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PM/WRA Director Jim Lawrence Retires, Leaves a Legacy by Crawford [from page 6]

1. Stacy Bernard Davis, email correspondence with author. 3 December 2012.
2. H. Murphey McCloy, email correspondence with author. 14 January 2013.
3. John Stevens, email correspondence with author. 4 December 2012.
4. Dennis Barlow, email correspondence with author. 21 December 2012.
5. Jerry White, email correspondence with author. 9 December 2012.
6. Donald (Pat) Patierno, email correspondence with author. 14 January 2013.
7. Ken Rutherford, email correspondence with author. 10 January 2013.
8. Ralph Cwerman, email correspondence with author. 19 December 2012.

Building Capacity to Clear ERW in Georgia by Kvinikadze [from page 12]

1. "Deepening Relations with Georgia." *NATO OTN: Backgrounder*. <http://tinyurl.com/cjl3624>. Accessed 18 December 2012.

A Review of External Post-clearance Inspection: How Cost-effective Is It? by Gilbert and Larsson [from page 16]

1. "International Mine Action Standards." *GICHD*. <http://tinyurl.com/c9vpvch>. Accessed 16 August 2012.
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Legal Aspects of the Land Release Process by Lodhammar [from page 20]

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Minesweepers: Towards a Landmine-Free Egypt, an Outdoor Humanitarian Demining Robotic Competition by Khamis [from page 24]

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2. "Minesweepers: Towards a Landmine-Free Egypt." *Minesweepers: Towards a Landmine-Free Egypt*. <http://tinyurl.com/d3y8r9w>. Accessed 10 December 2012.
3. "Egypt." *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor*. <http://tinyurl.com/94b58tb>. Accessed 17 January 2012.
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How to Improve Demining Activities Through the Integration of Gender-sensitive Mine Risk Education by Jones, Bini and Varó [from page 28]

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2. "Emergency Mine Risk Education Toolkit. Emergency MRE Handbook." First edition. UNICEF. New York, July 2008. <http://uni.cf/NxXhYM>. Accessed 13 July 2012.
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Post-conflict Recovery: Gender and Age Issues by Varó and Hamo [from page 32]

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2. *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, Article 6(3), Oslo, 18 September 1997.
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Detecting and Classifying UXO by Beran, Zelt and Billing [from page 57]

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Manizha Rasheed Kamal



Manizha Rasheed Kamal accepts her certificate at the closing dinner of the 2012 Senior Managers' Course held by the Center of International Stabilization and Recovery at James Madison University.
Photo courtesy of JMU photo services.

With a law degree from Preston University in Pakistan and in her current role as a contracts-management coordinator at the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan, Manizha Rasheed Kamal has more education and experience than many other Afghan women. “I was born into an educated [Afghan] family. My father allowed me to get an education, even during the Taliban time when all schools were closed for girls [in Afghanistan],”

she says. Fortunately for Kamal and her sisters, her parents moved the family to Pakistan in order to provide their daughters the opportunity to continue their education. While in Pakistan, Kamal and her sisters sewed burkas to pay for their schooling. Kamal worked throughout the day and attended university in the evenings until she attained her degree.

When she completed her education and could return safely to Afghanistan, she moved to Kabul seeking a position

that would accept her as a woman with strong qualifications. Although she is highly educated, securing a well-paying, responsible job in a mine action (or any) organization in Afghanistan is not easy for a woman.

Gender Discrimination

For Kamal, a woman working in Afghanistan presents its own unique challenges. During the five years of Taliban-controlled Afghan government (1996–2001), women were prevented from receiving an education and were not allowed to leave the house without permission from a male relative. This mindset carried over into today's society, with many men in the country restricting the opportunities for women to work outside of the home.

Kamal observed that even in situations where mothers, daughters, sisters and wives are permitted to hold a job, their opportunities and rights are limited in the workplace. Lack of education contributes to the problem. Women uninformed of their rights do not know what is available to them. Many organizations attempt to educate Afghan women through programs and training, but community elders, groups traditionally comprised only of males, discourage it.

Kamal is fortunate that her parents valued their daughters' education. As the eldest child in her family, she solely supports her parents and sisters. When her husband's family asked for her to marry their son, she would not agree to marriage unless she was allowed to continue working to support her family. They eventually agreed and she says, "I am happy that my husband is an open-mind[ed] person so he allows me to work."

Kamal was honored to attend the 2012 Senior Managers' Course in ERW and Mine Action at James Madison University as the first woman from Afghanistan. On the opportunity to attend the course, she says, "I gained a lot. Before [I attended the SMC] I was just only focused on the contract work, but now I think about the overall program strategy, planning, quality assurance, human resource and finance."

The Changing Workplace

However, working in a male-dominated society is difficult. When MACCA hired her in 2003, she was one of only two women working there. She says that when she first began at MACCA, the Taliban threatened her by saying, "Do not work. Do not support foreigners." Then early in 2012, the Taliban

sent letters to her house, demanding she stop working. Instead, Kamal held her ground.

"I did not want to stop working, so I changed my home. I am trying to work for my country and encourage women to work and build their capacity." Today, nine years after she began working at MACCA, it now employs 32 women in MAPA.

In her position as contracts management coordinator, Kamal oversees the processes by which implementing partners are selected and donor funds to the UN Mine Action Service administered Voluntary Trust Fund for Mine Action are allocated. Contracts with implementing partners are designed to create an outline of the operation plan, expected cost and the ways in which a contract will coincide with international and national mine action standards. Kamal seeks to ensure that the demining work in Afghanistan is contracted by IPs that provide the greatest value for the donor's money in a transparent and thorough manner.

MACCA is supported technically and financially by the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and on behalf of the government of Afghanistan coordinates the work of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan, one of the largest organizations of its kind and the world's first humanitarian mine action program.¹ For the past two decades, MAPA partners have worked to demine Afghanistan, clearing more than 20,000 hazardous areas, but the endeavor is unfinished.² Estimates indicate that 570.9 sq m (247.1 sq mi) of Afghanistan is still contaminated, affecting 1,717 communities. In addition, Afghanistan, a State Party to the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and their Destruction* (Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention or APMBC), submitted an extension request in March 2012 to extend its mine impact-free deadline to 2023.³

Kamal hopes that one day, she will have the opportunity to earn a degree in law, and advocate in the government of Afghanistan working for women's rights. She intends to send her children to an international school to acquire their education; she further expects them to bring that experience back to work in Afghanistan. Kamal wishes that one day women in Afghanistan will be free to pursue any job without threat of repercussions. ©

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~ Paige Ober, CISR staff

AICMA Helps Demine Nicaragua's Gocen District

The Gocen district of the Mateare municipality in Chiltepe Peninsula, 20 km (12 mi) outside of Managua, Nicaragua, was contaminated with explosive remnants of war from the artillery school that operated nearby. With support from *Acción Integral Contra las Minas Antipersonal* (Comprehensive Action Against Antipersonnel Mines, AICMA), a program of the Organization of American States, a large portion of the contaminated land in Gocen was cleared and released in 2012.

by Addison Embrey [Monterey Institute of International Studies]

Nicaragua's Sandinista Revolution (1974–1979) claimed 35,000 lives and the Contra War (1979–1990) claimed 43,000 lives, with a total death toll of 78,000 people after the two conflicts.¹ Although the Esquipulas II Accord was signed in August 1987, a cease-fire was not achieved in Nicaragua until 1990.² Guerrilla groups and military forces left behind landmines and unexploded ordnance throughout the country, including UXO at training sites such as the one at Gocen. By the end of 2011, there were known casualties due to landmines, UXO and other devices (92 killed/1,207 injured).³

The roughly 600 residents who reside in the Gocen district were subject to this daily threat. The current inhabitants retired from the army before settling on the lands at Gocen near Lake Xiloá. Their petitions to the government resulted in the legalization of the plots they claimed. Community coordinator, Geovanny Pastora facilitated among the different entities involved, and each family received an average of roughly 1 hectare (2.5 ac) of land. This land however, had formerly belonged to the Nicaraguan Army School of Sergeants (noncommissioned officers), and



Members of Nicaragua's Army Engineer Corps use UPEX-740 metal detectors to find unexploded ordnance in Chiltepe, Gocen district, Nicaragua.

All photos courtesy of the Organization of American States.

students used it as a firing range to practice artillery gunnery. When the settlers began working the land, they realized that UXO littered the area. Because the district is considered impoverished, concern arose that citizens would collect explosive remnants of war to sell as scrap for income, increasing the risk of injury or death.³

The Organization of American States partnered with the Nicaraguan Army Engineer Corps and Golden West Humanitarian Foundation to conduct a land rehabilitation project. Residents from the communities within the Gocen district experienced firsthand how they, their local authorities, the Nicaraguan military, OAS and the



Unexploded ordnance cleared from land in Gocen district, Nicaragua.

GWHF transformed lives through effective collaboration. OAS provided political and diplomatic support for the project. *Integral Contra las Minas Antipersonal* (Comprehensive Action Against Antipersonnel Mines, AICMA) partnered with GWHF to conduct technical field surveys and training, and the Nicaraguan Army Engineers provided equipment and personnel support.

AICMA

In 2011 an individual from the Gocen district was injured when UXO detonated near him. In the following days, the communities in the district filed a joint complaint when 37 additional items of UXO were discovered in the surrounding area. Military officials reviewed the complaints and rapidly coordinated with the OAS program, AICMA.

AICMA assistance to Nicaragua dates back to 1991 when AICMA and Nicaragua developed a national demining plan after the country requested assistance from the Secretary General of OAS. Of Nicaragua's 15 departments, 14 were found to be contaminated with anti-personnel mines.⁴ The national demining project took about 19 years to complete. Entire minefields were discovered within a kilometer of at least 284 communities. In total, an estimated 181,000 AP mines were

emplaced over 1,029 areas throughout the country.⁵ In April 2010 Nicaragua completed its national demining plan and declared Nicaragua and the entire region of Central America mine-free.

Mine-free, however, does not refer to other UXO left from the conflict or related activities. Since 2010, the OAS program has designed projects to assist Nicaragua in destroying 258,086 munitions of varying types and calibers, a total exceeding 900 tons. In 2011 AICMA helped clear 721,900 sq m (178 ac) of land in Las Palomas in the Matagalpa department. In completing these clearance projects, AICMA focused on three fundamental pillars: victim identification and assistance; prevention and response to reports; and rehabilitation of cleared land.

Gocen District: A Success Story

During the preliminary stages of the Gocen district project in 2011, which involved establishing long-term relationships with affected communities, AICMA proposed a plan to conduct clearance of those plots of land presenting the greater risks to the community. AICMA and Nicaragua's Corps of Engineers drew upon past in-country accomplishments and experiences. In the international development world, best

practice is the duplication and modification of previous experiences to produce similar results. To clear contaminated lands, the communities in Chiltepe peninsula also received technical assistance and consulting services from GWHF. Specific to Chiltepe, GWHF trained Nicaraguan military engineers on how to operate the UPEX-740 metal detector, a novel large-loop device to locate buried caches.

The residents of the Gocen district provided their knowledge of the area and guided experts and officials to the UXO. This helped to set the priorities for clearance, minimized the risk of the operation to the military engineers and demonstrated how the local residents—who make a living from the land—played an active role in building their community's future. This specific, sustainable and unique aspect of the project is one of the main reasons why OAS member states continue requesting AICMA's assistance.

In addition to coordinating priorities in clearance operations, AICMA also conducted community liaison at the Gocen district, working to obtain support for the project from the general population and community leaders. Also, because the Gocen District could not be cleared completely at the time with available resources, AICMA conducted awareness campaigns to encourage safe behaviors among local youth, the most at-risk group in the region.

In July 2012 the project was completed and the immediate surrounding area declared safe. The project consisted of clearing an area of 79,142 sq m (20 ac) and the subsequent removal of 909 items of UXO that were discovered, of which 904 were high caliber and 47 were unstable. In addition, more than 6,000 pieces of metal debris were discovered and removed during the clearance process. The land has since been turned

over to the Gocen district communities; the military, AICMA and GWHF no longer operate in the area.

According to the OAS–AICMA project coordinator, as of 2012, 10 plots of land were successfully cleared, and local residents began cultivating crops. Local actors and residents of the Gocen district, the Nicaraguan Army Engineer Corps, AICMA, civil society and GWHF worked together to remedy the contamination from an otherwise productive land, working toward a landmine- and ERW-free future for Nicaragua. The collaborative leadership exemplified in this project is a success story. Here, the accumulated momentum will help encourage needed clearance operations in the future. Through the AICMA program, which was responsible for implementing munitions clearance and land remediation in the Gocen district, Chiltepe peninsula, OAS helps other member countries fulfill their national demining goals and collaboratively destroy remnants of war. ©

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The author would like to thank Carlos José Orozco, AICMA's Regional Coordinator for Central America, for his assistance with this article. Note: Mr. Orozco, in coordination with Nicaragua's Corps of Engineers, devised the land rehabilitation project in Nicaragua's Gocen district.



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