Dear Readers,

As the director of the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery (CISR) at James Madison University, I recently presented at a disaster-management conference in Indonesia, tying disaster management with post-conflict recovery; spoke at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace’s landmine event in Washington, D.C., and traveled to northern Iraq as part of a new CISR risk-education project for Syrian refugees. Travels such as these help CISR to recognize and evaluate humanitarian mine action (HMA) trends, seek authors and ideas for The Journal, and discover new ways to help our global community.

In this issue of The Journal, our Focus section discusses land release issues. For example, Mikkel Nedergaard (Danish Demining Group) examines how various HMA programs are attempting to develop better ways to monitor and document the socioeconomic results of their programs. Similarly, lessons learned from the development and use of DDG’s Impact Monitoring System provide examples of how to build or improve current outcome- and impact-monitoring systems. Norwegian People’s Aid’s Håvard Bach discusses using technical survey more effectively to reduce unnecessary, time-consuming and costly deployment of mine action resources.

In our Feature section, we look at best practices of residual clearance: Fran O’Grady (Defence Forces Ireland) reviews Irish Army Engineer Corps’ efforts to develop a self-sustainable nationwide capacity for conventional munitions disposal in the world’s newest nation, South Sudan. Ian Biddle of G4S Ordnance Management Ltd. discusses how the need to dispose of small arms ammunition (SAA) for short-term stability and security has traditionally outweighed the long-term need for environmentally responsible disposal. In addition, two of our authors, Erik K. Lauritzen (Lauritzen Advising) and Samuel Paunila (Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining), look at how lessons learned in one country can be applied to other post-conflict environments.

Finally, this issue’s Special Report section focuses on declining donor funding and strategies to attract new donors to unexploded ordnance/mine action programming. CISR’s Dane Sosniecki and Suzanne Fiederlein review how the mine action sector is shifting its approach to resource mobilization and allocation, and the importance of seeking diverse financial and technical funding.

As a nonprofit, CISR faces many of these same funding challenges affecting the broader mine action community. Like others, we seek to diversify our funding base; we would love to learn about what has worked for your organization. Please continue to dialogue with us.

Ken Rutherford,
CISR Director