



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan  
The Office of the State Minister for  
Disaster Management and Humanitarian



د افغانستان اسلامي جمهوري دولت  
پېښو ته درسيډوپه چارو کې د دولت وزير دفتر



اداره ملی آمادگی مبارزه باحوادث  
Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority  
ریاست انسجام و هماهنگی تطهیر ماین  
Directorate of Mine Action Coordination

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## Press Release on the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

*Kabul – Afghanistan, 4 April 2020*

The unprecedented increase in the number of civilian casualties as a result of victim-operated IEDs is a cause for concern. Approximately 120 Afghan civilians lose their lives and limbs as a result of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) including victim-operated IEDs. Data suggests that more than 60% of these casualties are caused by victim-operated IEDs.

In Afghanistan and many other countries around the world, particularly those affected by landmines, 4<sup>th</sup> of April is observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. But this year the looming health crisis posed by COVID-19 did not allow the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) to celebrate the Mine Action Day.

Despite the tremendous challenges faced by the programme, such as lack of access to some areas in the country as well as funding shortfall, the MAPA was able clear 56 square kilometers of contaminated land in the last 11 months. The increasing number of civilian casualties coupled with the country's treaty obligation towards the international community highlights the need for the continuation of this humanitarian programme which is almost entirely reliant on international donors. The Directorate of Mine of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) of the State Ministry for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs is grateful for the continued support from our donors and implementing partners without whom a mine-free Afghanistan may not be possible.