

# National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action Sector in Lao PDR (NRA)



## Description

Lao PDR is, per capita, the most heavily bombed nation in the world with more than 2 million tons dropped during 1964 to 73. Up to 30% failed to function and remain live and dangerous in the ground as Unexploded Ordnance (UXO). A programme to address the problems posed by UXO was initiated in the early 1990's and is ongoing today. In 2002, UNDP commissioned a review of the UXO Programme that recommended the creation of a National Regulatory Authority (NRA) for the UXO/Mine Action sector. The NRA was subsequently established by the Government in partnership with UNDP in March 2004 as a public institution and has been operational since April 2006. It is governed by a board comprising representatives from nine ministries. It has key roles in the coordination, regulation and monitoring of all implementing organisations that work on mitigating the impact of unexploded bombs, artillery shells, grenades, landmines and other ordnance to maximize the performance of the UXO sector overall. It also represents the Lao PDR in any UXO related international forum. Its secretariat, the NRA Office supported by UNDP, provides a UXO focal point within the Government and has instituted a framework within which implementing organizations work.

UNDP provides NRA with program oversight and administrative, technical and financial support to build local capacity and to provide support to staff.

## Main Objectives and Activities in 2009

The objective of this programme is to assist the Government of the Lao PDR to continue strengthening the NRA for the UXO Sector. The Programme will monitor the NRA jointly with Government and donors. This is ongoing and fundamental to good programme management

Key objectives of the programme in 2009 will include:

1. Support to the full implementation of the Oslo Convention, improved understanding of the Government and the general public about the Convention, and support to the organization of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of States parties
2. Application of appropriate coordination mechanisms to make the UXO Sector efficient and effective.
3. UXO activities in the Lao PDR are better monitored and regulated.
4. The national strategic plan for the UXO Sector is revised reflecting the findings and recommendations of the 2008 UXO sector evaluation and the new convention on cluster munitions and the Lao study on gender perspectives in the UXO Sector.
5. Improved data on UXO casualties and better understanding of needs of UXO survivors and victims
6. Improved UXO information management systems
7. Increased use of new UXO risk reduction education messages and materials
8. Capacity development analysis and measurement tools developed and utilized for more effective organizational and individual support
9. Increased transparent, accountable and efficient management of the NRA Office

## Duration

Establishment of the NRA in 2003  
Operational from 2005 until today

## Location

Vientiane Capital, Lao P.D.R.

## Budget

Total budget: US\$ 3,129,326.43  
(from 2003 - 2009)

Current year budget: US\$ 1,079,238

## Partners

Implementing Partner: the NRA for the UXO Sector  
Other Partners: National Rehabilitation Centre/COPE

## Contributing donor(s)

From 2006 to 2008

Donor	Amount (US\$)
Australia	542,088.33
New Zealand	450,907.61
Switzerland	500,000.00
USA	95,238.10
UNDP	900,148.73

## Delivery

2006: US\$ 530,873.83  
2007: US\$ 597,476.62  
2008: US\$ 816,067.47

## Funding Shortfall

Funding Shortfall in 2009: US\$ 301,238

## Agreement Signed with the Government

Agreement signed with the Government and current annual work plan can be accessible at <http://www.undplao.org/whatwedo/crisisprev.php>

## Key Results, Reports and Publications to date

2008 was a landmark year for the NRA and everyone involved in the UXO/Mine Action sector in Lao PDR, as in December the "Oslo Process" achieved the ambitious goal of concluding a convention to ban cluster munitions. The NRA played a leading role and participated in the Oslo process in the lead up to agreeing a text for the Convention in Dublin. Lao PDR was the second country to sign the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 3 December 2008 after the host country Norway when the Convention was opened for signature, and it was one of the first country to ratify the Convention.

The NRA developed a national database through 2008 of all mine and UXO related information using the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) which also includes the latest demographics and other information from Government census. The system will be used by all stakeholders in the sector in 2009 and will give everyone a comprehensive and consistent data-pool to guide planning and reporting.

The NRA carried out a country-wide comprehensive survey on mine and UXO accident casualties in 2008 and has added the results to the national database. The survey gained over 50,000 reports and recorded more than 300 deaths or casualties from 2008. It also showed an average of approximately 300 per annum for the last decade. This clearly indicates that more accidents are happening in Lao PDR than previously estimated, with the possibility that these incidents are still under-reported and under-recorded.

A complete set of Lao National Standards based on International Mine Action Standards was approved by the Chair of the NRA at the end of 2008 which was the result of 2 years of work. The standards cover everything from sector structure, through technical details on methods and requirements to licensing and accreditation. The Lao National Standards establish a framework in which regulation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation can be managed. In line with the Lao National Standards 50% of the clearance operators operational in Lao PDR were accredited or had started the process.

The NRA facilitated a series of coordination working groups over the past two years at different levels. There have been many specific subject working groups such as were held for the National Standards, Core Competencies and International Treaty Support. Above these were the regular monthly and bi-monthly sub-sector Technical Working Groups (TWG) in the three areas of Mine Risk Education, Victim Assistance and Clearance. These TWGs were brought together under UXO Sector Working Groups which now meets twice a year. The main topics of the UXO Working Group feed into the Round Table Meeting at the end of the year completing the structured coordination framework of the UXO Sector. For more details please visit <http://www.undplao.org/whatwedo/crisisprev.php> and <http://www.nra.gov.la>

## Thematic Area

**Corporate Thematic Area:** Crisis Prevention Recovery

**UNDAF Outcome:** By 2011, the livelihoods of poor, vulnerable, and food insecure populations are enhanced through sustainable development within the Millennium Development Goals Framework

**Country Programme Action Plan Outcomes and output:**

Outcome 1: Improved and equitable access to land, markets, and social and economic services, and environmentally sustainable utilization of natural resources;

Output 1.1: Enhanced safety and awareness of risks and more land cleared for productive use under the supervision of the NRA.

## Millennium Development Goal

With better regulation and improved coordination in the UXO sector the NRA facilitates increased and improved clearance of explosive remnants of war freeing up agricultural land in line with MDG 1 of eradicating hunger. The NRA promotes gender equality and empowerment of women in line with MDG3 and has been at the forefront of international partnerships with disarmament conventions in line with MDG 8.

## Contacts

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