



MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN (MAPA)

NEWSLETTER: NOVEMBER 2013



MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN DRAFTS ITS GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY

From 11th to 19th November 2013, the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP) delivered a workshop on Gender in Mine Action for MAPA's mid-level management at the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA). Prior to this workshop, the GMAP had conducted a baseline assessment in May 2013. The workshop was intended to facilitate in-depth discussions on the practical implementation of the assessment's findings. The workshop aimed to provide the participants with an overview of how to mainstream gender into all of the main areas of mine action, with a particular focus on developing a gender mainstreaming strategy for the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA).

The GMAP was first launched in 2006 by the Swiss Campaign to Ban Landmines to respond to the fact that landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) affect women, girls, boys and men in different ways and that mine action programmes often do not equally benefit females and males. Since June 2011, the GMAP is an independent association providing technical assistance, including training and capacity building, to mine action stakeholders.

Following this workshop, the GMAP held a two-day brainstorming session with around 40 senior managers of MAPA and government representatives to develop a gender mainstreaming strategy that will be adopted by all MAPA stakeholders. After a lengthy consultative process, the GMAP released a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for MAPA for 2014-2016. The entire process was financially supported by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

The strategy presents the common objectives that will guide the work of all MAPA stakeholders over the next three years. It aims to ensure that all those affected by landmines and ERW enjoy equal access to age and gender-sensitive assistance and services, that direct and indirect victims are fully integrated into society, that the mine action programme contributes to the adoption of safer practices, and that it creates an environment conducive to development.



"Sayed Salahudin, a Kabul Mosque's Imam, and a prominent preacher opening the workshop with a brief introduction to the teachings of the Quran on the rights and responsibilities of men and women in Islam."

The strategy underlines MAPA's commitment to meaningfully mainstream gender in all aspects of its activities. In accordance with this strategy, MAPA will ensure the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender-sensitive mine action projects are consistent with the specific needs, priorities and capabilities of women, girls, boys and men in mine/ERW affected communities throughout Afghanistan.

The strategy reaffirms the importance of effective partnerships with beneficiary communities and emphasises the need for

MAPA to collectively increase the impact of its mine action work for all stakeholders by delivering gender and age-appropriate activities and services. From January 2014 to December 2016, the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan and other stakeholders commit to focusing their resources to ensure that the strategy's objectives are achieved.

MACCA SHARES EXPERIENCE WITH COLOMBIA MINE ACTION

Mr. Mohammad Wakil, Chief of Staff at MACCA, was invited to participate in a two-day demining workshop held in Bogota, Colombia, on the 5th and 6th November 2013. On the first day of the workshop, he delivered a presentation on two issues. The first issue was related to how demining operations are carried out by civilian organisations in

Afghanistan. In the Colombian case, demining is currently undertaken by the military, and efforts are now underway to include civilian organisations in the demining process. Secondly, Mr. Wakil was asked to share MACCA's experience in producing a clearance plan for the Afghanistan's extension request. The Colombian programme had requested this presentation, as they will present their new plan to fulfil their extension request in Geneva in December this year.

The Organization of American States (OAS), which is mainly responsible for technical assistance, operational accreditation and quality assurance of demining operations in Colombia, asked Mr. Mohammad Wakil to present MACCA's quality management system (QMS) and planning processes. Mr. Wakil was also asked to assess the QMS of the OAS. On the 7th and 8th November, having assessed the QMS, Mr. Wakil presented the OAS with his findings and recommendations.

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CASE STUDY: EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR (ERW) INJURES TWO BOYS IN NORTH OF KABUL PROVINCE

Naser Ahmad explains what happened to him.

Naser Ahmad, "I was doing my school assignments when my younger brother Esmatullah came with a bullet in his hand and said, "I found this under the grapevines in the courtyard". I immediately stopped writing and was curious, looking at what Esmat had found. I noticed it was an unexploded ordnance, and we together decided to play with it. Telling no one else about it, I went to the washroom where I knew the pliers and hammer were kept. With the help of the pliers, I was able to remove its fuse. Then, I put a nail into the small hole on the bottom of it and started hammering it."

"It was then that my eyes and ears stopped working for a while, and when I was able to open my eyes and look at what had happened, I could only see blood everywhere. We both were shouting and crying, when my mother and other family members came and hugged us. After that, due to severe pain, I don't know what else took place."

"When I opened my eyes for the second time, I was in the hospital and noticed I didn't have my left hand anymore. There were some small injuries on the rest of my body. This made me very disappointed and my tears started falling. I turned to look at my brother; I noticed he had only a few minor injuries, which made me relieved."

Naser's father says, "When my wife went to the hospital to see her sons, she saw that Naser had lost his hand, which made her cry. Naser was asking his mom to stop crying." He further adds, "Naser told his mom, 'See? I still have my right hand, so I can still go to school and write. It's okay.'"

Naser's father appreciated the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan's efforts, and added, "Mine/ERW risk education should be boosted. It should be regular and not just a once-off. Annual campaigns should take place covering all villages of the country so that such incidents do not happen again." He went on, "It's good that my sons are both alive, although looking at Naser's hand upsets me very much, but I don't want such sorrow for other vulnerable Afghans." He further added, "It is not easy to face such situations, I couldn't even imagine this happening to us, but now I know better how broad this mine/ERW problem is in our country and how dangerous it can be."



Caption: Naser (left) with his brother Esmatullah at their home.

This incident took place on 31st October 2013 at approximately 3:00 pm, when an unexploded anti-aircraft exploded in a house in Qala-e-Yusuf village in Qarabagh district. The interview was conducted by Noorullah Elham, Senior Public Information Officer at the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan.

MACCA AT THE OSCE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)'s Regional Conference was conducted in Almaty, Kazakhstan from 19th to 21st November 2013. The conference was hosted by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Kazakhstan and co-organised by the OSCE and the International Trust Fund (ITF). The conference is part of the OSCE's efforts to

provide mechanisms to encourage technical cooperation among the participating states in Central Asia to address the concerns and challenges stemming from explosive hazards .

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan support the OSCE's regional coordination and cooperation mechanism. As part of this support, in October 2013, the Presidents of Afghanistan and Tajikistan signed a memorandum of understanding on cross-border demining. MACCA experts also briefed the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre on quality management standards and reviewed the Tajikistan Mine Action Standards.

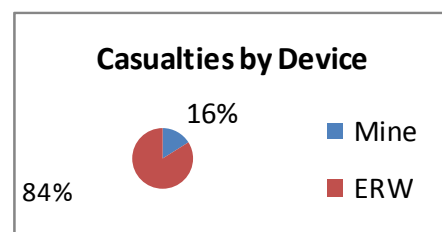
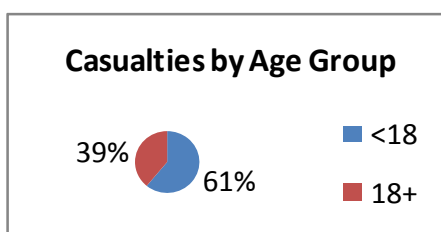
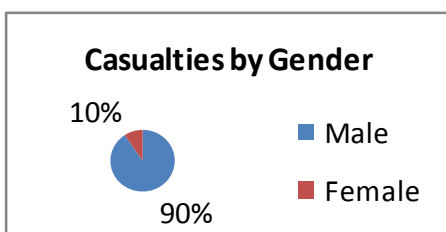
Afghanistan has regularly attended these conferences since 2009. This year, Afghanistan's delegation to the conference included Mr. Habib Khan Zazai, Capacity Support Project Manager from MACCA, Mr. Mohammad Qasim Samandary, Chief of Analysis and Evaluation at the Department of Mine Clearance (DMC), and Mr. Mohammad Hamed Wardak, EOD Manager also at DMC.

Mr. Zazai on behalf of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) presented the core functions of Quality Management and Information Management (QM/IM). Both QM and IM systems and mechanisms for their application in MAPA were much appreciated by participants, as Afghanistan proved almost all those theories and academic researched points on QM and IM presented by Cranfield University and GICHD.

"In conclusion, it was found that both QM and IM systems in MAPA are on the right track and met the international requirements, but it is not the end of our destination. We will go ahead for further improvement & development," said Mr. Zazai.

CASUALTIES DURING NOVEMBER 2013

During this month, 31 civilian casualties due to Mine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) were recorded in Afghanistan.



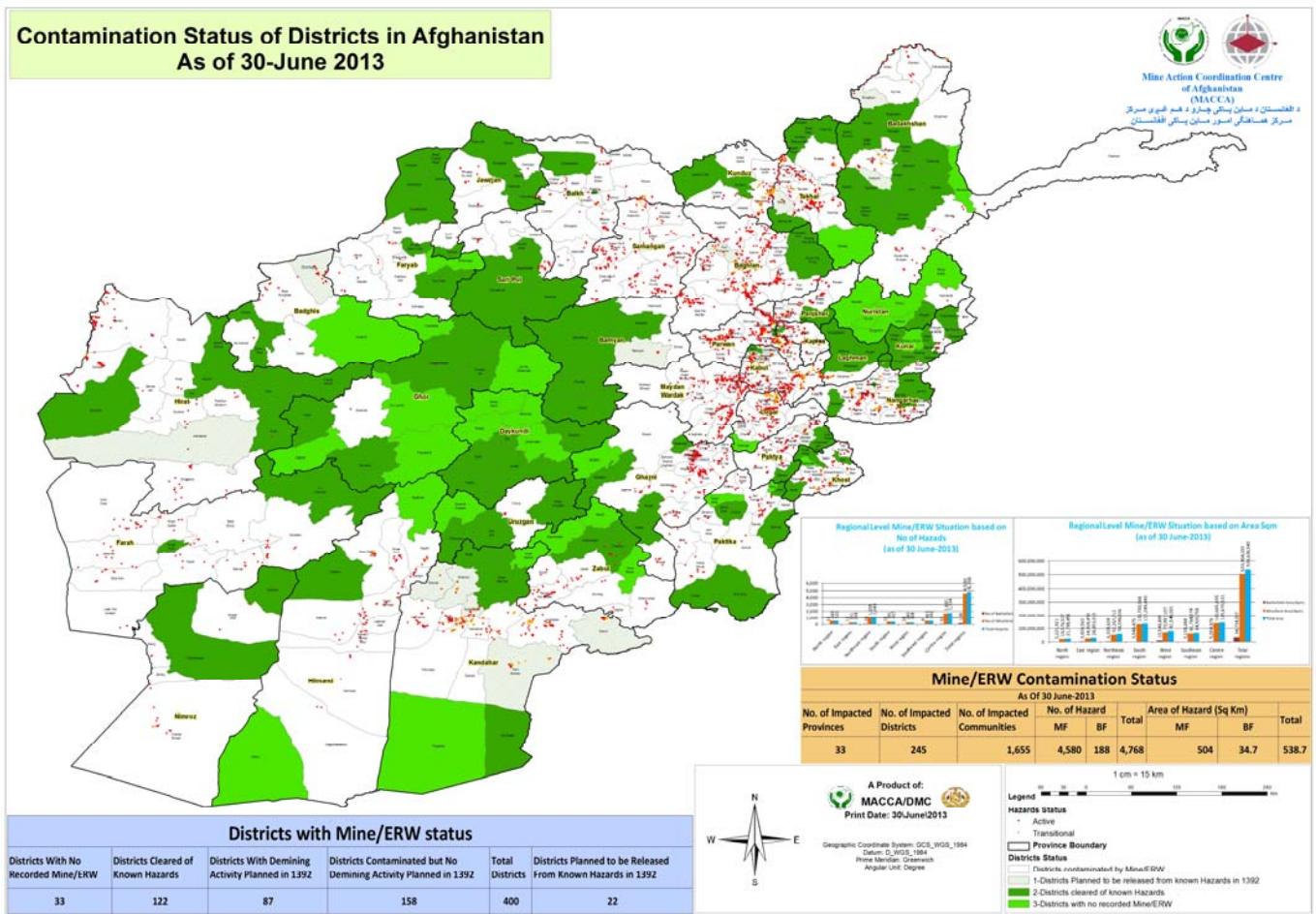
MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

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		Previously unreported hazards, up to end of November 2013		Resurvey results up to end of Nov 2013	Current target as of end of November 2013		Hazards processed from April to end Nov 2013		Remaining hazards at the end of November 2013		Progress at the end of Nov 2013 against current target	
	Hazards <i>a</i>	Area <i>b</i>	Hazards <i>c</i>	Area <i>d</i>	Change <i>e</i>	Hazards <i>f (a+c)</i>	Area <i>g (b+d+e)</i>	Hazards <i>h</i>	Area <i>i</i>	Hazards <i>j</i>	Area <i>k</i>	Hazards <i>l (% of a & h)</i>	Area <i>m (% of b & i)</i>
AP + (AP,AT,ERW mixed)	3,439	266.4	371	15.4	-1.4	3,810	280.4	723	33.7	3,087	246.7	18.98	12.02
AT + ERW	1,248	252.1	153	14.4	-3.6	1,401	262.9	258	26.6	1,143	236.4	18.42	10.10
BF	179	33.5	75	8.3	-0.1	254	41.8	48	7.5	206	34.3	18.90	17.93
Total	4,866	551.9	599	38.2	-5.1	5,465	585.0	1,029	67.7	4,436	517.3	18.83	11.58

Contamination Status of Districts in Afghanistan As of 30-June 2013



MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 1392 SO FAR

- * 16,017 anti-personnel mines, 551 anti-tank mines, and 532,626 ERW destroyed.
- * 211 communities cleared of known mines and ERW.
- * 203,600 women and girls, and 237,531 men and boys received Mine/ERW risk education throughout the country.

