

AFGHANISTAN



CLEARING CLUSTER MUNITION REMNANTS 2019

CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS ARTICLE 4 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2022
ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

CLUSTER MUNITION
CONTAMINATION: LIGHT

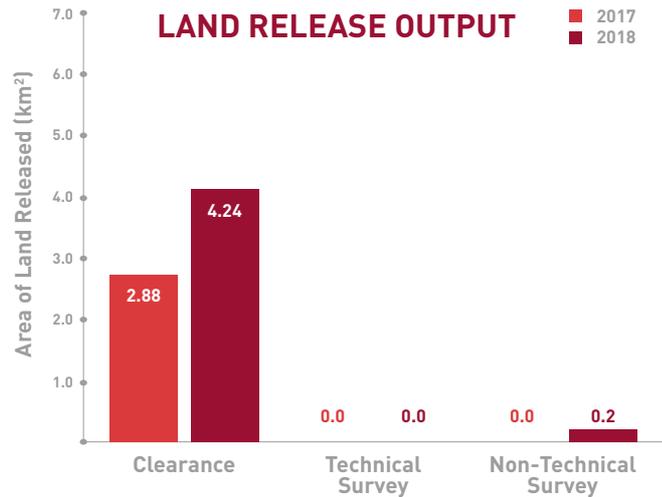
4.1 KM²

SUBMUNITION
CLEARANCE IN 2018

4.24 KM²

SUBMUNITIONS
DESTROYED IN 2018

307



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Resurvey identified previously unrecorded areas of cluster munition remnant (CMR) contamination but increased funding for tackling cluster munition hazards saw significant acceleration in the amount of contaminated land released by clearance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Afghanistan should ensure funding, including from national sources, to achieve the earliest possible completion of its known cluster munition contamination.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2018)	Performance commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	9	Afghanistan has a limited number of contaminated areas well-defined by survey and is aware that further scattered contamination exists in currently undefined locations.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) completed transition to full national management in 2018 but the programme is totally dependent on international donor funding.
GENDER (10% of overall score)	6	Gender is being mainstreamed within the constraints of a very conservative religious culture. The year 2018 saw the first all-women mine clearance team in action, with further clearance by an expanded all-women team planned in 2019.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	8	The IMSMA database at the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) is rated among the best in the world, providing comprehensive, disaggregated data though reportedly subject to some delays in the uploading of reports. There were some inaccuracies and inconsistencies in Afghanistan's CCM Article 7 report for 2018.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	8	DMAC has in place a plan for clearance of all cluster munition-contaminated areas which is in the process of being implemented.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	DMAC has well-established land release standards, though there may be a case for more technical survey of hazardous areas.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	8	After receiving increased funding in 2018, clearance of CMR-affected land increased by 50% in 2018 compared to the previous year, putting Afghanistan on track to meet its Article 4 deadline.
Average score	7.8	Overall programme performance: GOOD

CLUSTER MUNITION SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)
- Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC)
- Agency for Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation in Afghanistan (AREA)
- Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA)
- Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA)
- Mine Detection Centre
- Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation (OMAR)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Demining Group (DDG)
- HALO Trust
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION

Afghanistan says that at the end of 2018 it had nine CMR-contaminated areas covering a total of 4,122,534m², of which 65% was located in one province, Nangarhar, in the east of the country.¹ The total included 1.6km² of contamination added to the database after resurvey of two battle areas confirmed the presence of submunitions.²

Table 1: CMR contamination (at end 2018)

Province	CHAs	Area (m ²)
Baghlan	1	64,531
Nangarhar	3	2,680,103
Takhar	5	1,377,900
Totals	9	4,122,534

All the identified sites are affected by remnants of the 1,228 cluster munitions containing some 248,056 BLU-97B submunitions dropped by the United States between October 2001 and early 2002. Operators conducting demining and battle area clearance tasks also report encountering scattered Soviet-era cluster munitions dropped during the decade-long war in the 1980s.³

Cluster munition remnants make up only a small part of Afghanistan's extensive explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination, which includes a wide range of other unexploded ordnance. There are also hundreds of square kilometres of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mine contamination, including mines of an improvised nature (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Afghanistan for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Afghanistan's National Disaster Management Committee fulfils the role of a mine action authority acting through the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA). The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) is led by the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC), a department of ANDMA. From its headquarters in Kabul and seven regional offices, DMAC manages and coordinates the work of national and international implementing partners. DMAC provides strategic planning and annual workplans, sets priorities and standards, accredits operators, conducts quality assurance, manages the mine action database, and conducts resource mobilisation.⁴

Afghanistan issued a decree in September 2019 adding an annex to the existing Law on Firearms Ammunitions and Explosive Materials, which includes cluster munitions in a ban on the use, acquisition, trading and

stockpiling of weapons, ammunition, and explosive items without a requisite licence.⁵

Since 2012, the MAPA has transitioned from being a project of the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to national management, a process completed with the transfer of the last positions from UNMAS to DMAC in June 2018. Afghanistan, in partnership with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), convenes all stakeholders periodically in Geneva, to discuss progress. UNMAS continued to provide technical support in planning, advocacy, resource mobilisation, and managing funding provided through the Voluntary Trust Fund.⁶ Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) was funded by the US Department of State to monitor performance of all implementing partners receiving US funding.⁷

GENDER

The MAPA includes mainstreaming gender and diversity as one of the four goals of its 2016–20 strategic plan but is still in the process of developing steps and capacity for implementing it within the constraints of Afghanistan's deeply conservative religious society. The year 2018 saw the first all-women mine clearance team in action in Bamyan province, with further clearance by an expanded all-women team planned in 2019.⁸

DMAC advises implementing partners (IPs) to consider including women in community liaison and risk education teams to ensure access to all members of the community and a gender department has prepared a checklist of actions to ensure consultation with all parts of the community. To address cultural sensitivities, some IPs are employing couples in risk education and community liaison roles as well as in office-based roles and DMAC reports data is sex and age disaggregated.⁹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

DMAC operates an IMSMA NG Version 6 database but in 2018 started preparations for an upgrade to IMSMA Core. DMAC was still in the process of migrating legacy data to IMSMA; as part of a continuous effort to increase efficiency, duplicates of historical data were deleted from the database.¹⁰ Operators endorse the accessibility and accuracy of data but reported the database experienced some significant delays in uploading completion reports into the database.¹¹

Afghanistan submits comprehensive Article 7 reports, although there were some inconsistencies in its Article 7 report for 2018 (see endnotes 2 and 22). It provides regular updates on the progress of survey and clearance at intersessionals and meetings of states parties. Afghanistan's Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 extension request in 2012, prepared in consultation with and endorsed by Afghan implementing partners, was regarded as a model providing a comprehensive overview of all aspects of the country's ERW challenge.

PLANNING AND TASKING

DMAC's strategic plan for 2016–20 sets out four basic aims¹² but identifies implementation of its APMBC Article 5 Extension request as an "overarching goal". Afghanistan's extension request, drawn up with participation of implementing partners, provided for completing clearance of all known mine and ERW contamination by the requested deadline of 2023. This remains a benchmark against which DMAC measures progress, but a shortfall in donor funding and deteriorating security will ensure that deadline will not be achieved for mines.

DMAC also sets annual workplans for the sector. Priorities in the workplan for Afghan year 1398 (2019–20) include reducing civilian casualties, building capacity for tackling abandoned improvised mines, strengthening the quality management system, setting up a research and development unit to explore the application of new technologies, investigating new tools and methods for survey, finalising a policy on liability, and setting up a database to record details of all trained deminers.¹³

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Afghanistan has comprehensive national mine action standards that are International Mine Action Standard (IMAS)-compatible and subject to regular review. CMR survey and clearance are addressed in AMAS 06.02 (Battle Area Clearance). In March 2019, Afghanistan became the first mine action programme to adopt a standard for clearance of improvised mines.¹⁴

OPERATORS

Most operators encounter some residual CMR contamination in the course of clearing mine and battle area tasks but a single IP, Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA), conducted the clearance of all CMR tasks in 2018.¹⁵

OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Only manual clearance of ERW, including CMR, is conducted in Afghanistan.

DEMINER SAFETY

No accidents occurred in cluster munition clearance in 2018. Insecurity, however, posed a major challenge to the sector. Six deminers were killed and a further eighteen injured as a result of security incidents in 2018, which also resulted in loss of equipment and damage to vehicles.¹⁶

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT AND ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

After several years in which no CMR clearance occurred (see Table 2 overleaf), DMAC circulated a proposal to donors at the end of 2016 to complete clearance of 17 remaining tasks at a cost of \$1.85 million. It completed ten of those tasks in 2018, eight of them through manual clearance. Two tasks were added to the database in 2018 as a result of survey leaving nine to be cleared to complete the clearance of Afghanistan's cluster munition hazards.¹⁷

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT IN 2018

The MAPA released a total of 4,403,448m² of cluster munitions-affected areas in 2018, the overwhelming majority as a result of full clearance. There may, therefore, be a role for additional technical survey of hazardous areas to improve land release efficiency. Resurvey of some areas resulted in the addition of 1.6km² of contamination to the database of CMR-affected areas.¹⁸

SURVEY IN 2018

Afghanistan's CMR-contaminated areas were defined by survey so further survey is not routine. Re-survey by DAFA in 2018 resulted in cancellation of 160,000m². At the same time, non-technical survey of two battle area tasks in the Pachir Agam District of Nangarhar province in 2018 identified CMR contamination resulting in the addition of two tasks totalling 1.6km² to the database.¹⁹

Table 2: Area cancelled by non-technical survey in 2018²⁰

Province	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Paktya	DAFA	160,000
Total		160,000

CLEARANCE IN 2018

DAFA cleared a total of 4.2km² in three provinces (see Table 3), destroying 217 submunitions, a 5% increase over CMR areas cleared the previous year and double the number of items destroyed.²¹

DMAC reported another 66 CMR were destroyed in spot EOD tasks in 2018.²² DDG said it destroyed 24 CMR among 1,292 items of ordnance destroyed in spot tasks in 2018.²³ DMAC said almost all submunitions destroyed in spot tasks were Soviet-made AO-2 items; two were US BLU-97s.²⁴

DMAC expected that out of a total of nine remaining CMR tasks, eight tasks in Takhar, Baghlan, and Nangarhar would be cleared by ATC and DAFA in 2019 with funding from the United States and other countries provided through the Voluntary Trust Fund.²⁵

Table 3: Clearance of CMR-contaminated area in 2018²⁶

Operator	Province	Areas released	Area cleared (m ²)	Submunitions destroyed*	Other UXO destroyed*
DAFA	Nangarhar	1	1,219,611	18	346
DAFA	Paktya	3	1,202,957	130	46
DAFA	Takhar	5	1,820,880	69	384
Totals		9	4,243,448	217	776

* Items destroyed during clearance of CMR tasks

ARTICLE 4 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

CCM ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR AFGHANISTAN: 1 MARCH 2012

ARTICLE 4 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2022

ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE: YES

The acceleration of clearance of CMR contamination in the past two years has put Afghanistan well on course to complete clearance of known CMR hazards by its Article 4 deadline. DMAC expected eight of the nine remaining tasks to be cleared by September 2019 leaving one task covering 884,000m² in Nangarhar province to be tackled in the remaining 18 months.

Despite escalating levels of conflict in Afghanistan, DMAC reported all nine tasks were in areas considered accessible. It considered the only potential obstacle to completion would be lack of funding, which had not been obtained for the remaining Nangarhar task as of April 2019.²⁷

Table 4: Five-year summary of CMR clearance (2014–18)

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2018	4.2
2017	2.8
2016	0
2015	0
2014	0
Total	7.0

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- 1 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, Head of Operations Department, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
 - 2 DMAC said contamination data in Afghanistan's Article 7 Report for 2018 (5,063,958m²) included some areas already cleared and would be amended. Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 9 July 2019.
 - 3 Email from DMAC, 11 April 2018; Statement of Afghanistan, CCM intersessional meetings (Clearance and Risk Education Session), Geneva, 15 April 2013.
 - 4 Email from Mohammad Wakil Jamshidi, Chief of Staff, UNMAS/DMAC, 16 May 2017.
 - 5 CCM Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form A.
 - 6 Interview with Patrick Fruchet, UNMAS, Geneva, 5 February 2019.
 - 7 Email from Vanja Sirica, Country Director, NPA, 25 April 2018.
 - 8 Emails from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019; and Daniel Bertoli, Head of Programme, DDG Afghanistan, 15 April 2019.
 - 9 Emails from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019; and Mir Mohamed, Executive Operations Manager, MCPA, 17 April 2019.
 - 10 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
 - 11 Interviews with mine action operators, Geneva, March 2019.
 - 12 The four goals are to: 1) facilitate development; 2) integrate mine action into other sectors such as health, education, agriculture and economic development; 3) prevent and mitigate the effects of landmines through clearance, risk education, victim assistance, advocacy and stockpile destruction; and 4) mainstream gender and diversity.
 - 13 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
 - 14 Statement by Mohammed Shafiq, GICHD workshop, Geneva, 26 March 2019.
 - 15 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
 - 16 Ibid.
 - 17 Emails from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 and 16 April 2019.
 - 18 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
 - 19 Emails from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 and 16 April 2019.
 - 20 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
 - 21 Ibid.
 - 22 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
 - 23 Email from Daniel Bertoli, DDG Afghanistan, 15 April 2019.
 - 24 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 16 April 2019.
 - 25 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
 - 26 DMAC reported that clearance recorded in Afghanistan's Article 7 Report for 2018, Form F, (1,957,233m²) left out some cleared areas and would be amended. Emails from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April and 9 July.
 - 27 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 16 April 2019.