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## National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation

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## National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation

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Jordan has been contaminated by landmines and explosive remnants war from various armed conflicts during the second half of the 20th century: the division of Palestine in 1948, the Arab-Israeli conflict in the late 1960s, civil war in 1970 and the 1975 conflict with Syria.<sup>1</sup> In an effort to remove the threat of landmines to economic and residential development, the Jordanian Armed Forces began clearing the estimated 305,000 landmines in 1993. Then in 1998, Jordan became the first nation in the Middle East to sign the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction* (also known as the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention or APMBC).<sup>2</sup>

### A Coordinated Response

To coordinate all national actions related to ERW and landmines in Jordan, the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation in Jordan was established in 2000.<sup>2</sup> NCDR's work is divided into five departments: Operations, Finance and Accounting, Planning, Risk Awareness and Victim Assistance, and Training.<sup>3</sup>

The Operations Department oversees all clearance activities undertaken by local and international partners such as Norwegian People's Aid and the Royal Engineering Corps. Current demining

efforts focus on Jordan's northern border with Syria and the Jordan Valley.<sup>4</sup> The Operations Department and its partners follow the International Mine Action Standards.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, in December 2010, Omar Bani-Salaam, a Jordanian deminer working with NPA, was killed when an anti-tank mine exploded during clearance operations along Jordan's northern border. Bani-Salaam was a retired engineer and is survived by his wife and 8 children.<sup>5</sup>

The Finance/Accounting Department works closely with senior management and the Operations Department to provide efficiency, transparency and reliable information to enhance decision-making by both managers and donors.<sup>3</sup>

The Planning Department gathers and analyzes data about landmines and ERW in Jordan. From 2008 to 2011, this department completed a large ERW assessment of 296 communities.<sup>6</sup> During this three-year span, 524 ERW incidents



caused 730 casualties, and children comprised 60 percent of the victims.<sup>7</sup>

### Risk Education

With the continuous support of donors and partners, NCDR's Risk Awareness and Victim Assistance Department successfully delivers ERW risk education to all high-risk communities in Jordan, fulfilling its three main goals: informing people about the risks of ERW, changing behavior to mitigate the ERW threat and decreasing the number of incidents.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1: Phase I (April 2007–August 2008)**

Affected Communities Covered	Beneficiaries		
	Direct	Indirect	Total
32	104,000	100,000	204,000

**Table 2: Phase II (August 2008–September 2009)**

Affected Communities Covered	Beneficiaries		
	Direct	Indirect	Total
28	110,000	100,000	210,000

**Table 3: Phase III (September 2009–August 2011)**

Affected Communities Covered	Beneficiaries		
	Direct	Indirect	Total
74	124,612	125,000	250,000

Groups identified by assessment surveys and casualty data as a priority for mine-risk education include farmers, shepherds, children, adolescents, soldiers, forest rangers, smugglers and other community members moving through or living in affected areas. A newly identified group, emerging in the last five years, includes scrap-metal collectors and dealers.<sup>3</sup>

The Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA) has funded an ongoing project of community liaison and mine-risk education since 2007. The first phases of the MRE program focused on the affected communities in Al Balqa', Az Zarqa', Irbid, Jarash, Mafraq and the Jordan Valley. See Tables 1, 2 and 3 for details. Between April 2007 and September 2011, the project reached 665,000 individuals in 137 communities. The final phase of the project began in September 2011 and will complete the MRE

program in the northern and central regions of Jordan. Similarly, from May 2010 to October 2011, a NATO-funded risk-education project targeted 25 communities in the northern governorates of Ajlun, Az Zarqa' and Jarash and met its goal of reaching 100,000 individuals.<sup>3</sup>

Partnering with James Madison University's Center for International Stabilization and Recovery and Jordan's Life Line for Consultancy and Rehabilitation, NCDR developed the "**We Love Life**" play, also funded by PM/WRA. This interactive drama teaches children to recognize and avoid ERW, and focuses on victim assistance and social sensitivity to survivors. During the first four months of 2009, more than 15,462 people saw the play.<sup>8</sup> In 2010, the play was performed 20 times for more than 10,000 children.<sup>9</sup> The theater team also performed in Lebanon and hopes to show the play in other Arabic-speaking countries as well.<sup>8</sup>

### **Victim Assistance**

Among its many projects, NCDR's Risk Awareness and Victim Assistance Department drafted national victim-assistance standards, worked with partners to provide orthopedic and prosthetic training to clinicians and technicians, and assisted in establishing the National Centre for Rehabilitation of Amputees in 2006.<sup>10</sup>

With funding from PM/WRA, Polus Center for Social and Economic Development, in partnership with NCDR, launched a multi-dimensional project to improve the quality and accessibility of orthotic, prosthetic and wheelchair services in Jordan in September 2011. The project established and equipped a prosthetic/orthotic center at the Princess Basma Hospital in Irbid in northern Jordan. In addition, the project created small business development opportunities for ERW survivors. Thus far, 25 survivors have received loans of JD 1,500–2,500 (US\$2,113–3,522)<sup>11</sup> to create their own income-generating businesses.<sup>3</sup>

### **International Training**

NCDR's Training Department organizes international courses for regional deminers. In July 2011, supported by PM/WRA, NCDR organized the first Regional ERW Quality Management Course in Arabic for 13 participants from six countries.<sup>12</sup>

Also funded by PM/WRA, NCDR organized its third ERW International Senior Managers Training Course in October 2011 in Amman, Jordan, the final course in a three-year project.<sup>13</sup> This training, conducted in English, gathered 21 senior mine/ERW officials from 15 countries with the aim of educating, networking and maximizing the effectiveness of clearance and rehabilitation efforts.<sup>14</sup> The courses were led by experts from NCDR, CISR, the United Nations Development Programme and other organizations.<sup>13</sup> Six professors of management from James Madison University offered a more condensed management program for this four-week program than is provided in CISR's five-week Senior Managers' Course. Jordan's course also included more of a field emphasis, capitalizing on NCDR's mine-clearance projects and post-clearance recovery programs.<sup>15</sup> Jordan's ERWTC program will conclude in February 2012, and at present no future trainings are planned.<sup>16</sup>

### **Administration and Future Plans**

Coordinating these departments, NCDR has 16 staff in its office in Amman, Jordan. The chairman, His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Al Hussein, joined NCDR after serving in the military and in many humanitarian and charity organizations.<sup>17</sup>

Sponsored by His Majesty King Abdullah II, NCDR held a high profile event on 24 April 2012 to preview its May 1, 2012 announcement of its "minefield free" status, meeting its deadline in Article 5 of the APMB. Jordan also aims to have all ERW cleared by December 2012.<sup>2</sup> Though all known mines will be cleared according to Article 5 guidelines, verification processes and spot clearance of residual mines will continue in the Jordan Valley and along the northern border.<sup>16</sup>

~ Rachael Weber, CISR staff

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