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THE JOURNAL

of Conventional Weapons Destruction

CALL FOR PAPERS Special Double Issue (26.1 & 26.2)

The Journal invites government/nongovernment organizations, field/research practitioners, policy advisors, and technical experts working in humanitarian mine action/conventional weapons destruction to contribute their challenges, experiences, and lessons learned in the form of practice-based article submissions.

Special topic: UKRAINE

HMA organizations and personnel are shifting priorities and redesigning their on-the-ground operations to accommodate the situation in Ukraine. Amidst an evolving and complicated situation, a compromised healthcare system, and lack of surveyed contaminated land, how are organizations conducting operations in Ukraine? What are the unique requirements and challenges of working in Ukraine

right now? How do organizations quickly adapt their operations when conflict erupts? And how is the community targeting specific at-risk groups such as children or those disabled by explosive ordnance? **How is the sector pivoting and adapting their work in response to the current conflict?**

Special topic: Diversity, equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives in HMA

DEI encapsulates race, disability, gender, gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, caste, age, etc. What do DEI initiatives look like in HMA? What does it mean for HMA donors and organizations to act equitably? What does this sound like (language), look like (social media), and act like (organizational operations)? *The Journal* is accepting articles on how organizations are approaching and encapsulating DEI initiatives within the sector.

- **EQUITABLE SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING:** Social media is a powerful tool for organizations to tell their stories, highlight operations, beneficiaries, and money well spent. We use social media to fundraise, raise awareness, and market ourselves. When highlighting beneficiaries of our programs, are we including the knowledge, and experiences of those we're aiding? Are we cognizant of not using an individual's disability, socioeconomic status, or trauma to highlight *our* needs and successes? How closely have we evaluated the language we use, and have we taken an intersectional lens to the ways in which we use images and stories of the people we 'assist'? How do we create an equitable social media landscape and move away from aid recipients to partners?
- **ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION:** How accessible and inclusive are our communications, trainings, and on-the-ground operations? *The Journal* seeks articles on how the sector is working to ensure that their daily operations and output—from EORE and survivor assistance programs and trainings, to hiring and visibility of all stakeholders—are accessible to and inclusive of our global community and beneficiaries.

Topics for *The Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction*

DEMINEING IN BORDER AREAS: Article 5 of the *Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty* obligates State Parties to clear all mined areas on territory under their jurisdiction or control, including border areas. However, extension requests frequently cite that border agreements must be reached before meeting Article 5 deadlines. How can States sharing borders work together to achieve clearance? How can EORE and survivor assistance programs adapt to support border communities, migrants, and refugees? How can casualty data collection improve to better inform EORE and clearance efforts?

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR REMOTE SENSING AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN HMA: With the evolving nature of AI, what measures are in place and/or necessary for HMA organizations using AI? Is there a need for standards within the IMAS? How are organizations currently using this technology working within national and international legislation?

EFFECTS OF EORE ON CHILDREN: According to the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor*, in 2020, there were 1,872 child casualties where the age group was known. Children made up half of civilian casualties and 81 percent of child casualties were boys. Children were killed/injured by

mines/ERW in 34 states in 2020, with Afghanistan and Syria having the highest number of child casualties. How have HMA organizations adapted their EORE programs in conflict environments such as Ukraine? What considerations will need to be taken into account in the future? And how are organizations using social media to reach at-risk populations?

CLUSTER MUNITIONS: According to the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* 2021, cluster munition casualties have been on the rise since 2009, with civilians accounting for all casualties recorded since 2020, and children representing 44 percent of all known casualties. With casualties recorded in several countries (Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Iraq, Lao PDR, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and Nagorno-Karabakh) and confirmed use in Ukraine, how are organizations handling assessments and best practices, technical/non-technical survey, land release, and EORE?

HISTORY OF SA/LW AND PSSM (LESSONS LEARNED AND THE WAY FORWARD): How has PSSM evolved over the past decade? The Journal seeks articles on changes in risk assessment, effective accountability/inventory systems, conducting training/risk assessments; maintaining physical infrastructure of storage sites; destruction of surplus and obsolete stockpiles, etc. What have we learned and what is the way forward?

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LOW-TECH INNOVATIONS IN MINE ACTION: Technological breakthroughs can lead to revolutionary new ways of conducting tasks more efficiently, and while exciting, these often overshadow more common incremental improvements that ensure progress and advance demining methods. What practices has your organization improved upon over the past year?

HMA'S ROLE IN ENABLING HUMANITARIAN ACCESS: What role does mine action have in providing humanitarian aid when access is restricted due to landmines, booby traps, and ERW? How can HMA actors infuse their skillsets and resources into the conflict-recovery formula and create the conditions needed for safe and efficient recovery?

CWD IN THE BALKANS: Countries in the Balkans have stockpiles of excess conventional arms and stockpiles of aging ammunition inherited from the Yugoslav Wars of 1991–2001. How are organizations working to prevent accidental detonations, destroy excess and aging ammunition, and improve munition storage facilities, including security of stockpiles?

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN CWD: How are organizations working to streamline information management for conventional weapons destruction? How can the sector work together to simplify terminology and counting mechanisms for small arms and light weapons? And as the small arms agenda has converged over the years with broader international policy on gender equality, how can we strengthen integration and analysis of gender-desegregated data on SA/LW?

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS: When newly discovered explosive ordnance (EO) poses risks to civilians and infrastructure, and when munitions sites are at risk of explosion, how do quick reaction teams provide efficient, timely responses to those who need it? What kind of planning is necessary and what services are teams capable of providing?

DIGITAL EORE: How are digital tools complementing evolving EORE activities? How are organizations utilizing digital tools to reach those most at risk of EO while ensuring the safety of their teams on the ground? What new and emerging ways are organizations distributing accessible and inclusive, culturally-appropriate EORE in challenging situations?

CLEARING ROUGH TERRAIN (BEST PRACTICES): Suspected and confirmed hazardous areas are often remote and require survey and clearance teams to travel long distances and navigate difficult terrain before beginning their work. How do organizations address this and how are teams supplied and supported to conduct remote work in tough environments?

IRAQ AND SYRIA: Recent conflicts in Iraq and Syria have caused widespread explosive contamination. How are geospatial technology and data collection techniques enabling organizations to combat security concerns and offset reporting challenges? What work is being done and how have teams on the ground navigated the unique operating parameters of each country?

IED CLEARANCE (REVISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED): How are HMA organizations adapting their procedures to account for IEDs? What are your specific technical challenges and how have you overcome them? What can the broader community learn from your solutions?

EVOLUTION OF SENSOR TECHNOLOGY: With the evolving nature of technology and multi-sector collaboration to advance the use of AI, what has mine action learned and what lies ahead? How is the community leveraging partnerships to ensure those with the appropriate skills offer the latest expertise where needed?

DEMINEER TRAINING PROGRAMS: As standards and guidance continue to evolve, so too are the methods being taught by mine action instructors and technical experts. How is the community of practice ensuring the latest trends and most critical lessons are taught to the next generation of demining operators?

MUNITIONS DESTRUCTION (TECHNIQUES AND EQUIPMENT): When dealing with surplus or obsolete stockpiles of ammunition or SA/LW, how can countries efficiently dispose of munitions? What techniques or equipment are programs using to ensure these weapons are destroyed at minimal cost while maximizing safety?

BOOBY TRAPS IN URBAN SETTINGS (CLEARANCE OR RISK EDUCATION): With the rise in use of booby traps in global conflicts, what are HMA groups encountering in their areas of operation? How well prepared are deminers to neutralize and dispose of booby traps? And, due to the improvisational nature of IEDs, how are organizations modernizing EORE materials to better protect civilians?

THE BLURRED LINE OF HUMANITARIAN AID IN CONFLICT SETTINGS: Mine action is grounded in humanitarian principles and maintains strict policies of neutrality and impartiality. When HMA organizations find themselves in areas with immediate security concerns, does the scope of their activities change? How do priorities shift to the protection of staff, and how can organizations ensure the safety of their personnel while mobilizing critical resources to still pursue humanitarian objectives?

Direct inquiries or submissions to cisr-journal@jmu.edu

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