

A NOTE FROM INTERIM DIRECTOR Suzanne Fiederlein, Ph.D.



Welcome to our **twenty-fifth edition of *The Journal***. Sometimes it's a good idea to know where you've been to know where you're going. With this in mind, our team spent considerable time reviewing all sixty-four issues of *The Journal* and what an informative, humbling, and rewarding exercise it's been. With over 1,700 articles published over the course of twenty-five years, *The Journal* is a historical narrative and timeline of the evolution of mine action within the context of the global world in which it operates, reflecting the growth and decline of key trends and topics, highlighting successes and challenges, and bringing attention to ever-evolving programs and technology. Familiar personalities in mine action as well as new contributors working outside of the field have all shared their unique perspectives, insights, and experiences, expanding the breadth of knowledge of our community as we prepare for the future.

We're proud of the pertinent, timely, and valuable information the community of action has contributed in this twenty-fifth edition, with articles highlighting the history of mine action; successful completion of clearance in the Falkland Islands; continuing evolution of explosive ordnance risk education; the use of virtual reality to aid survivors and demining programs; mine action in Ukraine and the Middle East; and innovative programs in data analysis, machine learning, and small arms and weapons destruction. Additionally, reflecting broader global trends and their effects on mine action, we feature articles on mental health and mine action; the ongoing effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic on operations; environmental concerns of clearance; and how we can reframe stereotypical gender narratives in the realm of mine action reporting.

One of the benefits of this pandemic has been our ability to virtually communicate with one another: from attending meetings, symposia, workshops, and seminars, to chatting virtually with our authors, the mine action community has been able to meet despite isolation and separation from one another. With this in mind, we hope that *Journal* contributors will join us in a new initiative we're calling the "CISR Exchange", as we engage with authors in ways that both highlight their work and discuss its broader implications within the field of practice. By talking with experts and sharing these conversations online, we hope the Exchange can help contextualize the challenges that mine action practitioners face today while showcasing how the free exchange of information can spark new ideas and potential solutions, something which we believe is the very crux of *The Journal*.

The Journal is only possible through the generous support of the U.S. Department of State and the contributions made by the community. We are continuously impressed by and grateful for the field's commitment to collaboration to achieve a world free from the dangers of explosive weapons and other legacies of war. As the sector now faces the effects of an ongoing pandemic and increasingly unstable operating environments, we encourage readers to look back over *Journal* articles published throughout the years, finding encouragement in how far the mine action sector has come and the many voices, individuals, and organizations that have brought us thus far. And finally, I commend *The Journal* publications staff for its success in providing a consistent quality space for sharing the stories and lessons of this remarkable community.

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Stay safe,

Suzanne

