



DMAC representation at 23rd International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and UN Advisers

The 23rd International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and UN Advisers (NDM-UN23) was held from 11 to 14 February 2020 at the United Nations Office in Geneva. The discussions were guided by the theme "*Mine Action for People and Planet: Solutions, Commitments and Action.*"

H.E. Dr. Nasir Ahmad Andisha, Afghan Ambassador and Permanent Representative to UNOG chaired the plenary session #six focusing on MAPA's main activities and achievements.

DMAC director Mr. Mohammad Shafiq Yosufi, chaired a side event on issues regarding Survey, Clearance and Risk Education of Improvised Mines - Challenges, Solutions and Best Practices. The increasing use of improvised mines in Afghanistan poses a serious threat to the safety and security of civilians in the country. An international

response to improvised mines requires the attention and commitment of a variety of stakeholders from governments, donor communities, operational and other specialized agencies, research organizations and advocacy groups. The global challenge of improvised mines was discussed among the participants where they shared their experience and ideas with each other.

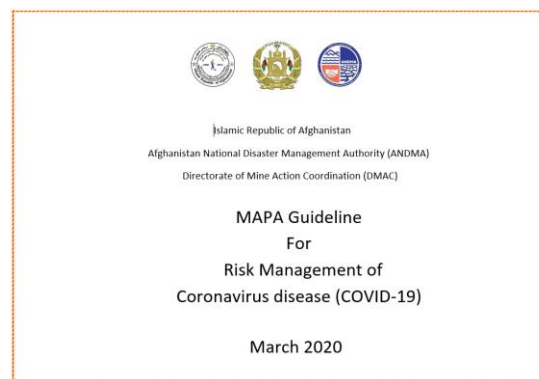
Mr. Yosufi also facilitated the side event on Risk education on the Oslo Action Plan. Topics including IED risk education, digital EORE technologies, EORE impact assessment and integration of EORE with broader protection, development and education efforts were discussed during this side event.

COVID-19 Risk Management Guideline released to all MAPA IPs

DMAC developed and released a guideline to all MAPA IPs in March outlining the various potential risk levels and measures recommended to be taken by IPs.

In the guideline, MAPA IPs were also asked to develop their own policies and procedures to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in line with the

context of their teams and areas of operation. A number of measures were recommended to be taken by IPs to ensure safety and protection of its staff. These precautionary measures included; at least 2 meters of spacing between individuals working in offices and base camps, provision of sanitizers and hand wash and avoiding or limiting the number face to face meetings. A Similar work regime was developed internally for DMAC staff to ensure the risk is minimized. DMAC continues to operate based on a schedule which divides staff to work both from home and office with extra safety measures.



H.E. President Ghani and H.E. First Lady commend MAPA female demining team for their hard work



Following the news that the MAPA female demining team was voted second in the Arms Control Association's 2019 Arms Control Person(s) of the Year Award, in January 2020, H.E. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and

H.E. First Lady Rula Ghani celebrated the achievements of Afghanistan's first female demining team at an event hosted by the Office of the First Lady of Afghanistan. The event which was aimed at recognizing contributions made by the MAPA female demining team to a safer Afghanistan, was participated by Deputy Minister of Defense, Deputy Governor of Bamyán Province, MPs, and representatives of DMAC, UNMAS and DDG. H.E. the First Lady complimented the female demining for their achievements in disproving the social stereotypes associated with women in Afghanistan.

MAPA celebrates International Women's Day

The International Women's Day was celebrated at DMAC on 8th March 2020 under the theme "I am Generation Equality; Realizing Women's Rights". The event brought together around 50 participants from different Government and Non-Governmental organization, including DAFA, AABRAR, ATC, OMAR, DDG, HI, HALO, MDC, DAO, AAR-Japan, MCPA, UNMAS, and ANDMA. In recognition of the increasingly important role played by women in the mine action sector, the event celebrated the achievements made by the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), particularly in mainstreaming gender and diversity as one of the four goals of the National Mine Action Strategic Plan (NMA SP).

DMAC acknowledges that the goal of a mine-free Afghanistan may not be easy to achieve without the participation of women as half of the country's population and citizens.



DMAC released Mine Action Livelihood Survey Report for 1398/2019

Mine Action Livelihood Survey is conducted to evaluate the impact of demining projects on local communities. The 1398/2019 livelihood survey was conducted in September 2019 in 12 communities covering 4 districts of Kapisa province (Mahmudi Raqi, Koh Band, Hisa-i-Awali Kohistan and Nijrab). This survey mainly focused on the impact of demining activities on peoples' lives, as well as the implementation of development projects in cleared areas, recognizing demining priorities based on peoples' demands and ensuring the quality of demining operations.

The survey findings indicate that mine action activities had a significant impact on the visited communities. Cleared land is now being used for agriculture, grazing animals and building houses as well as other public facilities. As a result of clearance operations considerable areas of land has become available for the communities to be used for productive use.

The cleared areas are directly benefiting 2,396 families in the visited communities. The mine action livelihoods survey was funded 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.

The Mine Action Livelihood Survey for 1398/2019 can be found on DMAC website using the following link;

<http://dmac.gov.af/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/MINE-ACTION-LIVELIHOOD-SURVEY-Report-1398-2019.pdf>



DMAC released the fourth version of MAPA Annual work plan for 1398

“The first version of MAPA annual operation work plan for the year 1398 (March 2019-April 2020) was released in April 2019. The document has previously been shared with all the stakeholders of the programme and can be accessed in the DMAC website as well. The work plan consists of four main chapters. Chapter one (overview) covers the remaining contamination as of beginning of 1398, analysis of civilian casualties, the programme funding situation and an overview of all mine action related conventions. Chapter two list activities related to all the pillars of mine action and main functions of DMAC such as programme management and advocacy, planning and prioritization external relations, survey, clearance, explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), victim assistance, quality management, information

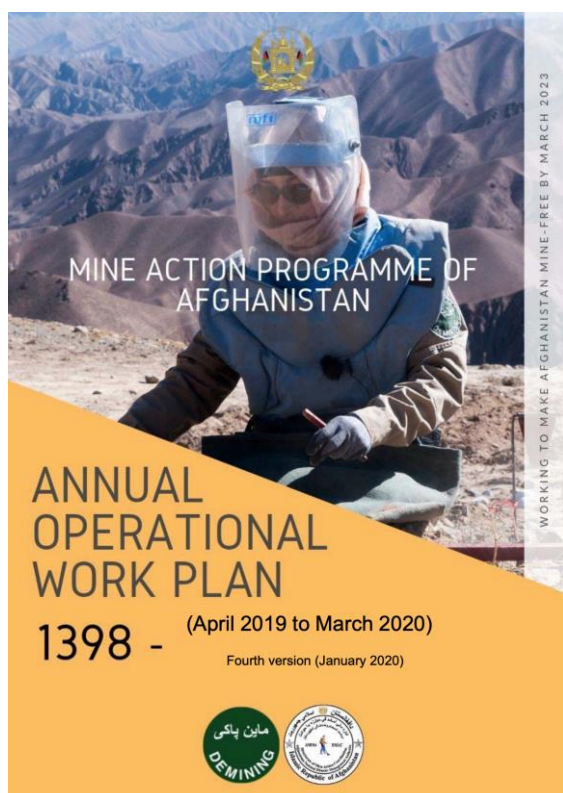
management, gender and diversity mainstreaming, and research and development. The planned activities under each of the stated functions are listed with clear deadline which will be tracked on quarterly basis to monitor progress. The last two chapters cover roles and responsibilities of different departments and individuals and the risks associated with the programme as well as risk mitigating factors.

As per set procedure this document has been recently updated and its fourth and last version released during Feb 2019 which reflects all changes and updates as of end of third quarter 1398 (December 2019). In fourth version, the readers can find the update on the progress of activities planned by different departments of DMAC in

chapter two and the reason if any of these activities are not yet implemented.

Meanwhile, the update project list in terms of their status (operational, completed, planned and open) are also available for the current year. The document has been shared with the IPs via email and can be accessed on DMAC website using the following link;

<http://dmac.gov.af/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/MAPA-1398-Annual-Operation-Work-Plan-Fourth-version-Jan-2020.pdf>



GICHD Consultant examines MAPA land release practices

Ms. Helen Gray, Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) technical consultant came to Afghanistan during the 2nd Week of March 2020 to ***"conduct case studies of current MAPA land release practices and to seek practical options to further improve the process"***. This was follow-up visit of a mission by GICHD last year in which conducted a general assessment of the MAPA. During her week long mission, Ms. Gray met separately with different departments of DMAC, UNMAS, NPA, and implementing partners (IPs). The meeting involved queries on key issues on land release experience of the MAPA.

Part of the mission involved field visits to some cleared minefields and newly surveyed hazards around Balkh province. Ms. Gray conducted interviews with team command groups regarding the land release implementation process and the challenges they face in the field. The outcome of the land release case study containing the recommendation and action plan will be shared with DMAC in the near future.



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