

KHOST'S FIRST COMMUNITY BASED DEMINING PROJECT LAUNCHED

The first community based demining project to be undertaken in Khost province was launched in Tanai district this month. 13 community demining teams were hired, providing employment for 217 people in impacted communities. They will be supported by one Mechanical Demining Unit. A field office was also established in Khost city along with two sub offices in Dragi and Gosha villages of Tani district.

Khost province is made up of 577 communities, 45 of which are impacted by landmines and explosive remnants of war. Tani District has six impacted communities and is located on the border with Pakistan.

All the deminers were recruited from the affected communities and began their training on 15th October. After completing the training and being supplied with the required equipment, they will be deployed to the affected communities for demining operations in the first week of December 2009.

Mine Clearance and Planning Agency (MCPA) is conducting this one year project through which the community based demining teams will clear more than one square kilometre of suspected hazardous area.



Community members recruited for training as deminers



community deminers in training

Naqibullah, a community based deminer from Gosha village of Tania districts said: "I am 24 years old but I didn't have enough funds to complete my education. Before joining the community based demining programme, I was just finding whatever work I could, wherever I could. Now I am very happy to have a job in my own village. I am trained as a deminer and afterwards will start demining to remove this hidden enemy from my community and save the lives of my friends and family."

The widespread contamination in these communities has made life very difficult for the residents but this project will prevent potential deaths and injuries through landmine accidents and enable community members to use their agricultural land productively for growing crops and grazing animals and increase their incomes and quality of life.

The community based demining teams work to clear their communities and surrounding contaminated areas and once the problem is solved, they will be dismantled and new teams will be created in other contaminated areas.

In addition to this project, CBD projects have been implemented in Kunar, Helmand, Uruzgan, Kandahar and Ghor provinces. Community-based demining (CBD) has emerged as a successful strategy for tackling the mine and ERW problem in Afghanistan, whilst simultaneously supporting stabilisation in volatile communities.

2009 LANDMINE MONITOR REPORT RELEASED GLOBALLY

The 2009 Landmine Monitor Report was released globally on 12th November 2009. Afghanistan became a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty on 1st March 2003 and so the report also released in Kabul through a press conference the same day.

This report is the eleventh annual Landmine Monitor report. Landmine Monitor is the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)'s research and monitoring programme which monitors and reports on States Parties' implementation of, and compliance with, the Mine Ban Treaty. It also generally assesses the international community's response to the humanitarian problem caused by landmines and ERW.

This report highlights the success of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan including the destruction of its known stockpiles of more than 486,000 antipersonnel mines in October 2007 and the release of more than 250 sq km, a record for the programme, in 2008.

However, the report also highlights the huge affect landmines have had and continue to have on Afghanistan, with 12,069 casualties from mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) between 1999 and 2008. Although the good news is that the casualty toll in 2008 was less than half the level in 2001, with significant contamination remaining, the need for continued clearance and survivor assistance is as urgent as ever.

For more details on the 2009 Land Mine Monitor Report please refer to:

<http://lm.icbl.org/index.php/publications/display?url=lm/2008/countries/guatemala.html>



MINE AND ERW INCIDENTS JANUARY– NOVEMBER 2009

Month	18 Years and Younger		Over 18 Years		Unknown Age/Gender	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Jan	16	0	14	0		30
Feb	30	5	17	1		53
March	37	0	14	0		51
April	22	5	15	1		43
May	33	9	24	8		74
June	10	5	17	0		32
July	23	6	20	6	1	56
August	12	2	9	1		24
September	13	2	11	5		31
October	11	2	8	0		21
November	1	1	5	3		10
Grand Total	208	37	154	25	1	425

Ottawa Treaty:

Clear all emplaced anti-personnel mines by 2013;
Destroy all known anti-personnel mine stockpiles by 2007; and
Provide mine risk education to Afghans and assist mine survivors.

Afghanistan Compact:

Land area contaminated by mines and ERW will be reduced by 70% by March 2011;
All stockpiled anti-personnel mines will be located and destroyed by March 2007.

DESTRUCTION OF ALL KNOWN STOCKPILES OF ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES

The Government of Afghanistan successfully fulfilled its Article 4 of Ottawa Treaty and Afghanistan Compact benchmark to destroy all known stockpiled anti-personnel landmines in its territory in October 2007.

KEYS TO MEETING THE BENCHMARKS FOR MINE ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN

- * Sustaining existing capacities
- * Expansion of Community - Based Demining
- * Programming through focused projects
- * Introduction of competitive tendering
- * Enhanced fundraising to ensure resources to meet benchmarks

CHALLENGES TOWARDS BENCHMARKS

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan must increase multilateral and bilateral funding to mine action to achieve the targets set by the Ottawa Treaty and the Afghanistan Compact. Essentially, funding needs to be coherent to enable effective delivery; this means funds must be received before the beginning of the year. If the funds are provided, the MAPA has the technical capability to achieve the targets.

MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY JANUARY– NOVEMBER 2009

- * 48,769 AP mines, 644 AT mines, and 1,092,527 ERW destroyed.
- * 245 communities declared impact free.
- * 402,903 women and girls and 612,665 men and boys received MRE throughout the country.

THE MINE ACTION STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN

The strategy for mine action is based on the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's vision of a country free from landmines and ERW, where people and communities live in a safe environment conducive to national development, and where landmine and ERW survivors are fully integrated in the society and thus have their rights and needs recognized and fulfilled. To turn this vision into reality, the government has established benchmark obligations within its national development strategy, the Afghanistan Compact, which are in accordance with its obligations under the Ottawa Convention.

SUPPORT TO MINE ACTION NATIONAL CAPACITY

The Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) supported by the United Nations and the Government of Afghanistan through its Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)/Department of Mine Clearance (DMC) have formed a partnership within the MACA offices to plan, coordinate and ensure the quality of all mine action activities in Afghanistan. The most recent Inter-ministerial board meeting was held in March, key topics discussed included information exchange between ministries of Aynac copper mine.



MDD teams returning from demining operation in Charasyab district / June 2009

MAPA AND MACCA SUMMARY

The concept of humanitarian mine action was developed in Afghanistan in 1988/9. Mine action encompasses all pillars of mine action: advocacy, demining (survey, marking and clearance), stockpile destruction, mine risk education (MRE), and victim assistance (VA). The programme is funded both bilaterally and through the UN Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)^[1].

Collectively known as the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), mine action implementers in Afghanistan form one of the largest mine action programmes in the world. Together, these agencies have a twenty year history of successfully delivering mine action in Afghanistan and have cleared over 12,000 hazard areas throughout the country. The MAPA is coordinated by the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), which is funded through a UN modality. The MACCA has sub-offices, known as Area Mine Action Centres (AMACs) in Herat, Jalalabad, Mazar, Kunduz, Gardez, and Kandahar.



Demining Operation in Samangan province Photo by : Jacob Simkin, April

MAPA is supported by :

