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Information Exchange

CISR offers on-the-ground management and mine-awareness training and victim-assistance programs and services; facilitates innovative post-conflict recovery workshops and conferences; researches a variety of post-conflict issues; and offers resource materials through its information-exchange services including online and print media and content-rich websites, all focusing on post-conflict topics related to mine action and victim assistance.

CISR collaborates with many international partner organizations, including the U.S. Departments of State and Defense, the United Nations and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, among others. In 2011, the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recognized CISR as a leader in a post-conflict issue, and in 2008 the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations recognized JMU as one of 10 U.S. universities uniquely qualified to support State Department and United States Agency for International Development tasks.

Information Exchange

CISR functions as an information clearinghouse, gathering, managing and distributing information about global mine action through an interactive website, publications and related research. CISR’s website includes the CISR Sphered Blog — mine-action forums, an international job announcement board, publications and the Global Mine Action Registry — connecting people and organizations with resources throughout the world. CISR’s staff regularly updates the website with new developments in the field and is available to assist in researching questions related to clearance and recovery efforts.

Published three times a year, the CISR publication, The Journal of ERW and Mine Action, is sponsored by the Office of Weapon’s Removal and Abatement in the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Political Military Affairs (PM/WRA). The Journal was first published in 1997 and is the longest continuous source of explosive-remnants-of-war and mine-action information in the world. It reaches more than 1,800 readers in print and 170,000 online readers in 180 countries. Each themed issue contains editorials, articles on current clearance and recovery projects; reports on topics such as victim assistance, mine-risk education and field studies; book reviews; organization and/or country profiles; mine-related news; and the latest in research and development in the industry. The R&D section, supported by the U.S. Department of Defense’s Humanitarian Demining Research and Development Program, contains peer-reviewed articles describing new technology for clearance efforts and study results of equipment and technology tests.

CISR also publishes To Walk the Earth in Safety, the U.S. Department of State’s annual report on its global work in landmine removal and conventional weapons destruction. In addition, CISR publishes other useful resources, including, for example, the Landmine Action Smart Book, detailing background information and the key components of the mine-action pillars; the Adaptive Technology Catalog, providing in-depth listings of practical products to meet the needs of resource-limited persons with disabilities; and Landmine and Mine Casualty Data: Best Practices.

CISR conducts mine-action and victim-assistance research and publishes reports about the findings. In May 2011, CISR concluded a two-year study of the effects of aging on landmines for the U.S. Department of State. The results and findings of the study are available on CISR’s website. In partnership with GFCHD, CISR is currently conducting a four-country analysis and study of the use of landmine victim-assistance information as part of comprehensive mine-action national programing.

International Training

CISR continues to serve as the global leader for senior management training programs. Since 2004, CISR annually conducts a five-week ERW and Mine Action Senior Managers’ Course, providing high-level management training for officials and experts conducting clearance, demilitarization and conventional weapons efforts throughout the world. Sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme from 2005 through 2009 and by PM/WRA since 2010, the course combines the expertise of CISR staff members and JMU College of Business faculty with that of demining and post-conflict recovery experts. The courses are hosted by CISR at JMU, and the most recent course was held 16 May–13 June 2012 for 17 participants from 14 countries.

From 2009 to 2011, CISR and the JMU College of Business faculty facilitated a sister course to the SMC in Amman, Jordan, working with Jordan’s National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation to deliver the ERW Senior Managers Training Course.

Casualty Data: Best Practice Guidelines

Casualty Data: Best Practice Guidelines continue to support State Department and United States Agency for International Development tasks.

Other Services

Supported by PM/WRA and working with Jordan’s NCDR, CISR and a Jordanian NGO, Life Line Consultancy and Rehabilitation, jointly developed the “We Love Life” play, a psycho-educational drama and creative arts performance. This play, in Arabic, provides MRE to children and young adults, teaching mine-warning signs, safe behaviors and social sensitivity to survivors. The play was performed by disabled actors for more than 25,000 people in Jordan in 2008 and 2009. It has also been performed in Lebanon, and the team plans to use this MRE program in other neighboring countries.

Additionally, CISR administers the annual Fragile
Kruzel-Drew Humanitarian Mine Action Fellowship with PM/WRA, funding one JMU graduate to work at PM/WRA in Washington, D.C. for a year. The fellowship is named after three former U.S. officials who lost their lives in an automobile accident in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995, while working to develop the concurrent course.

Each April CISR hosts a Post-Conflict Recovery Week at JMU that includes a range of humanitarian UXO and mine-clearance activities. Past activities include demonstrations using mock minefields, lectures with keynote speakers, including landmine survivors and international clearance experts, movies and a variety of other activities that highlight the continuing global humanitarian impact of landmines and ERW. Post-Conflict Recovery Week 2012 was held 2-5 April at James Madison University.

“As a landmine survivor myself, I understand how challenging recovery is,” says CISR Director Dr. Ken Rutherford. “Whether it’s through our victim-assistance workshops, training programs for trauma counselors in low-resource environments, or our studies and publications, CISR is committed to standing with communities until peace is achieved.”

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