

Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA)

NEWSLETTER



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The International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action was marked in Kabul

The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) together with MAPA implementing partners celebrated the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action in Kabul on 4th of April 2021. The event was held in hybrid form (both in-person and virtual) at Kabul Star Hotel from 10:00 – 12:00pm. This high-profile event was attended by high-level representatives from the government authorities, UN and donor embassies in Kabul including H.E. Ghulam Bahuaddin Jailani, State Minister for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, H.E. Sabri Andar, Deputy Minister of Coordination and Programme, Ministry of Martyrs and Disability Affairs, Mr. Ian McCary, Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) of the Embassy of United States, Mr. Andy McCoubrey, Development Director at Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO) and Ms. Fiona Frazier, Head of Human Rights UNAMA/OHCHR.

H.E. Jailani, State Minister for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs thanked all donors and stated that the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) with financial support from donor countries has cleared around 3200 square kilometers of contaminated land from explosive ordnance. Around 1600 square kilometer area still remains contaminated with EO and need to be cleared in order for the country to become mine-free.



Subsequently, Ms. Fiona Frazier, UNAMA's Chief of Human Rights in Afghanistan emphasized the need for continuation of explosive ordnance risk education and added that in 2020 more than 80% of civilian victims were children. Additionally, DMAC Director delivered a presentation on MAPA achievement and challenges and stated that since the beginning of programme, the MAPA has destroyed 20 millions of explosive devices. Former DMAC Director also added that in 2020 alone 1580 civilians were killed or injured as a result of explosion ordnance in the country.



At the end, MAPA's longest-serving deminers were presented with plaques by the State Minister for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs. The event was well-covered by both national and international media.

MAPA Gender focal points exposure visit

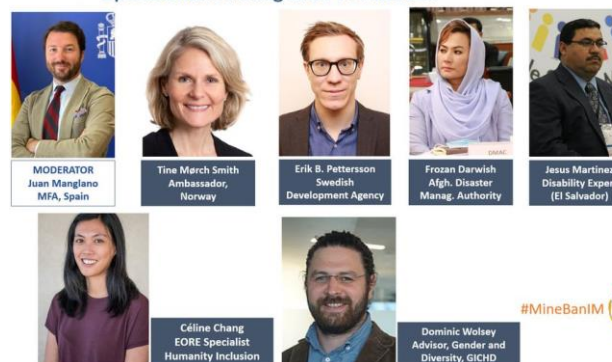


DMAC Gender & Diversity Mainstreaming Department organized an exposure visit for DMAC female staff and IP Gender Focal Points to OMAR EO Museum on 23rd of May 2021. The visitors learned about various types of explosive ordnance and exchanged views on gender and diversity in mine action. The MAPA aims to increase the number of women working in mine action and is committed to build the capacity of women who are employed in the programme.

DMAC was represented at the 2021 intersessional meetings of the Anti -Personnel Mine Ban Convention

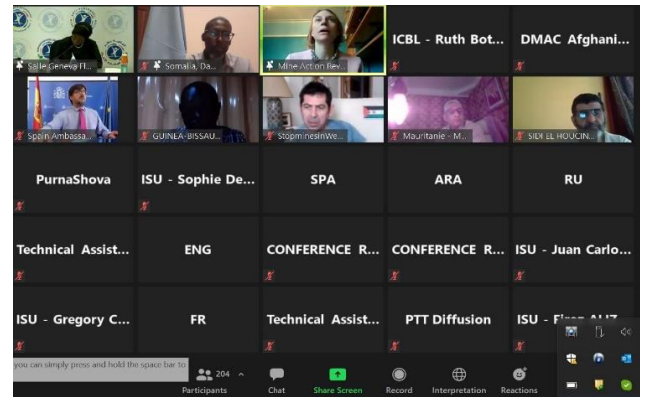
The 2021 Intersessional meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention was organized online due to COVID-related travel restrictions. DMAC delivered statements on a number of topics at the meetings including on thematic session 'Completion and Sustainable National Capacities and Victim Assistance. In addition, a side event on launching the Afghanistan [Mineaction.net](https://mineaction.net) application was organized in which DMAC along with UNMAS, Mine Action Review, Mines Advisory Group and Fenix Insight took part. With this application, all mine action standards are databased and linked digitally to the IMAS providing a smart updating arrangement to support operations and promote long-term national ownership and sustainability.

Integrating the Diverse Needs of Affected Communities in Operational Planning and Prioritization



This will be the very first time that an NMAS will have been incorporated into the system. Doing so offers all the existing benefits

available for IMAS to mine action organizations working in Afghanistan. Also, as part of the intersessional meetings, on 22nd of June, DMAC along with Survivors and Persons with Disabilities Ambassador Network of El Salvador, and Permanent Representative of Norway to UNOG, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Gender and Mine Action Programme and GICHD discussed integration of Gender and Diverse Needs of Affected Communities in Operational Planning and Prioritization.



Twenty MAPA staff participated in Developing the NTS Training Package Workshop

The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC), with technical and financial support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining - GICHD arranged a one day workshop on 29th of June 2021 in order to develop a Non-Technical Survey (NTS) training package for the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA). The workshop aims to provide a diverse platform which will explore ways in which the training package can be developed in a more context-specific way for Afghanistan.

The workshop fostered discussions on how to develop NTS national training package with reference to the existing Afghan context-specific by focusing on the following areas:

1. Steps of developing the national NTS training package
2. Instructor qualifications
3. Participant evaluation/selection criteria
4. Equipment of the Course



5. Possible open areas for NTS field exercises
6. Group discussion
7. NTS Training Package main topics:
 - Theoretical lessons and presentations
 - Class exercises documents
 - Outdoor/field exercises documents
 - Scenario based field exercises documents



At the end, it was decided to convene four separate working groups for each of the above-stated topics to work together and for the rest of the required information.

The next step will include drafting of a well-structured standardized NTS national package which will be in use by MAPA Implementing Partners (IPs) in Afghanistan.

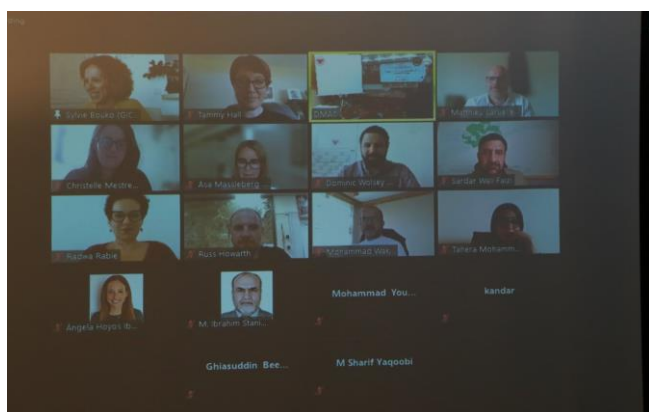
DMAC National Mine Action Strategic Planning Workshop

As part of the process for the development of the National Mine Action Strategic Plan (NMA SP) for the next 5 years (April 2021-March 2026) a one-day validation workshop was organized at Kabul Star Hotel. The participants of the workshop included H.E. Mohammad Qasim Haidari, Deputy Minister for Coordination from ANDMA, representatives of national and international mine action NGOs, gender officers, representative of commercial demining companies and the relevant government ministries who attended in-person. Meanwhile, a number of participants from GICHD, ISU, UNMAS and some of the IPs participated virtually in the



workshop. The workshop started with opening remarks by H.E. Mr. Haidari, Deputy Minister for Coordination of ANDMA followed by presentations delivered by a number of presenters from DMAC.

In the workshop, participants were briefed about the set goals, objectives, indicators, baselines and targets. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments on the draft strategy. For next steps, the strategy will be shared with all the MAPA donors for review and comments. Once finalized, the document will be officially launched in September.



MAPA Gender focal points meeting with UNMAS Country Director

On 7th of June 2021, female staff members of DMAC and MAPA IP gender focal points had a meeting with UNMAS. During the meeting. Mr. Paul Heslop, UNMAS Country Director emphasized on considering gender and diversity in all stages of the project cycle particularly in project proposals. He added, UNMAS is committed to gender equality and empowerment of women in mine action.

Additionally, MAPA IPs gender focal points delivered presentations outlining their achievements, challenges and future plans.

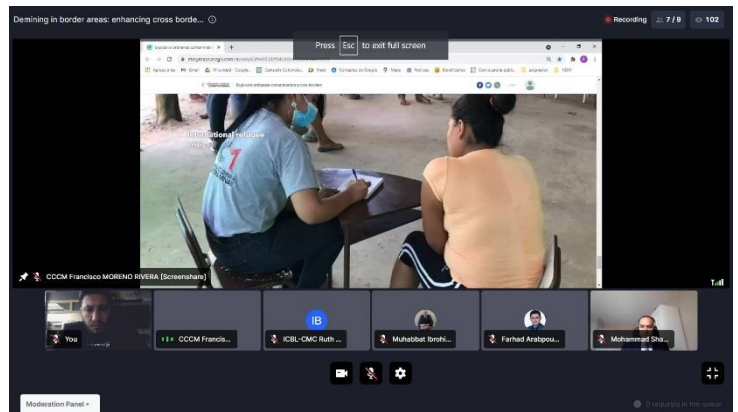


24th Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM-UN)

The 24th International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM-UN) was held from 25 to 27 May 2021. The meeting was held entirely online due to COVID-19 pandemic which provided an opportunity for the mine action community to reconnect, share knowledge and enhance the collective capacity to address old and new challenges under the overarching theme of “Perseverance, Partnership, Progress”. Simultaneous interpretation in the six UN official languages was available for all plenaries. About 1,200 people from over 105 countries and territories attended the event

Afghanistan had a side event on “demining in border areas – enhancing cross border Cooperation & Assistance” on the second day of the 24th Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM-UN) explored,

- Case studies and challenges from Afghanistan
- Iran's efforts to raise awareness of Afghan returnees/refugees concerning explosive ordnance
- ICBL - CMC's perspective on Mine Ban Treaty implementation in border areas
- Colombian Campaign Against Mines' overview of border issues



- Tajikistan's update on Tajikistan-Afghanistan border clearance in Badakhshan

As a result, key areas to further discuss were identified. The issue of border clearance, although rarely highlighted, remains a key challenge and MAPA will strive to build on this fruitful side event in the upcoming months. The main speakers for Afghanistan side events were: DMAC, ICBL, TNMAC, ICRC Iran and Colombian Campaign Against Mines. The record of Afghanistan side event is available with DMAC and if any of the stakeholder wish to have, DMAC will share with them. Additionally, DMAC was also involved at the speakers in the “Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)” side event as well as took part in the side event “standardizing beneficiary definitions (SBDS) in humanitarian mine action”.

Liability Workshop – Exploring Afghanistan’s Legal framework

The Mine Action Program of Afghanistan (MAPA) is biggest humanitarian demining program in the world, a superlative that exposes the dreaded realities of explosive ordnance contamination and its impact on innocent civilian lives in Afghanistan. Over three decades of prioritized response, a lot has been achieved but the remaining problem continues to loom over the scenic landscapes, endangering lives and limbs.

Currently, the MAPA records an average of 120 casualties per month – while the number is indicative of the problem at hand in terms of demining



response, it is important to understand other associated issues that continue to evade attention in the midst of emergency response. Liability, because of explosive ordnance (EO) accident, is one of main issues that the MAPA looks forward to adequately address. To do so, the MAPA, with technical and financial support from GICHD, conducted two workshops.

This workshop built on the significant results of the risk management, residual contamination and liability in mine action workshop, which was held in October 2020. It aimed to familiarize the Mine Action Program of Afghanistan (MAPA) with the general principles and concepts of risk management, residual contamination and liability.

With understanding of key concepts and principles facilitated, this workshop further enriched the Mine Action Program of Afghanistan's (MAPA) understanding of liability with key perspectives from national legal representatives.

The workshop was designed for three days where the first two days provided a platform for the legal representatives to understand key concepts of mine action and for the MAPA to understand the legal aspects of liability.



The third day was reserved for the groups to present their perspective and proposed solutions.

Due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the workshop was designed to involve minimum but essential representation of the legal entities, MAPA, and GICHD (online).

The aim was to bring essential MAPA staff, the ministry of justice, union of lawyers, professors of law, and legal advisors together to delve deep into the discussions of mine action and liability. The discussions and the resulting proposals will feed the development of the MAPA's liability policy.

The process began with initial discussions between MAPA and GICHD leading to scrutinizing the problems, challenges, and way forward; the five key phases are briefly shown in the figure below,



The workshop fostered discussions on addressing the issue of liability in mine action with reference to the existing Afghan legal framework and focus on the following areas:

- Introduction of key government bodies to the issue of liability in mine action and the need to develop a liability policy
- Identification of key requirements and principles for the liability policy;
- Defining key terms concerning liability

- Identifying relevant legal framework to use as the base for drafting the liability policy and identifying the process for developing the liability policy and the way forward for embedding it within the wider legal framework in Afghanistan
- Discussion on how the existing legal frameworks address liability in other sectors in Afghanistan;

Disability Stakeholders Coordination Group Meeting (DSCG) and VA Coordination meetings

On 8th May 2021, a DSCG meeting has been conducted by participation of 17 participants from 12 organizations in MoMDA. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Deputy Ministry of MoMDA DMAC head of VA. The following decisions were made after discussion;

- Holding DSCG Meetings on regular basis
- Holding a meeting for standard planning, reporting as well as standardization of the information system
- Establishing Provincial Disability Stakeholder Coordination Group meeting (PDSCG) meetings at all provinces
- Sending an official letter from Ministry to all provincial governor and MMD Departments for supporting PDSCG meetings

On 26th of May 2021, the VA Coordination meeting was conducted in DMAC with participation of 12 organizations.



During the meeting the following issues were discussed and decision taken;

- Balance Score Card (BSC) revision for VA IPs
- Setting a report and plan sharing mechanism through DMAC and MoMDA to Ministry of Plan
- For having a centralized database, a working group to be established and guideline to be developed and shared with all IPs
- The SOPs of VA IPs to be reviewed based on the revised

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