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Lao People's Democratic Republic



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## Annual Project Review Report

### *Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao)*

1 January 2014 – 31 December 2014

UNDP Award ID	00063618
UNDP Project ID	00080607
Project Duration	1 April 2013 to 31 December 2015
Reporting Period	1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014
Implementing Partners National collaborating agencies	Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao)
Cost-sharing and Trust Fund donors	Australia, the Government of Belgium, the Government of Canada, the European Union Delegation to Laos, the Government of Ireland, the Republic of Korea, the Government of Luxembourg, the Government of New Zealand, the Government of Norway, and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
UNDAF and Country Programme Outcome	Outcome 9: By 2015, national and local governments and communities have significantly reduced the impact of UXO on people in the Lao PDR

## 1. Project Implementation Status and Key Results

### Implementation Status Summary at Outcome level

2014 has seen important progress by UXO Lao in the areas of clearance, capacity development, adherence to national standards, and incorporation of new technologies for efficiency.

With regards to clearance, more than 60,000 people benefited from clearance activities which covered 3,164 hectares of land in total. 423 hectares of this land (or 13.85% of the total) was released in direct support of development projects, such as construction of schools, roads, and also included the development of rice paddies contributing to further socioeconomic development. Clearance of UXOs achieved the targets set out in the Project Document and benefited 922 villages where the risk of UXO

casualties is now reduced, human security is increased and obstacles for development have been removed.

With regards to capacity development, 2014 saw a major step forward for UXO Lao with the conduct of a Capacity Assessment in June, facilitated by UNDP, which identified key areas to focus on to develop the capacity of the organization, and provided Action Points to pursue. The capacity assessment also covered the NRA as detailed in the 2014 NRA Annual Report. Following the Capacity Assessment, a new Concept of Operations was developed for UXO Lao which incorporates an evidence-based survey methodology into the prioritization of clearance activities. This means that Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHA) are now the focus of clearance activities. The result of this will be that a much larger number of UXOs will be found and destroyed per hectare cleared. Combining this with a strategic focus on government focal areas will support the ongoing development of the country. This has occurred at the same time as ongoing development of a national standard on survey. Both of these processes were endorsed by the NRA board at their meeting in December 2014.

UXO Lao has also continued to train its staff in line with national standards, in order to ensure that safe practices are undertaken in clearance activities. The details of the training are included in the Annex. Development of the organisation's skill-base in the area of database management has also continued in 2014, which is aimed at better coordination of the sector as a whole in cooperation with the NRA.

At the same time as the positive developments in survey methodology within the sector, the UXO sector in Laos, and in particular UXO Lao, has come under significant financial pressure which has resulted in a requirement to scale down the size of the organization – from around 1,200 staff in January 2014, to around 1,000 at the end of the year. In this context, the Capacity Assessment has highlighted areas within UXO Lao where improvements can be made for greater effectiveness and efficiency in an increasingly challenging environment. UXO Lao is predominantly funded and supported via a UNDP-managed Trust Fund.

### **UNDP's Contribution at the Outcome Level during the Reporting Period**

UNDP has provided substantial support to the implementation of the Government of Lao PDR's 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan, progress towards MDG9 and the implementation of more efficient clearance methodologies. This has included the provision of a technical advisory support and UNDP's facilitation of the Capacity Assessment mentioned above. For this, a UNDP expert was deployed to enable the process and formulate the resulting recommendations to guide both UXO Lao and the NRA in their subsequent capacity development activities.

The Technical Advisory support provided to UXO Lao in 2014 has included:

- Strategic advice in the area of planning and resource mobilization;
- Support in the process of technical trials and adherence with international best practices and standards;
- Capacity development in the area of financial and programme management;
- Multi-year work planning support;
- Assistance in the conduct and implementation of the Capacity Assessment;
- Support drafting and implementation of the new Concept of Operations;
- Advice on responses to audit recommendations;

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- Preparation on reporting resources.
- Coordination with technical advisory provisions deployed outside of the UNDP mechanism.

UNDP has also played a major role in supporting UXO Lao's adoption of a more efficient survey-based methodology for clearance activities. This has now led to the drafting and implementation of a Concept of Operations to structure organizational changes. The details of the Concept of Operations have been made available to Development Partners. The Concept focuses operational activities and has already received praise and support from other actors in the UXO sector as well as Technical Advisors provided outside of UNDP mechanisms. Project proposal development was supported by UNDP and new funding was obtained (through several donors) to sustain the necessary work. With support from the technical expertise stationed at the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub, UNDP supported both NRA and UXO Lao with on-the-job training focusing on results-based planning and quality management.

### **Key Output-level Results during the Reporting Period**

On the Output level, UXO Lao completed the following operational tasks as the core focus of its work during 2014:

- The clearance and release of 3,164 hectares through area clearance and technical survey, achieving 105 % of the annual targets set in the project document.
- The conduct of 1,603 roving tasks in 949 villages, leading to the removal/destruction of 23,970 items of UXO, including 10,314 sub-munitions – this represents 123% of the annual target in the project document and 104% of the target in the 2014 UXO Lao annual operation plan.
- Survey task: 2,331 survey tasks were conducted in 1,336 villages, found and recorded 15,501 items of UXO, included 7,253 sub-munitions which was 155 % of the annual target. In addition, this was 130% as of UXO Lao annual operation plan.
- Risk Education: 608 RE activities were conducted, reaching 196,420 people (24% boys, 24% girls, 25% men and 27 % women). This was 122% of the annual targets set in the project document. However, it was only 90% of the UXO Lao annual operational plan due UXO Lao temporary financial constraints. As a result, this activity was stopped, including activities implemented by village volunteers.
- CHA Survey: 3,030 hectares of land were identified through CHA survey bringing benefit to 84,528 people. 34 big bombs, 6,189 sub-munitions and 4,229 other items of UXO were destroyed.
- In 2014 UXO Lao initiated the integration of government's rural development plan to its annual operation plan.

In order to pursue the development of an adequate national capacity to coordinate and manage the UXO sector in Lao PDR, a Capacity Assessment was undertaken in June 2014, of both the NRA and UXP Lao. This was a systematic and comprehensive, reflective and incremental process which resulted in a strategy to move forward with a clear framework for direction. After the initial process and draft report, UXO Lao worked internally to clarify the issues and, at the end of the year, a Capacity Development Strategy and Action Plan was agreed to help scope the way the organization develops. Many of the recommendations that were discussed in the process of development are already being

Operations (Action Point 11) and undertaking trials of detection equipment, which were undertaken in November/December (Action Point 13).

### Key Challenges

The major challenge for UXO Lao in 2014 has been financial. The last half of the year was characterized by cash shortfalls resulting in the necessity to stand teams down temporarily and ultimately reduce the size of the organization. Further, UNDP support for the finance unit was severely limited after the resignation of the TA Finance in summer 2014. This was subsequently compounded by the resignation of UXO Lao's chief of finance in November 2014.

Operational limitations in terms of the possible outputs of clearance teams have remained and mean the national target for area to be cleared could not be achieved. Technical trials and development may lead to a small increase in technical productivity, but it is likely that this will be neutralized by the implementation of a CHA focused clearance process which will reduce the hectare outputs of the organization. However, the yield of UXOs per hectare is expected to rise substantially meaning that the clearance activities undertaken are much more productive than in previous years.

## 2. Financial Management

### Financial Information Summary

Reporting Period: 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014

Output 2: UXO Lao is better able to manage clearance and risk education programmes for the needs of communities at risk.			
Source of Funding	Latest Budget Revision in UNDP Atlas (USD)	Accumulated Expenditure by the current reporting period (USD)	Delivery Rate of the current reporting period (%)
Canada	452,489	452,489	100%
Norway	101,132	101,132	100%
Ireland	506,993	388,435	77%
Luxemburg	207,346	159,582	77%
New Zealand	962,961	962,961	100%
Switzerland	1,065,581	1,055,165	99%
Australia CS	513,614	513,242	100%
Belgium	133,489	133,489	100%
Australia RL	396,034	376,923	95%
EU	577,979	568,202	98%
Republic of Korea	55,000	55,000	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,972,618</b>	<b>4,766,619</b>	<b>96%</b>

### 3. Project Management and Oversight

- **Monitoring and Evaluation**

UXO Lao's QM and Mobile QA/QC teams play an important role monitoring the work of UXO Lao operations. In Q3 and Q4, financial shortcomings limited the activities of the mobile QA/QC operations. However, the QM team still conducted internal audit for management work especially preparing assessment list for training center and coordinate for spot check and audit recommendations.

- **Risk Management**

<i>Status of Risks and Risk Management Strategies and other challenges</i>	<i>Counter Measurements</i>	<i>Update</i>
Lack of financial sustainability; high dependency of UXO Lao on donor contributions	Increased GoL contribution to the UXO sector, as well as continued donor funding to support expanded activities over time; work to ensure multi-year contributions.	<p>The GoL is currently funding the office rent for UXO Lao and discussions on increased government contributions are expected to continue.</p> <p>UXO Lao faced funding shortages in Q3 &amp; Q4 2014; 19 clearance teams in six affected provinces (Huaphan, Luangprabang, Khammuane, Savannakhet, Champasak and Saravane) were stood down.</p>
Technical complexity of sector inhibits UXO Lao effectiveness	Capacity self-assessments and capacity building measures to be undertaken by UXO Lao with UNDP support, and then capacity development plans undertaken.	<p>The CA capacity assessment report was completed and shared with stakeholders.</p> <p>Throughout the capacity assessment, self-Assessment undertaken by UXO Lao, opportunity was provided to discuss the capacity gap and needs of UXO Lao. As a result, 21 actions have been agreed to be undertaken by UXO Lao with supports from donor communities to contribute and support to the realization of UXO Lao vision and strategy. Actions 11 and 13 have already been selected for implementation. In addition, support from JICA will further provide technical support for information management system and planning process.</p>

Changes in governance arrangements or key personnel in UXO Lao.	The integration of the Rural Development Plan into the UXO Lao work plan and the 2015 Annual Operation Plan and the identification of a number of focal development areas.	
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- **Communications and Advocacy**

Regular news and press releases were sent to the newspapers. UXO Lao website is now updated on regular basis. Donor visits were many and included highlights such as visits of Mrs. Kaarina Immonen, new UNDP Resident Representation, the Prince of Denmark, and the President of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) to UXO Lao operational sites

#### 4. Management Responses and Recommendations

UXO Lao worked closely with KPMG in March/April of 2014 to facilitate the 2013 NIM annual audit of UXO Lao’s operation. Thirteen observations were raised, of which seven have been completely addressed while six are currently in progress. These included recommendations relating to Results Based Management, Project/Program Sustainability Strategy, Quotation Evaluations, Direct payment lists, variance analysis by budget and activity and expenditure, and project data backup procedures. Under the close supervision of UXO Lao management, the Quality Management Unit, together with other concerned units and UNDP staff, will closely implement and address the recommendations and update the status of the audit recommendations on a regular basis before the next audit.

PREPARED BY PM

Date:

16 JUN 2015

APPROVED BY NPD

Date:

16 JUN 2015

Thiphaone SOUKHATHAMMAVONG

RECEIVED AND REVIEWED BY UNDP

Date:

Annex. Results Matrix

Outcome 2 – UXO Lao is better able to manage clearance and risk education programmes for the needs of communities at risk.			
INDICATOR, MILESTONE AND STATUS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	ACTIVITY PROGRESS TO DATE	RESULTS ACHIEVED and BENEFICIARIES
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Number of hectares of priority land released in accordance with NS and CCM and in accordance with priorities set by Government to advance implementation of the NSEDP and its rural development and poverty reduction strategies. (Overall target 9,000 hectares)</p> <p><b>Milestone 2014</b> - 6,340 hectares of</p>	<p><b>Activity Result 1:</b> Release priority land in accordance with Lao NS and CCM in nine or more provinces for safe access to contaminated land for socio-economic and humanitarian purposes and reduce the risk of UXO related accidents through risk education programs</p>	<p>3,164 hectares cleared and released through area clearance and technical survey – achieving 105% of the annual targets set in the project document.</p>	<p>Clearance and technical survey activity reached 239,053 beneficiaries who could use the land to support their livelihoods, especially for agriculture. Moreover, 423 hectares were cleared for development projects including construction of schools, sanitation buildings, roads and water supply facilities.</p> <p><b>BENEFICIARIES</b> - 235,687 people benefited from the UXO clearance, more than 31,658 item of UXO were destroyed of which 15,491 were sub-munitions</p>
	<p><b>Action1:</b> Clearance/Technical survey: 3,000 hectares</p>		

<p>priority and release.</p> <p><b>Status – Achieved</b></p> <p><b>Indicator 2 –</b> Number of UXO items destroyed. (Overall target 200,000)</p>	<p><b>Action3:</b> Survey tasks: 1,500 tasks</p>	<p>2,331 survey tasks were conducted in 1,336 villages. These activities found and identified 15,501 items of UXO, including 10,314 sub-munitions which were 155% of the annual targets. In addition, it also achieved 130% of the UXO Lao annual operation plan.</p>	<p>Derived Survey Data is used to create maps of contaminated areas for UXO clearance teams, development planning of local authorities, government focal development areas, and development partners. In addition that, this data will also support to NRA’s national database of contaminated areas and maps.</p> <p><b>BENEFICIARIES –</b> Survey tasks took place in 1,336 villages, finding 15,501 items of UXO.</p>
<p><b>Milestone 2014 –</b> 65,529 items destroyed.</p> <p><b>Status -</b> Achieved</p> <p><b>Indicator 3:</b> Community awareness programmes are reaching communities, facing different risks by women, children, and other vulnerable groups. (Overall target 800,000 people reached)</p>	<p><b>Action 4:</b> Risk Education: 500 villages visits</p>	<p>608 Risk Education activities were conducted, reaching 196,420 people (including 24% boys, 24% girls, 25% men and 27% women). This was 122% of the annual targets set in the Project Document. This activity was temporarily suspended towards the end of 2014 due to financial constraints.</p>	<p>Villagers were encouraged to identify the location of UXO they may have found in the surrounding areas. The main causes of accidents were children playing with bombs, accounting for about 30% of total causes, lighting fires for cooking, and collecting scrap metal.</p> <p><b>BENEFICIARIES –</b> Risk education activities reached 196,420 people.</p>
<p>communities, facing different risks by women, children, and other vulnerable groups. (Overall target 800,000 people reached)</p>	<p><b>Activity Result 2:</b> Assess, strengthen and improve UXO Lao programme management capacity through the provision of training and advisory services and mobilize sufficient resources for UXO Lao to enable Lao PDR to move towards meeting MDG9 Targets and CCM obligations.</p> <p><b>Action 1:</b> UXO Lao Capacity Assessment conducted with support from UNDP.</p>	<p>UXO Lao staff fully and actively participated and were involved in all process of assessment, especially self-assessment process that provided opportunities to discuss capacity gaps and prioritize capacity development activities. The draft Capacity Assessment report was shared at the October Policy Forum.</p>	<p>As a result of the Capacity Assessment, 21 actions were agreed to be undertaken by UXO Lao with support from donors. The outcomes of the actions will further directly contribute and support the realization of UXO Lao’s vision and strategy as well as contributing to MDG 2015, CCM and LDC by 2020.</p> <p><b>BENEFICIARIES –</b> UXO Lao HQ Staff</p>



<p><b>Milestone</b> 2014: 481,007 individuals supported.</p> <p><b>Status:</b> Achieved</p>	<p><b>Action 2:</b> M&amp;E Framework pilot and information-sharing for 5 Clearance Teams supported by Australian Aid developed.</p>	<p>UXO Lao, in cooperation with the Learning Facility of the Laos-Australia Rural Development Programme, piloted an M&amp;E framework and information sharing of five clearance teams to better report the outcomes of Australian support for development activities.</p>	
<p><b>Action 3:</b> Update the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) from version 5.04 to version 6.</p>	<p>UXO Lao worked together with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to update its current IMSMA version 5.04 to IMSMA version 6.</p>	<p>UXO Lao staff were trained on the use of updated version, which enables UXO Lao to better synchronize existing data.</p>	
<p><b>Action 4:</b> Conduct training on the operation of Brush Cutter machines which are supported by the Japanese Government.</p>	<p>12 UXO Lao staff including SEOD and Team Leader from 3 provinces (Sekong, Champak, and Saravan) completed the training on how to operate and maintenance Brush Cutter Machines, conducted in Cambodia by CMAC. Trainees learned how to operate the machines to cut vegetation in contaminated areas.</p>	<p>This technique will reduce the site preparation of beneficiaries; facilitate deminers to smoothly operate UXO clearance, and to integrate with other UXO clearance tools for increasing UXO clearance productivities. Planning and operation will be trained by CMAC, Cambodia, in Laos from Feb-March 2015. Two Machines arrived into Laos in February 2015 and two more will arrive toward the end of 2015.</p>	
<p><b>Action 5:</b> Conduct two workshops for experience-sharing between UXO Lao and CMAC, under the South - South Cooperation Project supported by JICA.</p>	<p>The workshop on Senior Management and Middle Management was conducted in Luang Prabang and Final workshop for Feedback and Action Plan was organized in Cambodia; 17 UXO Lao personnel participated both workshops</p>	<p>Participants discussed operations management, assessing funds through bidding processes, and integration of development activities under the Peace Building Project supported by Japan. The second phase of cooperation was discussed and agreed. This will focus on job training and run from September 2015-August 2017.</p>	
<p><b>Activity Result 3:</b> Provide training for all clearance personnel to national standards.</p>			

<p><b>Action 1:</b> Train 75 new staff trained annually and provide regular refresher training to all existing staff.</p>	<p>187 staffs were trained at UXO Lao Training Centre: 1) Team leader refresher: 49; 2) Section commanders: 30; 3) Medic Refresher: 32; 4) Trauma medic and First Aid Instructor (ICRC supported course): 22; 5) EOD Team Leader: 28; 6) Deminer training for Lao military: 26.</p>	<p>After the completion of the courses, staff returned to provincial offices with more knowledgeable skill on their work in the field operations.</p>
<p><b>Activity Result 4: Review and adopt improved technology where possible for effective and efficient operations.</b></p>		
<p><b>Action 1:</b> Complete geophysical technology trials to consider whether such technology could suitable and updateable for the Laotian environment.</p>	<p>Geophysical Trials were undertaken in the last quarter of 2014 in conjunction with MinMetals Group (MMG) at their site in Sepon. These trials were overseen by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and results will be available in Q1 2015.</p>	<p>Preliminary results of the tests have been positive and pointed and areas for further research with the potential for eventual application to the Lao context and also globally. The results will feed into a process of supporting UXO Lao to move forward further with effective and efficient survey operations.</p>
<p><b>Action 2:</b> Implement training for technical and non-technical survey for improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of UXO Lao.</p>	<p>Two CHA training courses were conducted in Saravane and Xiengkhuang province with 44 participants from nine provinces and National Office attending the courses.</p>	<p>After the completion of training, all nine provincial operations conducted the CHA in each province, 34 big bombs, 6,189 sub-munitions and 4,229 other items of UXO were destroyed. When this process is adopted throughout the organisation, it is expected that clearance operations will be more effective, far better directed and provide better value for money.</p> <p><b>BENEFICIARIES</b> – 3,020 hectares of land were cleared through CHA survey with benefited to 84,528 people</p>