Knowledge, Attitude, Practice and Belief (KAPB) Survey - Afghanistan

Background
As the result of the widespread and indiscriminate use of mines during more than two decades of conflict, Afghanistan is one of the most heavily landmine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) contaminated countries in the world. As of August 2010, 6,726 hazardous areas totalling an estimated 654 square kilometres of land remain in the country, affecting 2,115 communities. From January 2002 to December 2009, mine action organisations recorded 7,141 victims of landmines and explosives remnants of war. The vast majority of these victims are male, and almost 50 percent of all victims are children.

The number of landmine and ERW victims in Afghanistan is declining annually, which demonstrates the success of clearance and Mine Risk Education (MRE). However, mine action organisations still have a lot to do. Landmines and ERW threaten Afghans with physical harm. They also rob farmers of their livelihoods and impede housing, resettlement and the grazing of livestock.

There are 34 provinces in Afghanistan, of which 12 provinces hold 75 percent of all mine and ERW affected communities. Approximately 2.7 percent of the Afghan population is severely disabled, with landmine and ERW accidents accounting for approximately 8.6 percent of this total. The impact of disability on economic participation is substantial, impoverishing survivors and their families, straining government and other health care systems, and limiting economic growth and poverty reduction.

Objectives of the survey
The Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) has performed three Knowledge, Attitude, Practice and Belief (KAPB) surveys, in 2004, 2005 and 2009. The first two surveys confirmed the positive impact of MRE implemented by the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA), implementing partner agencies and the knowledge of risk by affected communities. They also identified the best mechanisms of information dissemination. MACCA carried out the first KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, Perception) survey in 2004 to assess the impact of MRE, to justify continued funding for MRE and to establish a baseline of information in order to compare the findings with future KAP surveys. A KAPB survey was undertaken in 2005; beliefs were added to find out what people thought about how injuries occur and who they believe is responsible. Like the previous KAP survey, it concluded that people understood MRE messages and valued them, and that MRE was resulting in behaviour change and targeting the most vulnerable.

In the absence of relevant baseline information, the first KAPB surveys assessed people’s perceptions of mine risk education activities in target populations. They also assessed the changing behaviour of the Afghan population in response to MRE programme implementation. In the 2005 KAPB survey, demining activities were included in the assessment.

Following a targeted pilot KAPB survey called Attitudes towards Mine Action: An Afghan Woman’s Perspective, MACCA rolled out a new survey in late 2009. Given that the first two KAPB surveys did not fully respect issues of gender parity, this third survey, referred to as KAPB+, targeted women, men, girls and boys.

The overall scope of the KAPB+ survey was to assess the situation of mine/ERW affected communities and people in terms of effectiveness and impact of demining and MRE programmes in Afghanistan.

The specific objectives of the KAPB+ survey were to:

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1 Written by Samim Hashimi, Senior Projects Manager (MRE), MACCA, Afghanistan with technical support from Susan Helseth, Deputy Programme Director, MACCA Afghanistan, Kabul, June 2010
2 The 2009 KAPB+ questionnaire and pilot report are available on the MACCA website: www.macca.org.af
• assess the impact of demining and mine risk education activities on affected communities
• collect data on the knowledge, attitudes, practices and beliefs of Afghans working and living in areas where mine action activities have a high impact
• identify and recommend strategies for enhancing the effectiveness and impact of demining and mine risk education activities within the Afghan mine action programme
• learn lessons and identify gaps in order to improve the effectiveness of demining and mine risk education activities, particularly with regards to obtaining the views of women and involving them in programme planning and data collection
• analyse data and share it with relevant programme stakeholders
• improve mine action programme activities

MACCA opted to undertake a KAP+B survey because it is an established and relatively simple way of assessing MRE activities through local means and with existing resources. MACCA had previously implemented KAP surveys to do the following:

1. Justify resources spent on MRE:
   • did people learn about the dangers of mines and ERW?
   • were the methodologies effective?
   • did people learn how to identify and respond to mine/ERW dangers?

2. Ensure MRE activities are relevant in a changing environment:
   • which methodologies are most effective?
   • which target groups are under-served?
   • which messages need to be reinforced compared to risk behaviours and/or knowledge level?

3. Prioritise mine action activities better:
   • do community members understand how mine action activities are prioritised?
   • are the priorities of women and girls different from those of men and boys?
   • do mine action activities target a balance of priorities among all community members?
   • are communities satisfied with their involvement in mine action prioritisation?

UNICEF and MACCA developed the first KAP survey in 2004 through consultations with Afghan implementers and MRE experts, as well as inputs from international advisors. MACCA conducted a review of existing survey tools, including KAP surveys from other country projects, to provide sample questions and ideas. The survey team developed a questionnaire to answer the question: “Does MRE have an impact”. Before implementing the survey, the survey tool was extensively field tested by teams of personnel trained to provide MRE training to new MRE instructors. Field testing ensured question quality and provided needed training for future survey implementers and monitors.

With the assistance of UNICEF and international advisors, MACCA undertook a second KAPB survey in 2005. The survey was the same except that MACCA added questions about beliefs. MACCA thought that belief questions would provide better insight into the cultural context of Afghanistan and individual responsibility concerning the risk of mines. It also allowed the programme to compare data and see if there were significant changes in knowledge, attitude and practice. MAPA MRE partner agencies implemented this KAPB.

Data analysis proved to be the greatest challenge in the first KAPB survey. Although information collection was straightforward, the skills required to consolidate and report on findings were not available nationally. MACCA recruited an international consultant to analyse and report on the findings of the second KAPB and also to do the comparative analysis that formed the rationale of the second survey.
The approach used
MACCA implemented the third survey during the second half of 2009. It involved the Afghan Ministry of Education (MoE) teachers and child protection officers (CPO), female MRE trainers from the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) health clinics, and MRE teams from ARCS and Handicap International (HI), where security allowed. The 2009 survey ensured that 50 percent of the respondents were women and girls, and involved the use of more female surveyors than in the past.

Trained survey personnel were equipped with standardised questionnaires, as with previous KAPB surveys, which were successful. The survey teams gathered information from a variety of target groups, including children and adults with low or no literacy skills. Survey personnel made every attempt to go through each questionnaire in a practiced and routine way to ensure they exerted no influence over respondents. Answers were gathered and centrally entered into a database. MACCA again hired an international consultant to conduct the analysis.

The third survey has provided MACCA with male and female perspectives on MRE, mine action prioritisation, and the value of MRE and other mine action activities. The KAPB+ questionnaire focused on two groups of questions: “informative” and “evaluative”. Informative questions supplied information about the social, cultural and economic background of each interviewee. Evaluative questions were based on external valuation methods used to analyse the level of MRE received and attitudes towards risk and mine action activities.

This new KAPB+ tool was used to understand the level of knowledge, changed behaviour and perceptions of mine action among the Afghan population after exposure to demining and mine risk education activities. Moreover, MACCA will cross check previously collected data on mine victims and on demining activities in the provinces surveyed to help understand the effectiveness and impact of mine action programme activities.

Planning
Gathering information from individuals is the primary survey activity. However, this informs the programme about how well the activities are being implemented, received and understood at household, community and national levels.

Implementation of a KAPB survey should be driven by a desire to find the answers to particular questions that are quality and value driven. Are we doing a good job communicating, prioritising and raising awareness? Do people understand the risks associated with hazards? Do they value the activities we undertake? Do they have suggestions for improvement, etc? To answer these types of questions, key activities are required as listed below:
• identifying the purpose of the survey
• planning the survey (budgets, consultant contracts, locations, numbers of participants, field personnel)
• developing or updating the questionnaire
• identifying and training appropriate survey personnel
• implementing the survey
• data entry and cross check
• data analysis
• reporting to the end use

Implementation
MACCA, supported by the United Nations Mine Action Service, typically leads KAPB survey activities. MACCA decides why survey activities are justified, when and how the KAPB survey
should be implemented, and who will implement it. The Department of Mine Clearance (DMC), Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), Mine Action Implementing Partners and the Ministry of Education are usual participants in the planning and implementation process. In every Afghanistan KAPB survey, a specific implementing partner has provided international technical support, particularly for analysis and reporting, as this capacity has not been available locally.

Implementation of all of the activities, from the very beginning when the KAPB is first considered to the point where the final report is available, can take anywhere from six months to one year. The actual survey activities that have been implemented in Afghanistan often take only two to three weeks if sufficient staff are available. It is the data cleaning and analysis that takes time as well as expertise.

The MAPA is large and has sufficient personnel (75 MRE teams and MoE staff that include 122 Child Protection Officers and over 16,000 teachers) who can be diverted temporarily (two weeks) from their normal work routines. Under the guidance of the MACCA, they work as survey implementers, saving the programme the cost of actual field implementation. However, for the third KAPB in 2009, the MACCA required data input and analysis capacity, so it contracted an NGO for this function. The analysis was done by an international consultant, as the capacity to undertake the analysis was not available nationally. The cost of an international consultant and database management was USD 36,405.

MACCA briefed and trained the survey teams on the use of the survey tools and other requirements prior to the start of the survey. The cost of this activity was absorbed within the MACCA and implementing agency regular budgets so did not have a specific budget attached.

The capacity required to undertake a survey at the programme and oversight level requires personnel to have a good understanding of basic survey skills and the objectives of a KAPB survey. It is helpful but not mandatory for those coordinating or overseeing the implementation of a KAPB to also have basic knowledge of data entry and analysis.

Field testing of tools is important to ensure the survey teams have the capacity to implement the survey and use the required tools.

At the field and implementation levels, personnel should be provided with training to ensure that they understand what the KAPB seeks to accomplish and survey techniques and methodology. It is also helpful if survey personnel have previous survey experience to ensure that the KAPB is implemented in a professional and standardised manner.

Specific database development and management is required for data input and analysis. Personnel with knowledge of data entry and cross-checking can ensure the quality of data for analysis. Personnel with data analysis capabilities that enable the data to be used, and information to be gathered for programme growth, are critical for the final output of the report and recommendations. In Afghanistan, all KAPB surveys were done with the support of international expertise for the data cross-check, analysis and reporting components.

The survey methodology mainstreams gender and diversity considerations. Equal numbers of men, women, boys and girls were interviewed in the 2009 KAPB+ survey. Survey teams were specifically tasked to reach all mentioned targets from community leaders, teachers and parent committees and community members to ensure gender parity, economic and social diversity and a range of ages. Each successive survey has interviewed a new set of people from different communities and provinces.

Data is analysed by:
• looking at the number of people who responded to each question and comparing those numbers to a specific answer and to those who answered they do not know; this provides a degree of understanding of percentages of people who are informed, who are not informed and what they know or don’t know (how many know versus how many do not know and how many know what)
• comparing previous years’ answers to the new survey data (variants in understanding from year to year)
• showing abnormalities or exceptions to certain circumstances (in a province where there are no mines and no mine clearance operations, some people felt they were not informed well and that mine action activities were not operating sufficiently)

The data is used to tell the programme if what they do is being done well, if people understand, and whether the methodologies are good.

Analysis
KAPB surveys are cluster surveys, which try to get an understanding of what is happening in the field. They do not collect quantitative data. While this methodology has its limitations, it is useful for assessing general knowledge, and is relatively inexpensive to facilitate. However, entering the results in a database and analysing them is resource-intensive.

The main challenges involved in implementing the KAPB survey include the following:
• security challenges often restrict access to geographic areas that might have cultural or economic differences that would affect the way people respond to questions
• cultural restrictions may be a barrier and create challenges that staff are fearful of crossing; this may impair their ability to gain access to women and girls which affects the gender parity of the respondents, as well as age variations among girls and women
• geographic access is also a challenge as many MRE and demining operations take place in remote and seasonally inaccessible areas; this restricts the areas of KAPB survey operations to certain times of the year
• lack of expertise of field staff and the requirement to provide training to staff geographically spread throughout the country
• underestimated budget considerations for KAPB in a changing environment could restrict the scope
• security is often a challenge; sometimes it is very difficult, even impossible to reach all target communities/groups
• lack of female staff to conduct surveys and reach women and girls
• lack of professional staff to design, develop, implement and do the analysis and reporting

One of the lessons learnt was the need to identify gaps and improve MACCA priority setting. Identifying gaps highlights areas for which improvements can be made that include changes in outreach or methodologies of training. MACCA found that media plays a more important role in terms of raising awareness among affected communities than was previously thought. MACCA also recognised that gender does play a role in priority setting and that greater effort to reach out to all sectors of society is important to ensure all voices are heard. The KAPB pilot confirmed our priority setting activities, but highlighted the need to review our planning processes.

KAPB surveys are traditionally implemented by MRE actors. However, MACCA also learnt that within the Afghanistan programme, involving other sectors of mine action such as planning, community liaison and clearance assets can:
• improve survey value
• add needed information that MRE implementers might not consider important but find useful later
• enable other mine action sectors to participate in a survey activity which they would not normally be involved in, enabling them to benefit from new knowledge coming from the communities they serve

Specific recommendations include:
• develop survey questions carefully
• ensure survey personnel have sufficient training in order to ensure valid results
• field test survey tools to make sure they work and provide surveyors with field training
• monitor the survey process to ensure quality

Outcomes
Despite required amendments in planned implementation due to insecurity in some parts of the country and some environmental aspects, the 2009 survey achieved its objectives. Access to some highly impacted communities in parts of the country, especially the south, was difficult due to insecurity. However, this was a problem for all three KAPB surveys.

The initial findings of the KAPB+ survey reveal that MRE messages are being received through the projects that are implemented. However, greater community involvement is required to ensure that clearance activities are targeted according to the needs and priorities of the people. Specific survey findings include:
• people receive MRE information about the dangers of mines and ERW
• people understand the dangers, warning signs, etc
• people say the information influences their behaviour
• clearance priorities are considered good
• benefits of mine clearance are good
• sufficiency of mine clearance is lacking in that there are still mines
• community involvement in mine action is required for proper prioritisation

MACCA will use the outcomes of the KAPB+ survey to raise awareness within relevant actors (UNMAS, UNOPS, MACCA, MAPA partner NGOs and governmental counterparts) to the issues of mine action, to best practices and to encouraging change where needed. In response to the findings, MACCA now ensures that the views of all people (women, girls, men and boys) are considered in the prioritisation and planning of clearance and MRE activities.