



FACTSHEET
Afghanistan

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Scope of the problem

At the start of 2013, Afghanistan estimated it had 270.7km² affected by antipersonnel mines out of a total explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination of 558.6km². The ERW total included 253.3km² affected by antivehicle mines and a further 34.7km² by other forms of ordnance, including 7.6km² by cluster munition remnants. Survey in 2012 added 204 hazards totalling 15.4km² of mine and battle area hazards to the database, but also resulted in the cancellation of 258 suspected hazards totalling 19.6km². As a result of clearance and survey, the extent of mine contamination was nearly 12% less at the end of 2012 than in 2011, and total ERW contamination was down by 9%.

Land release

Mined area clearance rose 28% in 2012 over the previous year. This was more than one-fifth higher than the target set in Afghanistan's 2012 Article 5 extension request, but the total amount of land released through humanitarian clearance of mine and battle areas decreased by almost a quarter (22%) to 123.39km² from the previous year following a sharp fall in battle area clearance (BAC). Commercial companies checked an additional 24.5km² in 2012, clearing 16 landmines and 22,926 unexploded ordnance (UXO) items; this was also 20% less than the previous year and is likely to drop further over the next two years as international forces withdraw and spending on military and police facilities declines.

Year	Mined area cleared (km ²)	Battle area* cleared (km ²)
2012	87.22	36.17
2011	68.04	82.54
Total	155.26	118.71

*Humanitarian BAC only.

EODT's United Arab Emirates (UAE)-funded operations in Kandahar province, among the country's most conflicted, recorded a big increase in mined area clearance, as did HALO Trust and Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA). Survey teams cross-trained for explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) cleared 3,674 UXO items in the course of the re-survey being conducted as part of the Article 5 extension request, mostly in the second half of 2012. The number of community-based demining teams—active mainly in insecure southern provinces—dropped from 167 in 2011 to 111 by the end of 2012, and their share of demining spending also fell sharply.

Compliance with Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty

Insurgency and insecurity, which resulted in nine deminer deaths and 13 injuries in 2012, represent one serious obstacle to completing clearance within 10 years as targeted in Afghanistan's extension request. Another is maintaining the effectiveness of the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) in its critically important role through a period of political transition. But the biggest immediate challenge is money. The MACCA reports humanitarian mine action received a total of \$84.2 million in 1391 (Afghan year ending March 2013) but due to funding cuts by key donors, among them the United States and European Union, the program is losing considerable capacity: it lost 3,500 deminers in 2012–2013, while disruption in delivery of

US funding this year has put another 1,500 deminers on standby. That ensures Afghanistan will not achieve the clearance targets set for this year and, unless the funding trend reverses, it jeopardises the goal of the extension request to achieve closure within 10 years.