

CHILDREN LEARN TO SPEAK OUT ON MINES THROUGH MINE RISK EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Pointing to a nearby field in Farza district, the principle of Bostan secondary school recalls, “Last year a number of our students were grazing animals and playing in that field. They found an object that intrigued them-without knowing what it was started playing with it. sadly it exploded-killing one and injuring two others. Fortunately, a few days ago a number of our other students saw something similar, but remembering the mine risk education classes they informed the school child protection officers and the object was safely destroyed. We are witnesses of a major change in students’ behaviors now they are receiving mine risk education.”

As part of transitioning mine action responsibility to national ownership, mine risk education was integrated into Ministry of Education in June 2007. 8 MACCA professional trainers have trained more than 130 child protection officers of MoE in Mine Risk Education and Victim Assistance since November 2007. These child protection officers then trained more than 16,000 teachers who are now training students in 9,000 schools all over the county.

Rafiullah and Subhanullah, who informed the child protection officers after seeing a suspicious object said: “We were playing football and our ball rolled away. When we went to pick up our ball, we saw a mine there. Remembering the advice of our MRE teacher, we informed the child protection officers. They called the mine action staff and they destroyed it.”



Mirbachacot secondary school students received MRE where ERW was found during the reconstruction of classes . May, 2010

Rohullah and Nawid who were injured in last year’s incident said they were grazing animals when one of their friends found an object and brought it to them: “It was a small object and to have fun we started to beat it with a stone to hear its sound. Even though it was a small object, when it exploded it made a big sound. our friend was killed on the spot and we were taken to hospital for treatment. Now we won’t pick even a pen from the ground.”

Jawed, whose brother Jamshid was killed last year in the incident says that he is now taking care of his other small brothers and sisters to not touch suspicious objects “As well as my brother a friend of mine was working in his grapeyard last year and found an object, he threw it away, and now he is disabled. I urge all families to take care of their children to not lose them as I lost my younger brother.”

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY PROGRAM MEMBERS TRAINED IN MINE RISK EDUCATION

In order to further embed mine action in national sustainable structures and expand mine action coordination, MACCA and DMC have reached out to the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development's National Solidarity Programme (MRRD/NSP)

Based on an agreement between MACCA/ DMC and the Head of NSP, all MRRD/NSP Focal Points will be provided with training on Mine Risk Education (MRE), disability awareness and data collection of casualties. In addition, the NSPs will help create follow-on development projects using the platform of Community Based Demining.

The Focal Points will train all implementing partners which will then train Community Development Councils (CDCs). These



representatives will monitor mine awareness activities, especially among communities affected by mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). MACCA will also provide MRE and disability advocacy materials to NSP Focal Points and Community Development Councils.

The project will be piloted in central areas between April and June and if the pilot is successful, activities will then be expanded throughout the country.

The first MRE training session was conducted from 3rd to 5th May where 23 NSP representatives from Kabul, Dai Kundi, Bamyán, Parwan, Paktika, Maidan Wardak, Kapisa and Panjshéer participated. The participants were then taken to OMAR Landmine Museum to see the displays of Anti-personnel & Anti-Tank mines as well as other Explosive Remnants of War (ERW).

Ghulam Farooq, the NSP Training officer said: "We have learned many things regarding the effect of mines on our lives and daily jobs and are thankful of MACCA for providing such important training and look forward to strengthening coordination. All local NSP implementing partners will be trained in mine action so then they can train the local NSP members".

MINE AND ERW INCIDENTS JANUARY– MAY 2010

Month	18 Years and Younger		Over 18 Years		Unknown Age/Gender	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Jan	33	3	22	1	0	59
Feb	11	14	13	3	1	42
March	56	5	21	0	0	82
April	14	0	4	0	0	18
May	7	0	4	0	0	11
Grand Total	121	22	64	4	1	213

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 Compact:

Land area contaminated by mines and ERW will be reduced by 70% by March 2011;

All stockpiled anti-personnel mines will be located and destroyed by March 2007.

DESTRUCTION OF ALL KNOWN STOCKPILES OF ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES

The Government of Afghanistan successfully fulfilled its Article 4 of Ottawa Treaty and Afghanistan Compact benchmark to destroy all known stockpiled anti-personnel landmines in its territory in October 2007.

KEYS TO MEETING THE BENCHMARKS FOR MINE ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN

- * Sustaining existing capacities
- * Expansion of Community - Based Demining
- * Programming through focused projects
- * Introduction of competitive tendering
- * Enhanced fundraising to ensure resources to meet benchmarks

CHALLENGES TOWARDS BENCHMARKS

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan must increase multilateral and bilateral funding to mine action to achieve the targets set by the Ottawa Treaty and the Afghanistan Compact. Essentially, funding needs to be coherent to enable effective delivery; this means funds must be received before the beginning of the year . If the funds are provided, the MAPA has the technical capability to achieve the targets.

MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY JANUARY - MAY 2010

- * 11,344 AP mines, 412 AT mines, and 383,844 ERW destroyed.
- * 65 communities cleared of mines and other explosive remnants of war.
- * 185,544 women and girls and 257,934 men and boys received MRE throughout the country.

EXPLANATION ON CHANGES TO BENCHMARK TABLE

Introduction:

In January 2006, when the Afghan Compact was signed, the baseline set of known hazard was 719 sq. km, therefore the target of clearing 70% of the hazard required a removal of 503 sq km. The benchmark table below shows that to date, 574 sq. km has now been cleared. This would mean the MAPA would have now exceeded the goal of 70% clearance, if the baseline had remained the same.

However, the baseline set at that time was in fact an incorrect picture of the overall hazard in the country. Much work has been done over the last few years to ensure that the national database presents an accurate picture of known hazard is included in this database. For a full explanation on these changes, please see p25-27 of the 1389 Integrated Operational Framework, available on www.macca.org.af. In short, this work has resulted in an increase in the baseline.

The current baseline and progress is shown in the benchmark table below. However, as people continue to return and resettle in Afghanistan, new hazard continues to be discovered. In addition, there is new hazard being laid by the insurgent forces in some parts of Southern Afghanistan, although not in traditional high-density mine belts. Therefore it is expected that the baseline will continue to change and the progress towards these goals may fluctuate as the challenges to meeting these goals increases.

AFGHANISTAN'S PROGRESS TOWARD MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS

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

Indicator	Adjusted Baseline Mar 2010	Remaining Contamination at 31 Mar 2010	Clearance Processed at 31 Mar 2010	Compact Target of 70% of Hazards	Progress toward Compact	Treaty Target of 100% of Hazards	Progress towards Treaty
Number of Hazards	11,736	6,684	5,052	8,215	61%	11,736	43%
Hazardous Area (sq. km)	1,231	657	574	862	67%	1,231	47%

THE MINE ACTION STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN

The strategy for mine action is based on the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's vision of a country free from landmines and ERW, where people and communities live in a safe environment conducive to national development, and where landmine and ERW survivors are fully integrated in the society and thus have their rights and needs recognized and fulfilled. To turn this vision into reality, the government has established benchmark obligations within its national development strategy, the Afghanistan Compact, which are in accordance with its obligations under the Ottawa Convention.

SUPPORT TO MINE ACTION NATIONAL CAPACITY

The Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) supported by the United Nations and the Government of Afghanistan through its Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)/Department of Mine Clearance (DMC) have formed a partnership within the MACCA offices to plan, coordinate and ensure the quality of all mine action activities in Afghanistan.

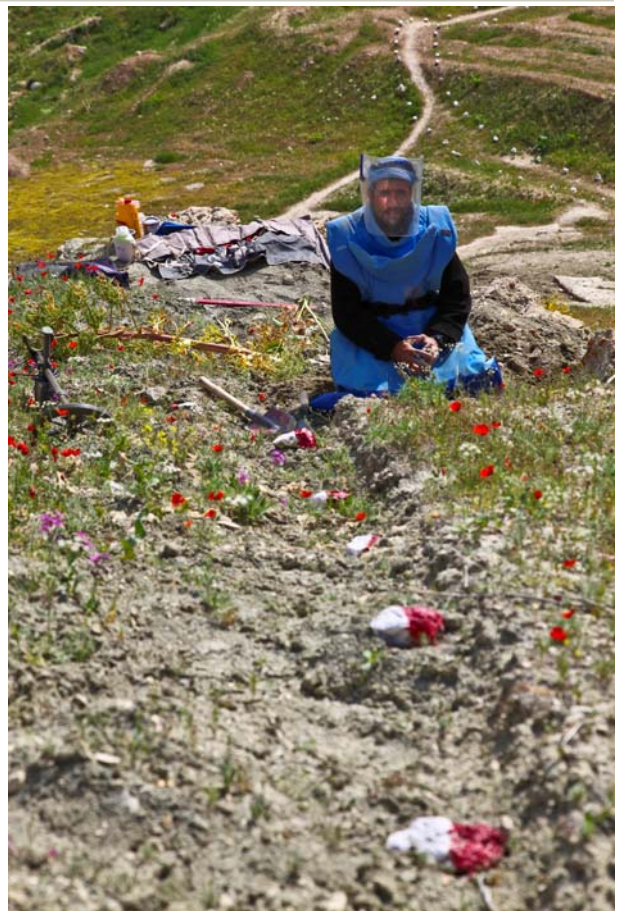


MDD teams returning from demining operation in Charasyab district / June 2009

MAPA AND MACCA SUMMARY

The concept of humanitarian mine action was developed in Afghanistan in 1988/9. Mine action encompasses all pillars of mine action: advocacy, demining (survey, marking and clearance), stockpile destruction, mine risk education (MRE), and victim assistance (VA). The programme is funded both bilaterally and through the UN Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)^[1].

Collectively known as the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), mine action implementers in Afghanistan form one of the largest mine action programmes in the world. Together, these agencies have a twenty year history of successfully delivering mine action in Afghanistan and have cleared over 15,000 hazard areas throughout the country. The MAPA is coordinated by the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), which is funded through a UN modality. The MACCA has sub-offices, known as Area Mine Action Centres (AMACs) in Herat, Jalalabad, Mazar, Kunduz, Gardez, and Kandahar.



Demining Operation in Samangan province

Photo by Jacob Simkin, April 2009

MAPA is supported by :

