

# Mine Action Support Group

---



**UNMAS**

**UNMAS AFGHANISTAN**

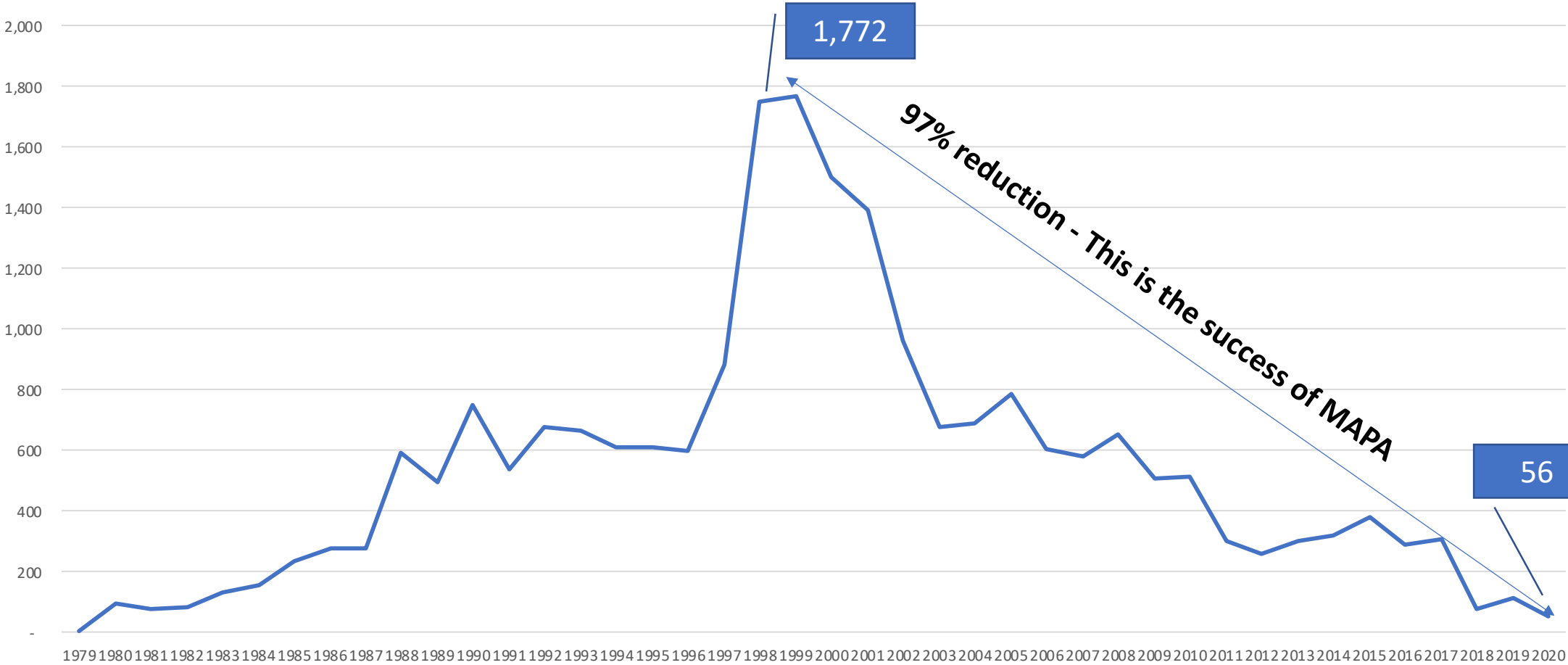
May 2021



# Vision 2024

- **Afghans benefit from humanitarian and development initiatives unimpeded by explosive ordnance.**
- **DMAC has alternative multi-year commitments from international donors and the Ministry of Finance of Afghanistan.**
- **MAPA is engaged in large scale clearance of improvised mines**
- **Fewer access impediments and security incidents, and quicker resolution of issues when they arise**
- **UNMAS supports peace process e.g., through DDR, SSR and clearance projects**
- **Improved rights, access to services and financing of assistance to those impacted and impaired by explosive ordnance in the past.**

# Impact: Civilian Casualty by pre-2001 Contamination (1979-2020)





View of West Kabul during mine clearance 1998



View of the same neighborhood 2021

## Success of Mine Action in Afghanistan

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** km<sup>2</sup> 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)

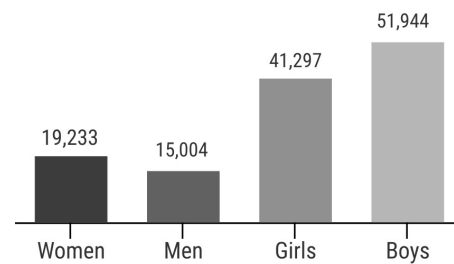
In 2020, UNMAS has helped Afghanistan to:

## Achievements 2020

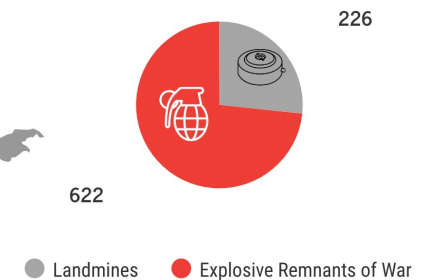
### Clear 15 sq. km. of contaminated land

- 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

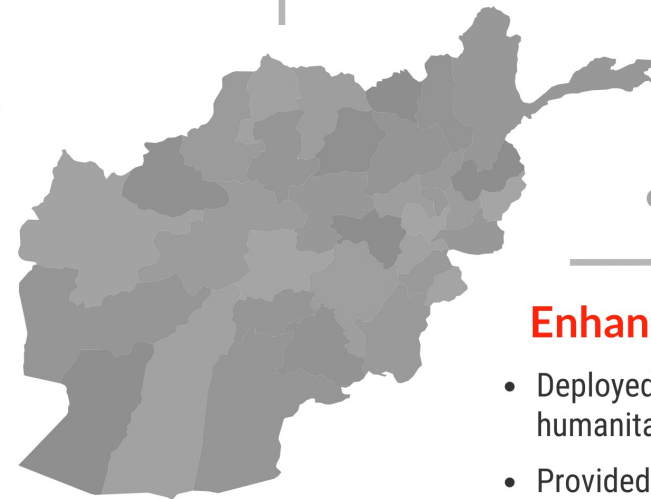


### Destroy 848 landmines and Explosive Remnants of War



### 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

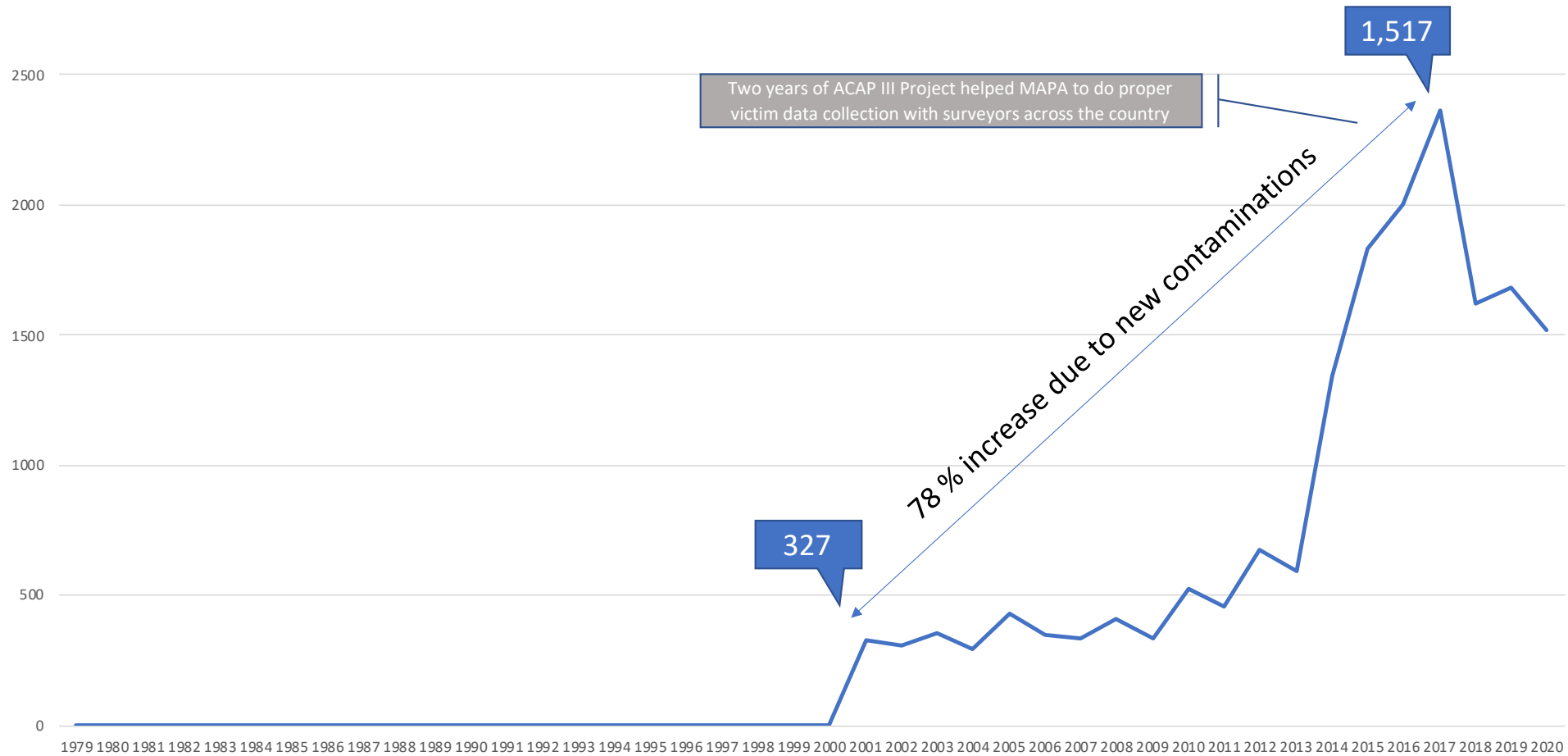
Access and Security

US Troop Withdrawal and Peace Process

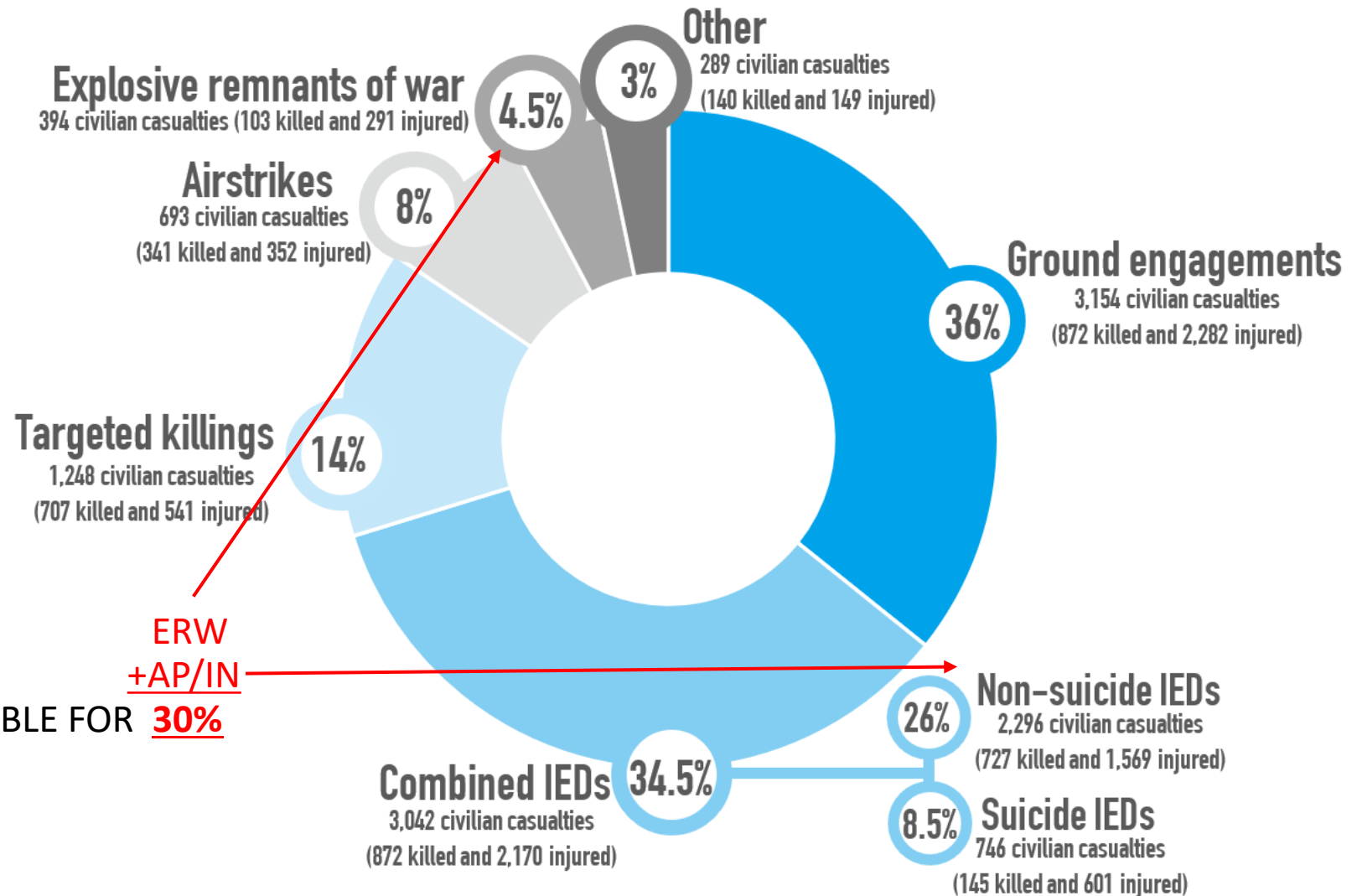
Supporting safe returns and humanitarian delivery

Funding Required

# Threat: Civilian Casualties by Post 2001 Contamination



# Trend Analysis for 2020 – Civilian Casualties

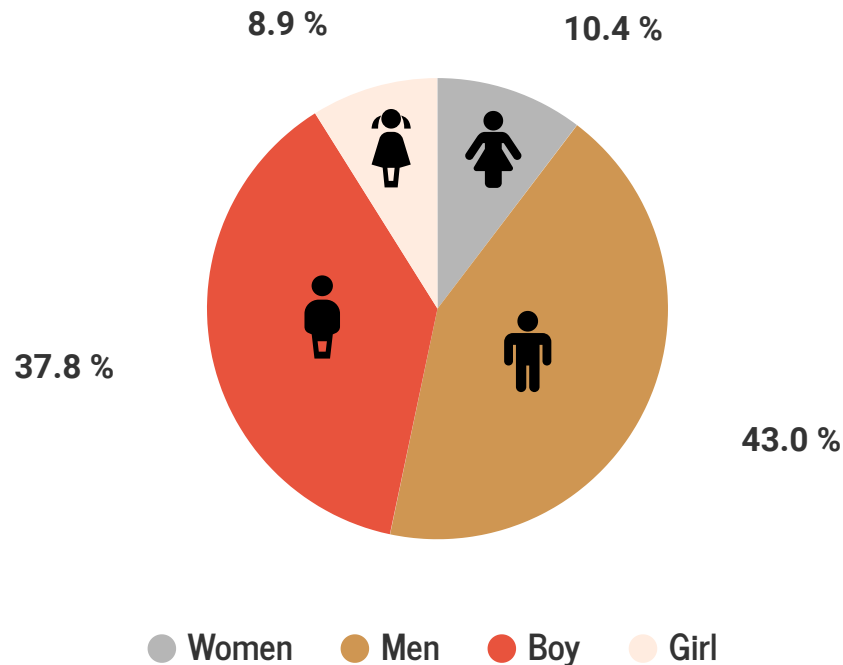


EXPLOSIVE HAZARDS RESPONSIBLE FOR **30%**

# Summary of Explosive Hazard Casualties 2020

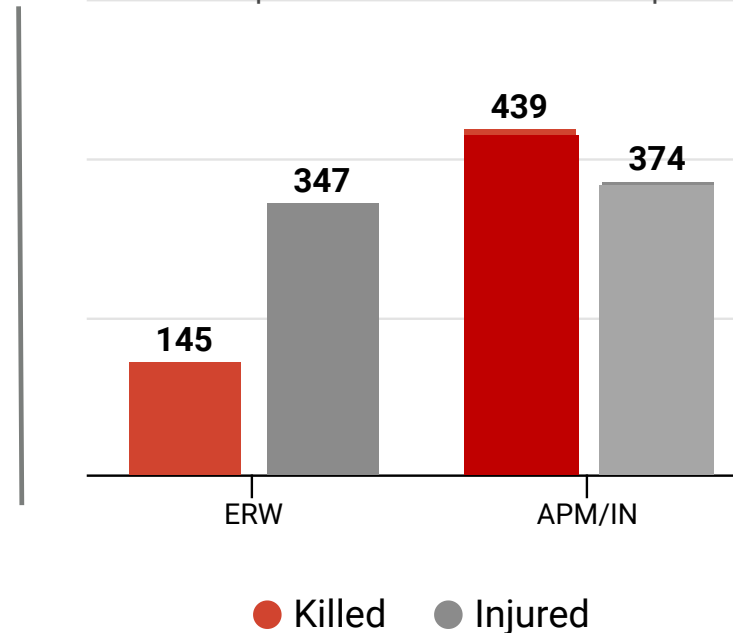
Anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature (APM/IN) and ERW from more recent armed clashes caused **98.8 percent** of the explosive hazard-related casualties recorded in 2020. In the same year, **more than 72 percent of the ERW casualties were children.**

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



### Breakdown of Casualties By Devices- Jan to Nov 2020

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 - 1<sup>st</sup> 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 AMASUNMAS 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

	IN APRIL 2021	IN 2021	
	117	620	total number of access incidents
	25	106	total incidents related to health workers or facilities
	2	11	aid workers killed
	3	27	aid workers injured
	6	36	aid workers abducted

## Humanitarian Access

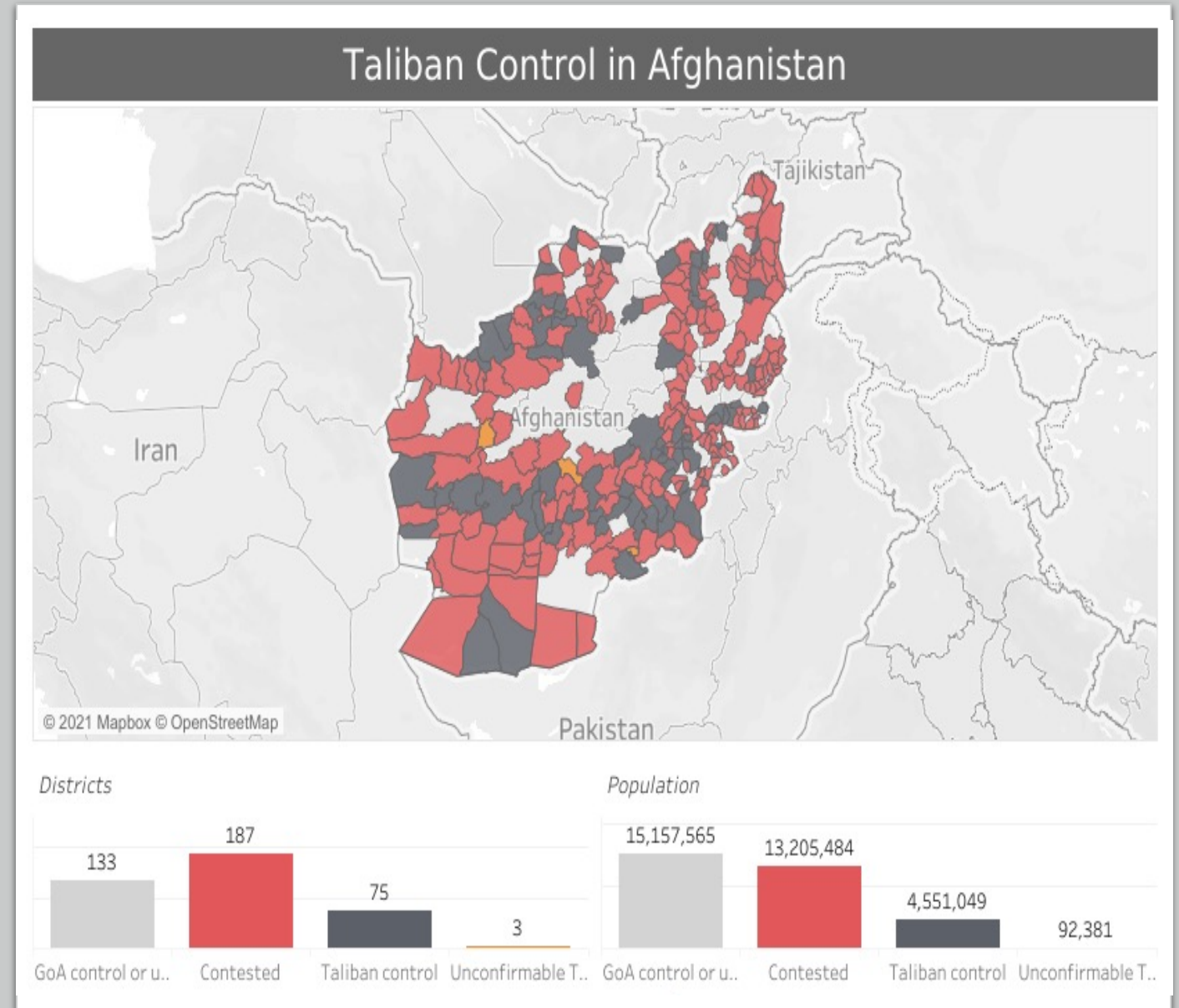
Humanitarian operations are frequently disrupted by conflict, IEDs, bureaucratic processes, and checkpoints.

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.

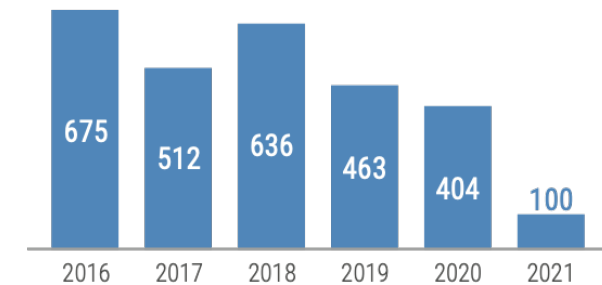
# Supporting Returns and Humanitarian Delivery

- 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

■ Number of IDPs (thousands)



- Highly vulnerable to explosive hazard risk
- In 2020, UNMAS funded EORE reached 127,000 returnees and IDPs at encashment and transit and zero-point centers

# Funding Needs

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

# Exit Strategy



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?

**UNMAS thanks the following donors for their generous support for 2020 - 2021:**

**Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Netherlands, Denmark, New Zealand, CERF and Japan.**