

UXO Sector Progress Report 2022

<p>Name of Sector Working Group: Unexploded Ordnance</p> <p>SWG Chair and Co-Chairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare (Chair) - UNDP Resident Representative (Co-Chair) and Ambassador of the United States to Lao PDR (Co-Chair) <p>SWG Secretariat Focal Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government Officials: Chomyaeng Phengthongsawat, Director General of the NRA - UNDP: Minyoung KIM, Head of UXO Unit, UNDP Lao PDR - U.S. Embassy to Lao PDR: Oliver Bauduin , UXO Program Advisor <p>Technical Supporting Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government Officials: Mr. Douangsy Thammavong, Deputy Director General of the NRA. - UNDP: Rupert Leighton, Chief Technical Advisor, UNDP Lao PDR

Overview of Sector Performance in 2022

Sector Outputs and activities	Progress	Challenges
A. Sectoral thematic (substantive) areas		
1. Actions/activities relating to the RTIM key recommendation as per Annex 1 (for most relevant recommendations only)		
Key Recommendations from 2021 RTIM for UXO Sector from the Report and Proceeding RTIM 2021,	With support of UNDP, coordination for the revision of National Standards is currently underway with the first tranche of revised chapters awaiting review. It is critical that national standards are updated and reflect best practices in order to optimize resources targeting clearance. Strong standards can significantly contribute to improved effectiveness and efficiencies in the sector. The National Implementation Measure in line with the Article 9 of the Convention on Cluster	Challenge/opportunity: We therefore need to develop a risk management approach in work-planning through: • Risk Identification at all levels of implementation. • Risk Prioritization by ranking the risks according to their likelihood of occurring and the potential negative impact on the work-plan. The

	<p>Munitions legislation have moved forward and made good progress through consultative workshops. The Government has endorsed Decree on UXO Regulatory and the Decree, PM Decree 210/GoLin 2022.</p> <p>In close coordination with UNDP, the new UXO National Strategic Plan, “Safe Path Forward III” (2021-2030) was published both in Lao and English. The strategy forms the basis on which the 5-Year UXO Sector Action Plan is developed and we will ensure that UXO is mainstreamed across all sectors through the nationally endorsed SDG-18, ‘Lives Safe from UXO’. The UXO contamination in Lao PDR is a cross-cutting issue that can delay the achievement of multiple SDGs, impact the poorest communities and hinder development initiatives. Provided that UXO issues acknowledged as specific output of the 9th NSEDP, the NRA, with support from UNDP, conducted a post-clearance impact assessment to better understand the impact in the areas where we surveyed and clear. The final report is being finalized and will help to guide the next 5 years of project monitoring and evaluation, specifically supporting the NRA’s work on developing a standardized approach to prioritization of clearance to support development priorities.</p>	<p>highest scoring risks should then be clearly identified as either drivers of work-plan objectives, or as threats to initiatives. • Risk Mitigation of the prioritized risks, through a mitigation plan that outlines what will be done to prevent or minimize the likelihood, and/or what would be done in the future to minimize its impact if the risk occurs. • Risk Monitoring by regularly reviewing the risks and to update the mitigation plans. • During lockdowns, working from home modalities are feasible for management functions, but UXO survey and clearance operations require presence on the ground.</p> <p>Opportunities: The new UXO national strategy will be a launchpad to make the next 10 years of the sector a success moving into a decade of action to achieve the 9th NSEDP and SDGs. A clear prioritization strategy is the best tool to make the case for the UXO Sector in the Lao PDR, and to increase the level of funding. The ongoing survey leads to better identified clearance needs, and it greatly improves the possibility of additional funding for clearance operations. With more efficient survey and</p>
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		clearance methodologies, the UXO sector can really make a difference in the next decade with greater prioritization of clearance efforts. The humanitarian clearance capacity has increased and will increase further in 2023 with the support from the Republic of Korea (KOICA Phase III project).
2. Other substantive actions/activities relating to overall sectoral strategies, if applicable, to support the implementation of the 9 th NSEDP and preparation for the 9 th NSEDP		
2a. EORE	EORE activities were conducted in 778 villages compare to the annual target is 672 villages, benefiting 180,911 people, of which 95,431 were women. This is equivalent to 115% of the annual target of 672 villages.	<p>Challenges: Some provinces no longer conduct full EORE activities (due to lack of funding), e.g. Luang Prabang and Hua Phan.</p> <p>Opportunity: In this year, the EORE achieved 778 villages which it reaches 115% of the annual target.</p> <p>The UXO Sector will be integrated the EORE into secondary school curriculums and local communities by broadcasting EORE material via the radio in 7 provinces. It provides information to communities in case of emergency, raising awareness of UXO to prevent the accident. Building on the previous achievements, the Ministry of Education and Sports will explore expanded ways to deliver risk education, this will further expand risk</p>

Commented [ba1]: It is planned and funded, MOU signed, but not yet implemented (planned for 2023).

Commented [RL2]: Contribution vs. Attribution: Undertaking EORE does NOT have a direct correlation to either a drop or rise in casualty numbers. It contributes but can not be attributed to.

Commented [ba3R2]: Agreed

		<p>education to be available in formal and non-formal education centers nationwide. In addition, in five pilot districts, the Village Education Development Committees and youth volunteers will disseminate risk education messages to community members.</p> <p>At a global level and within the ASEAN region, we are now seeing increased use of modern technologies to provide risk education to wider audiences, including mobile phone applications and social media platforms. These technologies will be applied in compliance with requirements of the relevant authorities.</p>
<p>2b. Victim Assistance (VA)</p>	<p>38 people have been supported through the NRA Victim Assistance program. This is equivalent to 3,3% of the annual target of 1140.</p> <p>To date 13 UXO accidents have been reported with 17 casualties (3 dead) in comparison to the yearly target of SPF III, below 38 casualties.</p>	<p>Challenges: Compare to the annual target, this year, 38 people have been supported through the NRA Victim Assistance program which reached only 3.3%.</p> <p>Opportunities: Increasingly Victim Assistance (VA) activities are mainstreamed in the broader disability sector, with support provided to all persons with disabilities including UXO survivors. This positive development is enabled by the collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Health.</p>

Commented [ba4]: We do not need to write it, but FYI on the OKARD project (currently in Vientiane, Xieng Khouang and Savannakhet), we plan to extend it in the future.

<p>2c. Survey and Clearance</p>	<p>In 2022, Non-technical surveys were conducted in 240 villages.</p> <p>Technical survey identified 1,850 Ha of CHAs. 4,218 ha was cleared of UXO.</p> <p>This is equivalent to 42% of the annual target of (10,000ha) for clearance.</p>	<p>Challenges: The annual target of Survey and Clearance did not reach targets. There are different factors which contributed to this causing this problem, most notably a drop in funding for UXO Lao from key donors in some provinces.</p> <p>Opportunities:</p> <p>Currently, the UXO Sector already have the National Strategic Plan (SPF III) which it will develop National Prioritization Plan as well as National Standard based on SPF III, National Social-Economic Development Plan and SDG 18 in nearly future.</p> <p>Improvements in productivity can be made across several areas such as revising National Standards (currently in progress), streamlining the MoU process to drive operational efficiencies with INGOs, supporting innovation in the sector and re-engaging with key donors.</p> <p>There are concrete plans and committed funding to increase the clearance capacity of the humanitarian clearance operators in 2023 and 2024. Demonstrate the progress made in the clearance of Confirmed Hazardous Areas is required to maintain the level of funding in 2025 and beyond.</p>
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Commented [RL5]: Ibid.

		This expansion of the clearance capacity will require training at the highest level of the national staff, to ensure safety and the quality of operations.
B. Communication and outreach activities with the sector and across Sector Working Group		
Communication and outreach activities	<p>The UXO sector is structured and coordinated under the leadership of the NRA. Each year there are: UXO Sector Working Group meetings, UXO Project Board Meeting (UNDP), regular IP meetings (NRA, donors and operators) and four UXO Technical Working Groups meetings (TWGs) for each of the following working groups: survey and clearance, MRE, VA and information management (IM).</p> <p>In 2022, the following TWGs were held: 4 MRE TWGs, 4 VA TWGs, 4 survey and clearance TWGs and 4 IM TWGs.</p> <p>An operational Dashboard is regularly produced, updated and made available on the NRA website www.nra.gov.la.</p>	
C. Cross-sectoral thematic areas applied to all SWGs		
1. Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (in accordance to VDCAP 2016-2025) (Only narrative on each principles)	I. Ownership- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NRA and UXO are the institution of the government which leads by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. 2. Increasing the engagement of Unit 58 in the UXO sector. This represents the Lao government involving in responsibilities on the UXO Sector especially on Clearance. 	

	<p>3. Vision of unit 58 on longer term situation for residual risk management.</p> <p>4. Resource committed of MoD for unit 58 deployment.</p> <p>II. Alignment- Currently, NRA is developing on prioritization standard for the sector to ensure maximum impact of Clearance to support the FDA at the district level.</p> <p>III. Harmonization & Simplification- - Revision of National Standard to facilitate more effective and efficient clearance to support NGOs for MoU streamlining is the main prioritization plan for the coming year. - Plus, having multiple years of MoU has been requested from NGOs which NRA accepted this condition. However, this process should be negotiated. For example: currently, MAG, Halo-trust, and NPA are holding two years of MoU contracts.</p> <p>IV. Inclusive Partnership for Development Results- In Khammuan, there is the joint development and Clearance program between Luxembourg (lux-development) partnering with UXO Lao and MAG. This could be a good example for others to implement the joint development program in nearly future.</p> <p>V. Transparency, Predictability, and Mutual Accountability- -</p>	
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Commented [RL6]: Mention got funding to the sector - funding by MoD of Unit 58

Commented [RL7]: Mention upcoming prioritization policy for clearance to support FDA at district levels

Commented [RL8]: Mention revision of NS, support to INGOs for MoU streamlining

Commented [RL9]: Could mention UXO Lao (and others) alignment of clearance and development work (e.g. Luxembourg funding in Khamouanne).

Commented [RL10]: Suggest need to work with donors to make funding more predictable. Mention US Govt support in this area to multi-year funding, which is much appreciated.

	<p>VI. Domestic Resource Mobilization- where NRA will explore any domestic commercial funding opportunity e.g</p> <p>NRA will develop DRM strategy in 2023 after exploring any domestic commercial funding opportunities for example: Cooperate Social Responsibility.</p> <p>VII. South-South Cooperation, Triangular Cooperation, and Knowledge Sharing- Study trip to Lebanon. Review Lebanon proactivity</p> <p>There is an Exchange Programme on Operational Management under the South-South Cooperation project supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The purpose of this activities will strengthen knowledge, knows-how and experiences through training program exchanges. Since 2012, a total of 228 Cambodian and Lao officers have benefited from training programmes under the South-South Cooperation project.</p> <p>Besides, NRA will conduct a study trip in Lebanon in order to review Lebanon proactive and impact of mine to potentially implement in Lao PDR during the Q1 of 2023.</p> <p>VIII. Business as a Partner in Development-</p> <p>Currenty, the bussiness as a partner in development is still limited.</p>	
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Commented [RL12]: As for point VI. above

2. Innovation and technology		
3. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and accelerating the adoption and implementation of the National Youth Policy	In 2022, NRA and UNDP conduct gender analysis in the UXO sector to promote gender equality and women's empowerment by sharing experiences in organizing the Gender Mainstreaming Training from MAG, reviewing the manual on TOT on Gender Mainstreaming in the UXO sector in Laos and discussing a roadmap to strengthen gender mainstreaming in the UXO sector.	

Commented [RL13]: This is something that the NRA needs to consider... Possible GICHD support? Suggest stating NRA is open to innovation and ideas which will improve effectiveness and efficiency in the sector.

Commented [ba14R13]: We could mention the work of UXO Lao to adopt the best setting on their new metal detectors (with the help of Tetra Tech). It took place in 2022.

Way forward for 2023:

- Conduct EORE more than 700 villages.
- Conduct area clearance more than 80% out of 10,000 hectares.
- Conduct Non-Technical Survey more than 80% of out 774 villages to identify UXO evidence points. Conduct Technical Survey to identify CHA more than 75% of out 50,000 hectares.
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- Strengthen national clearance capacity through the establishment of 13 teams of Lao People's Army (Unit 58) to undertake Non-Technical and Technical Survey and Clearance
- Review draft and finalize National Standards including demining standards
- Finalize and implement a National Standard on prioritization of clearance
- Undertake a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework for 2023.
- Review and update a Victim Assistance Database/Conduct training Workshop for VA operators
- Revise curriculum and undertake EOD 3 and 4 training
- Workshop on drafting regulation to regulate the UXO Clearance companies in Lao PDR.
- Complete analysis of financing opportunities and scenarios for UXO sector in Lao PDR, to 2030 and beyond.
- Develop a funding/resource mobilization strategy for the UXO sector to achieve 2030 targets.
- A workshop on MRE, VA, survey and clearance sector prioritization work plan for 2024.
- KAP survey, results and dissemination

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- To consider research to help develop tools for EORE to increase the relevance, impact and effectiveness of Evidence-based EORE methodologies.
- Establish QA/QC capacity in NRA for operators undertaking landmine clearance
- Attendance at Convention on Cluster Munitions meetings
- Attendance at National Directors Meeting in Geneva
- South South study trip to Lebanon
- Encouragement of innovation in the sector (clearance, information management etc.)
- Supporting streamlining of MoU process
- Strengthen Information Management through adoption of IMSMA Core, streamlining of processes, and elimination of historical task backlog.
- To explore options to develop the long-term capacity to address residual contamination, including consideration for the residual risk management.
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