

A NOTE FROM INTERIM DIRECTOR SUZANNE FIEDERLEIN



At the end of another challenging year, we celebrate the accomplishments of an innovative community of practice keen to adapt and evolve to the challenges of an ever-changing landscape.

This issue of *The Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction* encompasses well-timed articles on new solutions to past and present challenges, critical observations on personal protective equipment (PPE) and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), and

compelling cases for operational changes involving environmental risks and explosive hazards clearance.

New Funding and Record-Keeping Solutions. Camille Wallen (The HALO Trust, HALO), Peter Nicholas, and Anna von Griesheim (Social Finance) discuss challenges facing the mine action sector and three approaches their team developed as alternative finance mechanisms.

Philip Alpers from the Centre for Armed Violence Reduction presents ArmsTracker, a low-cost, digitized record-keeping solution to help low-capacity states prevent diversion and illicit use of state-owned arms, ammunition, and explosives.

Accident Reporting and Advances in PPE. Lillian Gates, Frasure Kruzell-Drew Memorial Fellow at the U.S. Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA), details the Accident Review Panel, the latest effort from PM/WRA to standardize accident response protocols and the collection of accident data.

Commenting on the lack of progress in PPE in mine action, Norwegian People's Aid's Kyaw Lin Htut analyzes the technical and operational limitations of existing deminer equipment, calling for considerations of future PPE to improve protection without reducing deminer effectiveness while also accounting for gender-considerations, environmental degradation of expired PPE, and cost-effectiveness.

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE). Sebastian Kasack (Mines Advisory Group, MAG) reflects on the lessons learned by the mine action sector to effectively influence lasting behavior change in people whose daily lives expose them to explosive contamination. His observations on how to best tailor EORE to account for gender, cultural, and diversity sensitivities are timely and relevant in today's world.

HALO's Kim Fletcher and India McGrath present their findings from a barrier analysis conducted in Mosul, Iraq, that looked at the constraints preventing the adoption of safe behaviors of youth. Their findings suggest ways to develop specific messaging and delivery techniques to improve EORE materials.

Environmental Concerns and Underwater UXO Remediation. Shedding light on the importance of effective risk management and climate adaptation principles, Linsey Cottrell (Conflict and Environment Observatory) and Carlie Stowe (PeaceTrees Vietnam) discuss how we can limit the impact of climate change-related risks and build more resilient communities.

Chris Price (Oklahoma State University) addresses the opportunities for multi-sector strategies in underwater unexploded ordnance remediation activities, commenting on the strengths of various entities and highlighting areas for potential cross-sector collaboration.

Nigeria Photo Essay. MAG's Sean Sutton documents the "Hidden Crisis in Borno State" in his latest photo essay featuring Nigeria. His work depicts the daily realities for those living in local government areas where resources are scarce and humanitarian access is insufficient.

Mechanical Equipment. From their experience clearing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Iraq, Pehr Lodhammar and Mark Wilkinson (United Nations Mine Action Service) maintain that mechanical equipment have a clear role in IED disposal. Their article looks at the various factors involved in using mechanical assets as well as future considerations and opportunities for development.

The Journal is soliciting for a myriad of topics this coming year, ranging from the application of forensic science in humanitarian mine action to regional focuses on Southeast Asia, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and the Nagorno Karabakh region. For more information, see our Calls for Papers at <https://www.jmu.edu/cisr/journal/cfps.shtml>.

As the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery celebrates its 25th year of operations, so too do we celebrate a diverse field of practitioners that contribute to the crucial work of mine action. Stay safe and best wishes to those across the globe working to make the world a safer place from explosive weapons contamination.

Suzanne

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