



MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN



MAPA NEWSLETTER



MAPA

WORKING TO MAKE AFGHANISTAN MINE-FREE

MAPA STAKEHOLDERS MEET IN GENEVA TO DISCUSS ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF THE PROGRAMME

The 2019 Donor and Implementing Partners Coordination Workshop was the fifth annual workshop financed by US Department of State's Bureau of Political and Military Affairs. Facilitated by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, this year's workshop was held in Geneva for the 3rd time in a row. The workshop was hosted by the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) of the State Ministry for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs and was participated by H.E. Najib Aqa Fahim State Minister for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, representatives of donor countries, Directors of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) Implementing Partners, Director and senior managers of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Director of ACBAR and representatives of civil society. The aim of this international gathering was to mobilize resources in support of the MAPA and the raise its profile as well as to draw attention of the stakeholders, in particular donors to the challenges of landmines and explosive remnants of war in Afghanistan.

In this workshop, the DMAC and implementing partners presented their achievements and briefed participants about the MAPA's future plans. At the beginning of the workshop a 7.5-minute documentary was played which highlighted 30th years of painstaking mine action in Afghanistan and its impact on the country's development and the lives of the ordinary Afghans. The video was produced by DMAC with support from the United Nations Mine Action Service and can be accessed using the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-TfZuD2nzk&fbclid=IwAR2EaWLG35ejlliU1th8dJDbcj-nMYo3dJdnahSiXJAMdiIMIGPYhofU7k>

On the margins of the donor workshop, H.E. Najib Aqa Fahim, State Minister for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs met with H.E. Ambassador Walter Stevens Head of the EU Delegation to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. As part of its humanitarian efforts, the European Commission contributed substantially to the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) between 1995 and 2012.

However, EU funding for mine action in Afghanistan has stopped since 2013. The meeting aimed to explore whether the European Union would be willing to consider re-instating its support for mine action in Afghanistan. The importance of mine action as a national priority and its links to the wider development sector in the country was explained by H.E Minister Fahim. Mr. Stevens stated that he will raise the issue with headquarters of the EU in Brussels.

THE UNITED KINGDOM COMMITS TO RID DEADLY MINES IN AFGHANISTAN



On 12th February 2019, H.E. Mr. Najib Aqa Fahim, State Minister for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs met with Mr. Pete Vowles of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) at the organization's headquarters in London.

Mr. Vowles is the DFID Director for Asia, Caribbean and Overseas Territories and leads a £1.2bn bilateral aid portfolio to deliver the British government's development and national security objectives across Asia. Part of the discussions in the meeting was on mine action. DFID recently allocated £20 million for MAPA through the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) for Assistance in Mine Action which will run until March 2020. This generous contribution makes DFID the second largest donor to MAPA. In the meeting, Mr. Vowles re-iterated British Government's commitment to Afghanistan and the humanitarian sector in the country.

DMAC PARTICIPATED IN THE TWENTY SECOND INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF MINE ACTION NATIONAL DIRECTORS AND UN ADVISORS



The Twenty Second International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and UN Advisors was held in Geneva, Switzerland from 5 to 8 February 2019. International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and UN Advisors is the annual meeting where mine action stakeholders meet to discuss_

emerging issues, and exchange best practices and lessons learned. This year the event was marked under the slogan 'Step up for Mine Action'.

Mr. Mohammad Shafiq Yosufi, DMAC Director participated in this meeting to represent the MAPA and the Government of the I.R of Afghanistan. Mr. Yosufi took part in all the relevant plenary sessions of this year's NDM and briefed participants about the progress MAPA has made and the challenges it faces. Mr. Yosufi also chaired some of the relevant side events and provided presentations on some of the topics discussed. DMAC also met bilaterally with officials from the GICHD, Landmine Monitor, DFID, ICBL, US PM/WRA and UNMAS. The slogan for 22nd NDM was "Step up for Mine Action".

DMAC AND UNMAS SENIOR MANAGERS MEET IN NEW DELHI TO EVALUATE PROGRESS MADE POST-TRANSITION



The second post-transfer retreat workshop was held in New Delhi India from 13 to 16 January 2019. The workshop was facilitated by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and was participated by the top management of both DMAC and UNMAS. The aim of this workshop was to evaluate DMAC's progress since transition to National Ownership and to measure progress made after the first retreat in Bamyán six months prior to this workshop. In the 4-day long workshop, discussions were held on various priorities listed below;

- Second round of DMAC's Maturity Assessment: The Second Maturity Assessment will aim to evaluate the progress made since the first Assessment which took place in October 2017 by UNMAS consultants. The second assessment is planned to take place during the month of July 2019 with the help of a third-party firm
- Improve data collection on mine, ERW and IM civilian casualties

- Development of 1398/2019 Operational Workplan
- Enhance the MAPA capacity to implement digital data collection by 2020 (1399)
- Establish DMAC and MAPA Risk Register and Risk Management Strategy
- Develop the MAPA Liability Policy
- Engage with Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) and COMAC project for Civilian Casualties data collection
- Establish Deminer database for the MAPA
- Review DMAC structure and discuss the existing and new positions for further effectiveness.

At the end of the workshop, the existing workplan was updated based on discussions held and clear directions were identified both for DMAC and UNMAS in helping DMAC to achieve its objectives. A decision was also made to organize a strategic workshop every six months to

It was also decided to organize similar strategic workshops every six months to discuss priorities and evaluate achievements and progress made on the set action points. Such strategic planning workshops are useful in identifying the required resources for DMAC to achieve its objectives as the programme manager of the MAPA.

DMAC PARTICIPATED AT THE INTERNATIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON HUMANITARIAN MINE ACTION ORGANIZED BY ICRC AND IRANIAN MINE ACTION CENTRE IN TEHRAN

DMAC director attended a three-day “International Roundtable on humanitarian Mine Action, Challenges and Best Practices” which was jointly organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Iranian Mine Action Centre in March 2019.

This provided DMAC an opportunity to meet and share experience with representatives from other mine action programmes and organizations which were represented in the event. Some of the organization and countries who attended the event included UNMAS, UNICEF, ICRC, Iraq, Croatia, Armenia, Oman, China, Cambodia and Pakistan. The topic discussed in the roundtable focused on three area;

- Innovation and new technology for mine action
- Public awareness and specialized training for mine action
- National management/ coordination and standards for mine action.



At the margins of the event, DMAC Director met with representatives of ICRC and the Iranian Red Crescent Society. The Iranian Red Crescent Society provides mine risk education for Afghan returnees in Dougharoun. Based on the outcome of the discussions in Tehran, later DMAC head of mine risk education visited the transition center in Dougharoun where mine risk education is being provided to Afghan returnees by the Iranian Red Crescent Society with financial support from the International Committee of Red Cross. The aim of this visit was to simulate the methods and materials of MRE based on the needs of Afghan returnees.

THE ROYAL NORWEGIAN EMBASSY IN KABUL MARKS THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF MINE BAN TREATY'S ENTRY INTO FORCE



To mark the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of the Mine Ban Treaty, H.E. Mr. Kjell Tormod Pettersen, Norwegian Ambassador to Afghanistan hosted a reception at the Norwegian Embassy in Kabul. The event which was held on 20th of March 2019 was participated by H.E. Mr. Najib Aqa Fahim, State Minister for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, Ambassadors and representatives of various donor countries including Canada, the UK, France, the Netherlands, NATO's senior civilian representative to Afghanistan, directors of the MAPA Implementing Partners, UNMAS and representatives from the wider mine action community in Afghanistan. As one of the largest donors to global mine action, Norway took over the presidency of the Mine Ban Convention from Afghanistan in November last year.

DMAC, UNMAS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS CONDUCT A THREE-DAY OPERATIONAL PLANNING WORKSHOP TO IDENTIFY MAPA PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD



“DMAC with support from UNMAS conducted a 3-day planning and operation workshop during 24 to 26 February 2019 in Kabul Star Hotel. The aim of the workshop was to identify priorities for the MAPA in a consultative and transparent manner for the development of the MAPA 1398 annual operation work plan. The workshop was participated by representatives of DMAC, the regional offices, mine action humanitarian organizations, commercial companies and the UNMAS. During the workshop the following points were discussed:

1. Humanitarian principles
2. UNMAS Strategic Plan 2019-2023
3. Analysis of civilian casualties
4. Current mine action coverage based on SIGAR categories
5. The current approach, challenges and proposed approach for:
 - o Planning and priority setting
 - o External & Internal QA/QC
 - o Information management
 - o Mine/ERW Risk Education
 - o Victim Assistance
 - o Gender & Diversity Mainstreaming
6. Afghanistan national priority programme and frameworks.

“Part of the workshop involved open discussions and group work on improving the processes and procedures. As a result of the workshop, the following priority areas were identified for DMAC and IPs to focus on during 1398:

- Reduce civilian casualties
- Build the capacity of mine action to respond to the emerging problem of abandoned improvised mine (AIM)
- Improve the quality management system
- Establish a sustainable civilian data collection
- Conduct a national survey to identify the scope of new contamination
- Establish a stand-alone research and development cell
- Establish deminers database to collect all records of deminers trained by all IPs
- Finalize liability policy for further use
- Search for new survey tools and its application in the programme
- Seek for proper utilization of Mine Detection Dogs (MDD)
- Functionalize the centre of excellence.
- Meanwhile, some activities were identified for each of the departments which are included in the MAPA annual operation work plan for 1398.

MAPA SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOPS AMAS FOR CLEARANCE OF ABANDONED IMPROVISED MINES (AIM)

The Afghanistan Mine Action Standard (AMAS) # 06.10 for clearance of areas contaminated with anti-personnel mines of improvised nature was finalized and shared with the demining organizations and key stakeholders of DMAC. This chapter of AMAS was developed in consultation with demining organizations and UNMAS global technical advisor. The standard will be a technical reference for the engagement of the MAPA in the clearance of confirmed or suspected AIM contaminated areas and can be used by the demining organizations to develop their SOPs in order to ensure that AIM contaminated areas are cleared safely, effectively, and efficiently without compromising their neutrality and impartiality. The standard will also ensure that all AIM clearance activity is conducted solely for humanitarian purpose.

NEW MINE RISK EDUCATION MATERIALS FOCUS ON CHANGING BEHAVIOURS

The Danish Demining Group (DDG), in coordination with the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) conducted Baseline and Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) surveys in 2017 with the report completed in March 2018. Following the recommendations based on the findings of the KAP survey and DDG Global Risk Education SOP 9 requirements, under the UNOPS project, DDG in close coordination with DMAC and MAPA IPs developed the new Risk Education material “children flip charts” tailored for children in order to increase the quality and efficiency of the Mine/ERW Risk Education intervention and consequently address the increase in casualty numbers among children which was observed in recent years. DDG produced the digitalized version of the flip charts in 2018 and the final set of slides was presented and approved for piloting by DMAC and Risk Education TWG in August 2018.



Do not touch, do not go and report

The children’s materials package is a story with incorporated Mine/ERW RE messages (Do not touch, Do not go, Report), includes the example of safe and unsafe behavior and consequences of it, including the impact of the ERW accident on individual, family and society. The main purpose of the story is not only to raise mine/ERW awareness, but also to focus on changing behavior. DDG held a one-day workshop for DMAC and RE TWG in March 2019 on the delivery of the children flip charts which will be used by risk education teams.



DMAC CONVENES AN INFORMATION SESSION ON MAPA ACTIVITIES TO THE NEWLY RECRUITED PROVINCIAL DIRECTORS OF ANDMA

On 24 February 2019, the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) provided a presentation on the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) and DMAC functions, to the newly recruited provincial directors of ANDMA.



The information session was held during the three-day induction workshop for ANDMA provincial directors in Kabul. ANDMA provincial directors were briefed about the history of the MAPA, the functions of DMAC, its achievements, challenges and the expected role of ANDMA provincial directors in support of MAPA. The session was perceived useful by the participants. ANDMA directors expressed their willingness to support mine action activities in their respective provinces.

DMAC STAFF ATTEND A TRAINING ON GRANTS MANAGEMENT, REPORT & PROPOSAL WRITING AND GENDER AND DIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING



The Gender and Diversity unit of the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) with financial and technical support from the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) organized a four-day long training on “Grants Management, Proposal and Report writing, Project Management and Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming in February this year at UNOCA compound, Kabul. The training aimed to enhance capacity of the participants by enabling their engagement in all phases of the project management and in mainstreaming gender and diversity in their work. A total of 25 participants from DMAC, MAPA IPs and UNMAS participated in the training. The training was very useful and participants suggested to have similar and more in-depth trainings on the same topics in the future.

DMAC RELEASED POST-DEMINEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR 1397/2018



DMAC conducted Post Demining Impact Assessment (PDIA) for 1397/2018 on 56 cleared hazardous areas in 36 communities, across 26 districts of 10 provinces of Afghanistan during the month of June-September 2018. PDIA findings demonstrate that mine action operations and services provided safe access for the locals and paved the way for the implementation of development and infrastructure projects in all the cleared areas and communities. Approximately 90 percent of the cleared lands used by the communities for agricultural, housing, animal grazing and other socio-economic activities, indicate that mine action activities have brought positive changes in the lives of communities and 97% of beneficiaries interviewed in the targeted communities expressed their satisfaction with mine action activities.

PDIA evaluates the impact of mine action on the livelihoods of communities through collecting quantitative data on the use of land six months to one year after a minefield or battlefield is cleared of mines and ERW.

The objective of PDIA is to measure the immediate to medium-term humanitarian and socio-economic impact of mine action activities.

PDIA assesses whether humanitarian demining operations have achieved their objective and whether the cleared land is used by the beneficiaries as intended. PDIA also assesses the accuracy of the information upon which demining operations were prioritized and therefore, helps to improve future planning processes.

PDIA was financially supported by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) through ITF- Enhancing Human Security.

