

EVALUATING MINE ACTION WORKSHOP, KABUL, AFGHANISTAN 12-17 FEBRUARY 2011

From 12-17 February 2011,¹ the GICHD delivered a five-day Evaluating Mine Action training workshop in Kabul in partnership with the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA). The workshop included representatives from numerous organizations, such as DMC, the AMACs, Handicap International, ARCS, ATC, MDC, DAFA, DDG, OMAR, HT, MCPA, TMAC, ANAMA, NAO, MRRD, AIRD, ANDS, and various ministries, such as MoE, MoLSAMD, MoPH and MoF. Most of the 43 participants came from Afghanistan, with two each from Azerbaijan and Tajikistan, plus one from the UNMAS programme for Darfur.

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Develop basic knowledge of evaluation concepts, processes and methods;
- Assist mine action officials and practitioners in assuming enhanced roles in the evaluation function (e.g. commissioning, designing and/or conducting evaluations).
- Support the process of setting up a results-based M&E system in Afghanistan

The specific objectives of this workshop were to:

- Enhance the capacity and confidence of national mine action officials to influence the mine action evaluation agenda in Afghanistan
- Equip managers with the skills required to better design projects/programmes and to implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks for these projects/programmes
- Enhance capacities of practitioners to serve as members of mine action evaluation teams

Ted Paterson and Vera Bohle from the GICHD delivered the training. The course was held in English with simultaneous translation into Dari.

The presentations, discussions and group work focused on the following issues:

Evaluating Mine Action:

- Introduction to Development Evaluation
- Project Cycle Management
- Project Planning for Results
- Understanding the Evaluation Context and Program Theory of Change
- Building a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System
- Developing Evaluation Questions and Starting the Design Matrix
- Special Issues for Mine Action
- Designing Evaluations to Answer the Questions
- Managing for Quality & Use

In addition, a representative from the MACCA made a presentation on two of the M&E tools used in the Afghan mine action programme (Balanced Scorecard and the Project Monitoring Tool).

¹ No sessions were scheduled for Tuesday, 15 February, which we were advised was to be a public holiday for the Prophet's birthday.

The content of the workshop was dense and, for some topics, on a high academic level. Overall, there was active participation and participant feedback was very positive.² However, there were some difficulties with the translation into Dari, as well as the readability of the bilingual slides. A new set of bilingual slides – or, perhaps, a set of Dari-only slides – should be prepared before another workshop is delivered to ensure all material can be read easily.

There was some confusion over the day that would mark the Prophet's birthday and, ultimately, the Government declared two days holiday (one to commemorate the anniversary of the departure of the Soviet forces). Provision had been made in our schedule for only one day. Accordingly, some of the participants were absent on either the second last or the final two days.

Not all the questions on the Participant Feedback forms appeared on the Dari-version of the form.

MACCA has asked the GICHD to submit a proposal for another workshop in Afghanistan in February 2011.

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² For example, the participant from the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) Secretariat in the Ministry of Finance asked if we could deliver a workshop for the ANDS Secretariat and their counterparts in the ministerial planning units.