

# HOME AFTER WAR

A VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE ON THE DEVASTATING  
IMPACT OF IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES IN IRAQ



# THE PROJECT

“Home after War” was part of the Oculus (now Meta) VR for Good Creators Lab 2017 programme that paired 10 rising filmmakers with 10 nonprofits to champion a variety of social missions while telling their stories in virtual reality. The project by NowHere Media and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) was selected by Oculus (now Meta) VR for Good, to tell a story that throws a spotlight on the threats posed by explosive hazards left behind after armed conflicts cease.

# THE PARTNERS



**GICHD**

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) works to reduce risks to communities stemming from all types of explosive ordnance: landmines, cluster munitions, explosive remnants of war, and unsafely and insecurely managed conventional ammunition.

As an internationally recognised centre of expertise, the GICHD helps develop and professionalise explosive ordnance risk reduction sectors for the benefit of its partners. Guided by the vision of a world free from explosive ordnance risks, the GICHD provides support in around 40 affected states and territories every year. [www.gichd.org](http://www.gichd.org)



**NowHere**

NowHere Media is a multi-award winning studio in Berlin designing virtual and augmented reality experiences, powered by evocative storytelling. They work with film production companies, nonprofits, media organisations and brand partners to create impactful stories that inspire and engage global audiences. Their work finds itself at the intersection of art, technology and social change. Founders Felix Gaedtke and Gayatri Parameswaran have backgrounds in journalism and believe in the power of stories to transform. They specialise in the fields of human rights, conflict, social justice and the climate crisis. [www.nowheremedia.net](http://www.nowheremedia.net)



Meta team is building innovative new ways to help people feel closer to each other, and the makeup of their company reflects the diverse perspectives of the people who use their technologies. Meta is moving beyond 2D screens toward immersive experiences like augmented and virtual reality to help build the next evolution in social technology. <https://about.meta.com/community/vr-for-good/>

View a full list of awards won:

<https://www.homeafterwar.net/awards>





## THE EXPERIENCE

“Home after War”, directed by Gayatri Parameswaran, was shot in Fallujah, Iraq, in January 2018. The city had been under Islamic State (IS) control. The war against IS has ended but the city is still unsafe. There’s one looming fear for returning refugees and displaced persons – booby trapped homes and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in the neighbourhoods. Since the end of the war, thousands of civilians have died or been injured by IEDs.

Ahmaied Hamad Khalaf and his family returned home after the fighting subsided. In the experience, the viewers find themselves in Ahmaied’s home, which still shows signs of the damage from the war. They hear Ahmaied speak of his loss and his hopes for his family, country and the world, and learn about what it’s like to fear the home he once loved.

Ahmaeid’s story is real. Using photogrammetry, his house was scanned and recreated in a virtual software to give viewers a room scale, interactive experience. At the festival in Venice, the experience is set up within a unique physical installation that recreates part of Ahmaied’s house. It is completed with a display of IEDs and complementary information by the GICHD.



There’s one looming fear for returning refugees and displaced persons – booby trapped homes and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in the neighbourhoods.

# THE ISSUE AT STAKE

Improvised explosive devices (IEDs), or booby-traps, are homemade explosive devices, used to kill, injure, damage property or distil terror. Often unexploded or abandoned munitions are modified to construct IEDs. They cover an enormously wide range of possible types, such as improvised landmines – as opposed to factory-made landmines.

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) used in current conflicts have led to an increase in civilian deaths and injuries since IEDs are frequently used in urban and higher populated areas. Often the civilian population is even the preferred target of the group using the IEDs.

Over the last two decades, the world has seen a steady increase in the use of IEDs.

Most IEDs explode due to the presence of, proximity to, or contact with a person, and are therefore forbidden under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Affected states are required to report on IED contamination and to clear it. Over the last few years, there has been increased discussion in the international arena on appropriate policies, practices, and techniques for addressing IEDs, including improvised mines.



Improvised explosive devices (IEDs), or booby-traps, are homemade explosive devices, used to kill, injure, damage property or distil terror.





## GICHD'S WORK

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) works with local partners to advance clearance of explosive devices.

This includes the clearance and disposal of conventional mines, the destruction of explosive remnants of war, the management and storage of ammunition stockpiles, and the disposal of IEDs.

In addition to these predominantly technical and factual measures, raising the awareness of the civilian population about the risks and dangers of these explosive ordnance in the middle of their habitat, which are often not easy to detect, is an important activity for the protection of the civilian population.

The Centre has developed an IED Clearance Good Practice Guide with the aim to share information across the mine action sector to assist in safe, effective and efficient IED search and disposal activities as part of a broader IED clearance process.



The GICHD is working to enhance existing guidance related to the survey and clearance of IEDs in a humanitarian context.



IED Good Practice Guide



## PRESS KIT

To Download our press kit, please visit the following links:

**1. Press release**

<https://bit.ly/hawpressrelease>

**2. Brochure**

<https://bit.ly/hawbrochure>

**3. Videos**

<https://bit.ly/hawvideos>

**4. Photos**

<https://bit.ly/hawphotogallery>

# TRY HOME AFTER WAR VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE



Available Now on Meta Quest (Oculus store).  
Download it, Experience it, Share it and Review it.

You require the following for the Home After War virtual reality experience:

1. Meta Quest 2 VR-Headset
2. Personal headphones (only if the environment is noisy)
3. Minimum requirement of 3m x 3m space

---

Want to know more about the Home After War?

Visit: [www.homeafterwar.net](http://www.homeafterwar.net)

Watch Trailer: [https://bit.ly/GICHHD\\_HAW](https://bit.ly/GICHHD_HAW)

## CONTACTS

### GICHD

Inas Rashad  
Digital Communications  
Coordinator  
[i.rashad@gichd.org](mailto:i.rashad@gichd.org)

Laura Collier  
Communications Manager  
[l.collier@gichd.org](mailto:l.collier@gichd.org)

### NowHere Media

Felix Gaedtke  
co-founder  
**+49 17671575101**  
[felix@nowheredia.net](mailto:felix@nowheredia.net)

Gayatri Parameswaran  
co-founder  
**+49 1758271133**  
[gayatri@nowheredia.net](mailto:gayatri@nowheredia.net)

### Meta

Eliza Kern  
Public Relations  
[elizakern@oculus.com](mailto:elizakern@oculus.com)



**Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining**  
Maison de la paix, Tower 3  
Chemin Eugène-Rigot 2C  
P.O. Box 1300, 1211 Geneva 1, Switzerland

Follow us on    

[gichd.org](http://gichd.org)