALTIES DURING SEPTEMBER 2014

During this month, 8 civilian casualties due to mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) were recorded in Afghanistan.



Inclusive Education Training in Hirat, September 2014

Inclusive education is one of the very effective ways to facilitate social inclusion for people with disabilities, particularly for children with disabilities. To this end, MACCA began working with Ministry of Education (MoE) on inclusive education back in 2007. Since then, significant achievements have been made, such as the integration of inclusive education to MoE's new strategic plan, the integration of victim assistance and disability awareness messages into the new national education curriculum. Also the establishment of an Inclusive Education Directorate within MoE's new structure was a good achievement. In addition more than 4,000 teachers in 750 schools in Kabul Province have been trained in inclusive education methods. A further 100 teachers have been trained as inclusive education master trainers in five additional provinces (Kabul, Nangarhar, Balkh, Laghman and Takhar). More than 3,000 children with disabilities and their parents have also attended inclusive education awareness sessions at 320 schools in Kabul.

Ensuring the Government of Afghanistan has the required inclusive education capacity in its schools is one of the primary objectives of MACCA and MoE to sustain these inclusive education activities. The MoE's new inclusive education master trainers in Kabul and throughout the provinces are intended to expand inclusive education to a larger number of schools throughout the country. UNMAS MACCA committed both technical and financial support to this project. By the end of December 2013, a total of 100 teachers had been trained in five provinces. Refresher training was also organised for 25 teachers of these teachers to learn about new developments in the inclusive education field.

MoE conducted a three-day refresher training session for 25 inclusive education master trainers in Hirat. The new master trainers shared the lessons they had learned and the challenges they faced during this programme with both the MoE in Hirat and a delegation from Kabul, including the Head of MoE's Inclusive Education Directorate, MACCA's VA/Disability Advisor, and representatives from the Department of Mine Clearance and the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority. The participants also visited the school for children with visual and hearing impairment in order to better understand inclusive education in practice. The visit was arranged by the Department of Education in Hirat and MACCA's Regional Office. The visitors learned how the children participated in the learning process just like other children using sign language. The new master trainers were very impressed and further motivated to work in the field of victim assistance and disability. They were overwhelmed by the fact that over 200 girls and boys with hearing impairment had the opportunity to attend both primary school and vocational training courses and seek knowledge just like other children.

Mr. Sarwary, the Deputy Head of the Department of Education in Hirat, said that his organisation was committed to fully supporting



Participants are visiting a school in Hirat

this project and would facilitate inclusive education activities in schools throughout Hirat. Addressing the participants during the training's opening ceremony; he encouraged all participants to work hard in the field of victim assistance and disability to achieve the Ministry's goal of "enrolling all children in mainstream schools".

Japan to donate USD 696,310 for humanitarian mine clearance in Afghanistan

The Embassy of Japan in Afghanistan announced funding for humanitarian mine clearance operations in the Northern and Central regions of Afghanistan. The official ceremony announcing this funding was hosted by HALO Trust Afghanistan, a Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) implementing partner, and was attended by H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Takahashi, the Ambassador of Japan to Afghanistan, and Dr. Farid Homayoun, HALO Trust Afghanistan's Country Director.

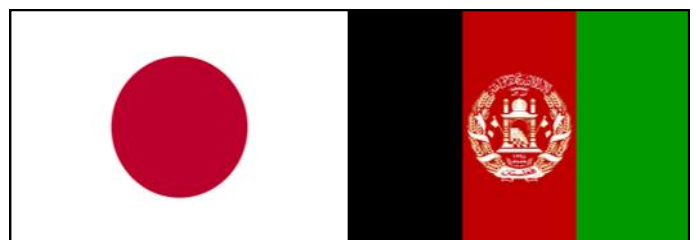
The Government of Japan has contributed \$ 1.73 million USD to the humanitarian clearance of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in Afghanistan last year. The continuation of this funding through the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects will allow HALO Trust to continue employing 108 trained deminers and to deploy four manual mine clearance teams to high-priority clearance tasks in communities that are in desperate need of mine clearance.

HALO Trust outlined the scope of their operations: "Each of the four teams consists of 27 deminers. The deminers will focus their efforts on 24 selected minefields in the provinces of Takhar,

Baghlan and Parwan. The teams will clear 758,403 square metres of contaminated land. All of the contaminated areas are agricultural or grazing land that has been inaccessible and abandoned by the local communities for decades due to presence of mines and ERW. Once the contaminated areas are cleared, these areas will be immediately put into productive use by the local communities."

Mr. Hiroshi Takahashi, Ambassador of Japan to Afghanistan, addressed the ceremony: "This project aims to provide a large number of young Afghans in rural communities with continuing honorable employment opportunities as deminers. I hope their work will help to mitigate the risk of mines and ERW and to improve the environment of the local community. Such projects contribute to the peace and stability of Afghanistan."

Japan has been assisting Afghanistan's nation-building efforts in various fields including infrastructure, security, health, culture, humanitarian assistance, agriculture and capacity development. The cumulative Japanese assistance to Afghanistan is around USD 5.4 billion since 2001. Japan has provided USD 122 million for 61 demining projects in this period.



We Thank The Government of Japan for their generous contributions to Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan!

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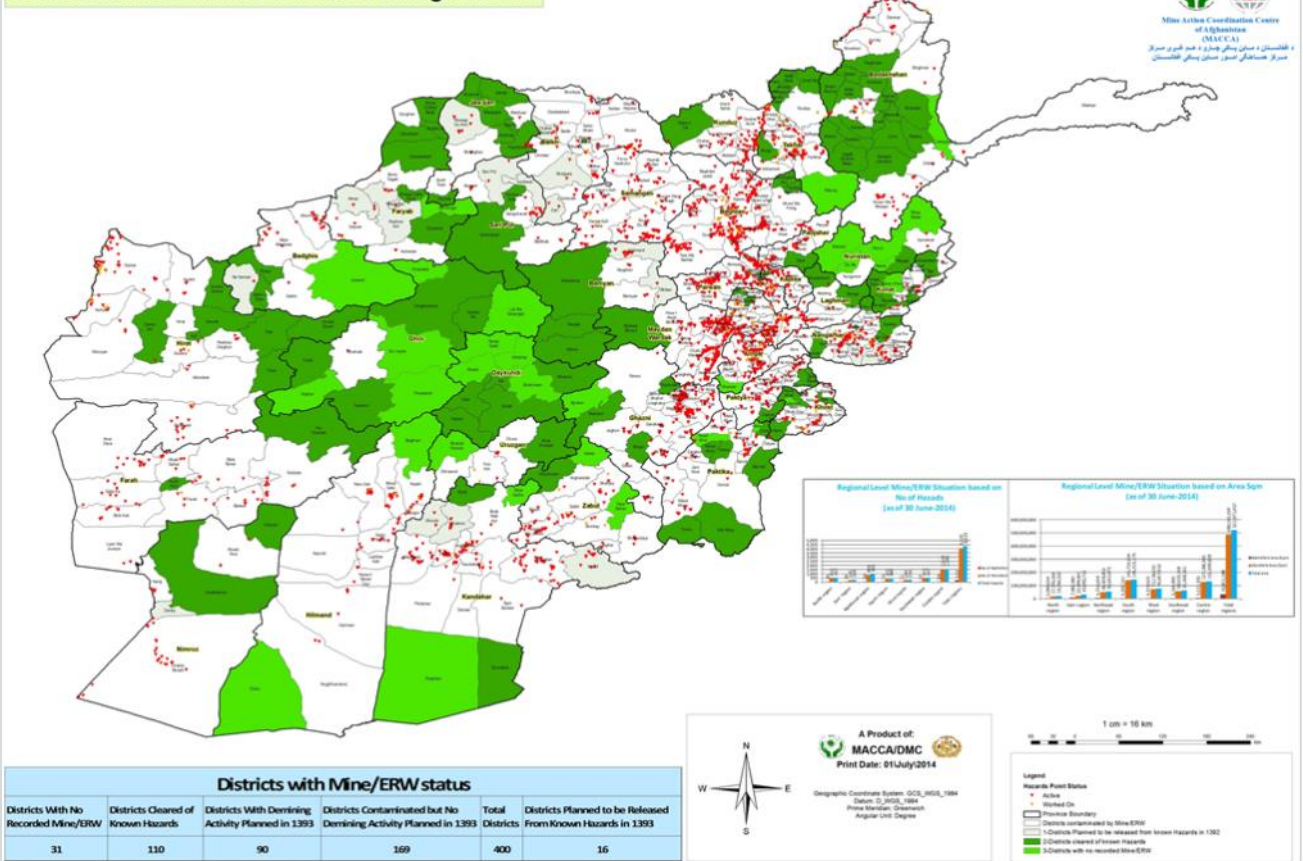
MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

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 September 2014		Resurvey results up to end of September 2014	Current target as of end of September 2014		Hazards processed from April 2013 to end of September 2014		Remaining hazards at the end of September 2014		Progress at the end of September 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	739	43.4	-1.6	4,178	308.2	1,274	62.9	2,904	245.3	30.49	20.40
AT + ERW	1,248	252.1	336	43.5	-12.0	1,584	283.6	482	52.4	1,102	231.2	30.43	18.47
BF	179	33.5	140	16.6	0.5	319	50.7	88	15.9	231	34.8	27.59	31.44
Total	4,866	551.9	1,215	103.5	-13.0	6,081	642.4	1,844	131.2	4,237	511.3	30.32	20.42

Contamination Status of Districts in Afghanistan



MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 1393 SO FAR

- * 7,964 anti-personnel mines, 258 anti-tank mines, and 111.443 ERW destroyed.
- * 64 communities cleared of known mines and ERW.
- * 107,689 women and girls, and 145,990 men and boys received Mine/ERW risk education throughout the country.
- * 543 people received victim assistance and disability activities including Disability awareness & advocacy, Physical Rehabilitation and socio-economical reintegration.

