

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.

All of the 17 provinces of Laos suffer from some level of unexploded ordnance (UXO) contamination and some 25% of the 10,000 plus villages in the countries. Large quantities of unexploded big bombs, shells, and rockets also constitute an ERW hazard. Such 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-based UXO risk education and survey. 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 capacity development.

Main Objectives and Activities in 2010

The main objective of the programme for 2010 is to increase in clearance and roving capacity through new technology and more effective and efficient operations. For this objective, UNDP will assist UXO LAO to:

1. Increasing effectiveness and efficiency through clearance technology development
2. Further developing capacity of UXO Lao on operational management, programming and financing
3. Further mainstreaming gender
4. Promoting and supporting the expansion of UXO Lao in line with the Convention on Cluster Munitions Obligations as well as supporting the activities leading to and during the Convention on Cluster Munitions First Meeting of States Parties.

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

Duration

On going from Feb. 1996 to present

Location

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

Budget

Current year (2010) budget: **US\$5,741,744**

Implementing Partners

Implementing Partner: UXO Lao

Contributing donor(s)

From 1996- 2009

Donors

Australia
Belgium
Canada
Denmark
Finland
Germany
Ireland
Italy
Japan
Luxembourg
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Poland
South Korea
Sweden
Switzerland
UNDP
United Kingdom
USA

Delivery

2006: US\$ 3,300,484;
2007: US\$ 4,245,208
2008: US\$ 4,930,337
2009: US\$ 4,131,836

Funding Shortfall

2010 funding shortfall: US\$ **1,092,647**

cluster munitions, even though much more needs to be done. Concrete achievements from 1996 to June 2010 include:

1. **Community Awareness (CA):** conducted UXO risk education activities in 8,202 villages with reached 2,080,377 beneficiaries, including 811,395 child beneficiaries. UXO risk education activities increases awareness of the dangers of UXO among people living in UXO affected areas.
2. **General Survey Tasks:** conducted 10,109 survey tasks in 2,755 villages mapping out UXO reported on the surface by villagers and CA team members. General survey tasks map locations of UXO found by villagers and defines areas where clearance activities are conducted. Data from survey is inputted into the national UXO database.
3. **Roving Tasks:** 19,582 tasks conducted in 3,255 villages clearing UXO found on the ground surface. Removal of UXO found on the ground surface promotes safe access to areas that are frequented by villagers and allows them to move around and conduct their daily activities.
4. **Area Clearance:** cleared over 18,317 hectares of land of sub-surface ordnance reaching 3,255,757 beneficiaries. This includes 15,337 hectares of agricultural land and 2,979 hectares of land in support of socio-economic development projects. Cleared land increases farmer's confidence and safety when doing farming activities. Development projects are able to take place after clearance is conducted, benefiting the people living in the area.
5. **Technical Survey (TS):** using TS, classified as low priority a total of 1,100 hectares of land reaching 360,158 beneficiaries. This includes 887 hectares of agricultural land and 213 hectares of land in support of socio-economic development projects. Land released through technical survey methods enable UXO Lao to maximize its resources as TS methods require less. Land released increases people's confidence and safety in utilizing and moving about the land as well as allows development projects to take place.
6. **UXO removed or destroyed through roving, area clearance, and TS operations:** 955,449 items including 449,532 submunitions from cluster bombs and 5,097 big bombs. Removal or destruction of UXO increases the safety of men, women, and children living in UXO affected areas.
7. **Training:** UXO Lao undertook 170 courses provided for the field staff which reached the total of 2,314 graduates.

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

Thematic Area

UNDP Priority Area: Crisis Prevention and 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.

Contacts

Mr. Bounpone Sayasenh, UXO Lao National Programme Director, email: uxolao@uxolao.gov.la
Address: Lao National UXO Programme, P.O. Box 345, Vientiane Lao PDR, phone: +856-21-415-767

Ms. Chikako Kodama, Unit Chief, Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit, email: chikako.kodama@undp.org
Address: Lane Xang Ave., P.O. Box 345, Vientiane Lao PDR, phone: +856-21-267 743

Ms. Viratsamay Visonnavong, UNDP Programme Analyst, email: viratsamay.visonnavong@undp.org
Address: Lane Xang Ave., P.O. Box 345, Vientiane Lao PDR, phone: +856-21-267 746