Mine Action Support Group
Vision
A country free from landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) where people and communities live in a safe environment conducive to national development and where landmine and ERW survivors are fully integrated into society and thus have their rights and needs recognized and fulfilled.

UNMAS will do this by:

- Building and sustaining the capability of the national mine action authority through technical advice on strategic planning and hazard prioritization; advocacy and resource mobilization; programme, funds, and contract management; the implementation of national legislation and international standards as well as piloting and mainstreaming of new technology.

- Developing capacity to address the increasing casualty numbers through gender-sensitive community liaison, behavioural change focused risk education and the improvement of the clearance capability of partners through technical training and the provision of specialized equipment, with particular focus on improvised mines.

- Enhancing information management to improve prioritization, performance monitoring and impact evaluation.

- Engaging with the wider humanitarian and development community through the Protection Cluster, the Humanitarian Access Group and other forums to ensure mine action projects are delivered in a principled manner and complement the delivery of assistance in other sectors.

- Establishing a conflict prevention and protection mechanism tailored to the Afghan context.

- Advocating for the rights of mine and ERW victims and their families, as well the inclusion of the needs of people with disabilities in all mine action projects.

- Mobilizing resources by providing reliable, up-to-date information on needs and solutions to stakeholders and raising awareness on the success of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan between 1987 - 2021

Link to the UNMAS Afghanistan program http://www.unmas.org/en/programmes/afghanistan
Impact: Civilian Casualty by pre-2001 Contamination (1979-2020)

97% reduction - This is the success of MAPA

1,772

56
Since 1989, humanitarian mine action partners in Afghanistan have cleared **745,750** AP mines, **30,790** AV mines and over **18.8 million** items of ERW, releasing **3,224 km²** of land released for productive use to **3,154** communities.
View of West Kabul during mine clearance 1998

View of the same neighborhood in 2021
View of Jebrail Township Herat province during mine clearance 2011

View of the same area Jebrail Township Herat province After mine clearance (2017)
Achievements 2020

In 2020, UNMAS has helped Afghanistan to:

Clear 15 sq. km. of contaminated land
- Benefited a population of 547,766 in 160 communities
- Enabled the implementation of agricultural, livelihood and housing initiatives

Deliver risk education to 127,478 people

- Women: 19,233
- Men: 15,004
- Girls: 41,297
- Boys: 51,944

Destroy 848 landmines and Explosive Remnants of War
- Landmines: 622
- Explosive Remnants of War: 226

Enhance national capacity
- Deployed Gender Specialists to local humanitarian demining NGOs
- Provided training and equipment to the MAPA for the survey and clearance of improvised mines
- Developed and provided COVID-19 awareness posters to be included in all MAPA explosive ordnance risk education programs
Current Challenges

- Improvised Mines and ERW
- Access and Security
- US Troop Withdrawal and Peace Process
- Supporting safe returns and humanitarian delivery
- Funding Required
Threat: Civilian Casualties by Post 2001 Contamination

Two years of ACAP III Project helped MAPA to do proper victim data collection with surveyors across the country.

78% increase due to new contaminations.
Incident Types Causing Most Harm to Civilians

The 15 per cent decrease in the total number of civilian casualties in 2020 was primarily driven by fewer civilian casualties from Anti-Government Element suicide attacks (including complex attacks), international military airstrikes, and search operations by Pro-Government Forces. At the same time, UNAMA documented an increased number of civilian casualties attributed to Anti-Government Elements from non-suicide IEDs and targeted killings, including so-called “assassinations” of civilians. UNAMA also documented a rise in civilian casualties attributed to the Afghan National Army from ground engagements and from Afghan Air Force airstrikes.

In 2020, for the first time since 2016, ground engagements were the incident type causing the most civilian casualties.

From 2017 to 2019, IEDs (the combined use of suicide and non-suicide IEDs) were the leading cause of civilian casualties. In 2019, UNAMA documented 3,061 civilian casualties (766 killed and 2,295 injured) from ground engagements.

Civilian casualties from ground engagements occurred mainly through the use of indirect fire, including from artillery shells, mortars and rocket shells in populated areas. The use of both suicide and non-suicide IEDs by Anti-Government Elements caused more than a third of all civilian casualties, amounting to 3,042 civilian casualties (872 killed and 2,170 injured). This marked a 30 per cent decrease in the number of civilian casualties from these devices in comparison to 2019, mainly driven by an increase in civilians killed.

Civilian Casualties by Incident Type

1 January to 31 December 2020

EXPLOSIVE HAZARDS RESPONSIBLE FOR 30%
Summary of Explosive Hazard Casualties 2020

Anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature (APM/IN) and ERW from more recent armed clashes caused 98.8 percent of the explosive hazard-related casualties recorded in 2020. In the same year, more than 72 percent of the ERW casualties were children.

Breakdown of Victims by Age and Gender- Jan to Nov 2020

- Women: 37.8%
- Men: 43.0%
- Boy: 10.4%
- Girl: 8.9%

Breakdown of Causalities By Devices- Jan to Nov 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Devices</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Injured</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERW</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APM/IN</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>374</td>
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</tbody>
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ERW: Explosive Remnants of War
APM/IN: Anti-personnel Landmines of an Improvised Nature
Bending the casualty curve: AP/IN

**2019**
- UNMAS assists DMAC complete AMAS for AP/IN - 1st of its kind
- Oslo Conference
- Begin advocacy to Donors on funding AP/IN clearance

**2020**
- UNMAS trains MAPA partners on **technical aspects of AP/IN** survey and clearance.
- UNMAS builds DMAC capacity for the **quality management** of AP/IN survey and clearance
- Provides AP/IN clearance **seed equipment** from training to the DMAC
- MAPA partners develop **internal training plans and SOP** AP/IN with UNMAS technical assistance.

**2021**
- IPs accredited by DMAC as per AMAS UNMAS Pilot clearance projects in process.
- Funding secured for AP/IN clearance
- Further capacity building and pilot projects in process
- MAPA better able to assist humanitarian delivery and bend the casualty curve.
**Access Challenges**

### Key Figures

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>In April 2021</th>
<th>In 2021</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🍀 117</td>
<td>620</td>
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<tr>
<td>🏙️ 25</td>
<td>106</td>
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<tr>
<td>🧜‍♂️ 2</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>🧜‍♂️ 3</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>🙏‍♂️ 6</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Total number of access incidents</em></td>
<td><em>Total incidents related to health workers or facilities</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Aid workers killed</em></td>
<td><em>Aid workers injured</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Aid workers abducted</em></td>
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**Humanitarian Access**

Humanitarian operations are frequently disrupted by conflict, IEDs, bureaucratic processes, and checkpoints.

In 2020, several health facilities were forced to close because of insecurity, affecting the provision of essential health services. For example, in April/May 2021, 6 health facilities in Arghandab, Kandahar suspended after access routes were contaminated with IEDs, preventing access by staff and patients.

Political outcome of intra-Afghan peace talks and the foreign policy adopted by the new US administration will be key in shaping future humanitarian access.
UNMAS Access Negotiation Approach

- Engagement with NSAGs for an ‘exemption’ for humanitarian mine action agencies from taxation and for a guarantee of safe and continuous access to areas in need. Currently, this engagement happens in-person and in writing.

- Advocacy with UNAMA and donors to obtain their support during negotiations with the Taliban.

- Advocacy, via the DMAC, at a high level of the Government to ensure that pro-government elements exempt mine action operators from taxation requests.

- Instituting access negotiation training and skills development for UNMAS/3rdParty personnel to keep skills relevant and up to date.
US Troop Withdrawal and Peace Process

Scenario A: Intensifying Conflict

• Following withdrawal, Taliban applies pressure to cities while attempting to increase hold in the countryside. Peace process remains stalled.

• Latest OCHA "Afghanistan: Spring Disaster Contingency Plan" assumes a risk of intensifying conflict which would in turn lead to an increase in EO contamination increasing casualties and risks to delivery of humanitarian aid.

Scenario B: A lull in Conflict or Ceasefire

• Peace process is renewed and parties agree to a temporary ceasefire while they negotiate.

• Mine action is a necessary enabler of response in the 30 first days of a ceasefire with newly accessible areas needing to be assessed for EO.

• Ensuring safe return and movement of IDPs.

• Experience in the immediate aftermath of peace agreements in other theatres and in Afghanistan show casualties unabated or increasing mostly due to an increase in returns and travel to previously inaccessible areas.
Supporting Returns and Humanitarian Delivery

- Conflict or ceasefire mine action *crucial to urgent humanitarian delivery* in both scenarios.
- *EORE for vulnerable pop. is essential* (see left) in addition to mass broadcast messaging.
- UNMAS funded Quick Response Teams deployed across Afghanistan for emergency EOD/BAC clearance in IDP/Returnee locations.
- Land release to allow more safe returns and socio-economic access.
- AP/IN Clearance (a major security challenge for humanitarian providers)
- Survey and risk mitigation for humanitarian delivery and socio-economic projects

- Deadliest conflict in the world.
- Annually averaging half a million new IDPS and half a million returnees. 50% are children.

![Past six years graph]

- High vulnerability to explosive hazard risk
- In 2020, UNMAS funded EORE reached 127,000 returnees and IDPs at encashment and transit and zero-point centers.
Main funding needs of the estimated under upcoming Article 5 extension.

- $200 million to clear firing ranges (not from humanitarian funds)
- $10 million for survey and land release to release 200 - 400 million sq m of SHAs (Saves $130 - $300 million in full blown clearance)
- $450-500 million for AP/IN clearance over next 6 years for casualty reduction and treaty compliance
- $3-5 million annually EORE leading to behavioral change and casualty reduction
- $3-4 million for DMAC support (50% USA and 50% VTF)
- $4 million annually UNMAS coordination and technical support
UNMAS Afghanistan will scale down its presence and assistance in coordination with the Government of Afghanistan when the comparative advantage of the United Nations as a neutral humanitarian and finance provider is no longer required or relevant, either due to the capacity to conduct this nationally or due to sustained peace.
QUESTIONS?

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