

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Lao Programme



Description

The Lao PDR was heavily bombed during the Vietnam War. With an excess of 266 million sub-munitions dropped, cluster munitions comprised a significant portion of bomb attacks from 1964 to 1973. It is estimated that up to 30% of all cluster munitions failed to explode, making Lao PDR the only country in the world where cluster munitions constitute the principal and most dangerous explosive remnants of war (ERW) hazard.

Fourteen of the seventeen provinces are impacted by the presence of such unexploded cluster munitions. Large quantities of unexploded big bombs, shells, and rockets also constitute an ERW hazard. Such unexploded ordnance (UXO) is a key hindrance to the country's socio-economic development, as well as a cause of accident, death and injury. The worst impacted areas are poor, rural and remote. UXO needs to be cleared in order for development to take place.

Recognizing the need to clear UXO in order for socio-economic development to take place, the Lao Government established the Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao) with the support of UNDP, UNICEF, and other donors in 1996. UXO Lao is nationally executed under the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare with operational activities covering UXO clearance, training de-miners, community awareness and surveying. UXO Lao has its National Office in Vientiane and provincial offices in the nine of most UXO impacted provinces. UNDP supports UXO Lao with programme oversight and technical expertise in order to build local capacity and to provide support to staff at both the national and provincial level. The majority of funds for UXO Lao are managed through UNDP through cost sharing agreements with donors.

Main Objectives and Activities in 2009

The main objective of the programme for 2009 is to increase programme output through new technology and more effective and efficient operations as well as increase in clearance and roving capacity.

UNDP will assist UXO LAO to:

- 1) Support to the implementation of the Cluster Munition Convention.
- 2) Fully implement the technical survey (TS) in all provinces using magnetometers and data loggers;
- 3) Identify, test, and/or introduce new equipment and vehicles to speed up the operations, including the use of geophysical survey in road clearance;
- 4) Fully deploy the roving quality management team;
- 5) Increase the amount of community awareness (CA) activities by deploying more trained CA village volunteers, utilizing revised CA messages; and
- 6) Increase resourced mobilization and public information activities.

Duration

On going from Feb. 1996 to present --13 years

Location

Vientiane Capital, Huaphanh, Xiengkhuang, Luangprabang, Khamuane, Attapeu, Saravane, Sekong, Savannakhet, Champasack

Budget

Current year (2009) budget: US\$ 7,364,582

Partners

Implementing Partner: UXO Lao
Other Partners: Armor Group, Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS), Mine Advisory Group (MAG) and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

Contributing donor(s)

For funds managed through UNDP

Donors	Amount (US\$)
Australia	1,589,127.00
Belgium	555,734.00
Canada	1,203,100.00
Denmark (MAG)	5,512,382.00
Finland	1,589,348.00
Germany	2,029,102.00
Ireland	1,348,601.00
Italy	161,464.00
Japan	5,694,112.00
Luxembourg	2,732,413.00
Netherlands	2,901,220.00
New Zealand	1,252,767.00
Norway	2,874,201.00
Poland	11,100.00
South Korea	138,584.00
Sweden	394,176.00
Switzerland	2,209,910.00
Trust Fund Interest	912,505.00
UNDP	2,995,671.00
United Kingdom	1,362,951.00
USA	3,103,086.00
GRAND TOTAL	40,571,554.00

Delivery

2006: US\$ 3,300,484; 2007: US\$ 4,245,208
2008: US\$ 4,930,337

Funding Shortfall

2009 funding shortfall: US\$ 3,788,996

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

The national UXO clearance agency has already accomplished a lot in addressing the long term humanitarian and development challenges of cluster munitions, even though much more needs to be done. Concrete achievements from 1996 to February 2009 include:

- **Community Awareness (CA):** conducted UXO risk awareness activities in 7,349 villages with reached 1,868,828 beneficiaries, included 713,302 child beneficiaries.
- **General Survey Tasks:** conducted 7,499 survey tasks in 2,337 villages mapping out UXO reported on the surface by villagers and CA team members.
- **Roving Tasks:** 17,653 tasks conducted in 3,050 villages clearing UXO found on the ground surface.
- **Area Clearance:** cleared over 14,991 hectares of land of sub-surface ordnance reaching 3,085,628 beneficiaries. (agriculture land=12,296 hectares and development land=2,694 hectares)
- **Technical Survey (TS):** using TS, classified as low priority a total of 482 hectares of land reaching 81,628 beneficiaries.
- **UXO found through survey operations:** 90,761 items (1,376 big bombs, 46,553 bombies, 351 mines and 42,481 others UXO such as mortars, rockets, shells, grenades;) and
- **UXO removed or destroyed through roving, area clearance, and ETS operations:** 881,453 items (4,380 big bombs, 409,816 bombies, 5,904 mines and 461,353 others UXO such as mortars, rockets, shells, grenades.)
- **Training:** UXO Lao undertook 163 courses provided for the field staff which reached the total of 2,205 graduates

For more details please visit <http://www.undplao.org/whatwedo/crisisprev.php> and <http://www.uxolao.org/Index.html>

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.

Millennium Development Goal

The work of UXO Lao contributes to the achievement of MDG 1 as the organization clears land for agricultural purposes as well as for socio-economic development projects of different development agencies.

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