

ກອງປະຊຸມໂຕະມືນ 2023: ແບບຟອມລາຍງານວຽກຂອງໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການ
RTIM 2023: Sector Working Group Reporting Template

ບົດລາຍງານນີ້ ແມ່ນບົດລາຍງານຮ່ວມ ລະຫວ່າງປະທານ ແລະ ປະທານຮ່ວມ ຂອງໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການ. ກະລຸນາປຶກສາຫາລື ກັບຂະແໜງການຍ່ອຍ ແລະ ຄັດຕິດເອກະສານທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງມານຳ ຕາມຄວາມເໝາະສົມດ້ວຍ.

This is a joint report of SWG Chair and Co-chairs. Please consult with your sub-sector working groups as appropriate, and consider annexing relevant documents to this report.

ຊື່ໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການ SWG Name: Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Sector Working Group
ປະທານໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການ (ຊື່ ແລະ ຕຳແໜ່ງ name and position):

H.E. Padeumphone Sonthany, Vice Minister of Labour and Social Welfare (until August 2023)

H.E. Phoxay KHAYKHAMPHITHOUNE, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs (from September 2023)

ປະທານຮ່ວມໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການ (ຊື່ ແລະ ຕຳແໜ່ງ name and position):

Mrs. Martine Thérér, Resident Representative, UNDP.

H.E. Michelle Y. Outlaw, Chargée d’Affaires, US Embassy to Lao PDR

ຊື່ຫົວໜ້າກອງເລຂາ Head of Secretariat (ຊື່ ແລະ ຕຳແໜ່ງ name and position):

ກອງເລຂາ Secretariat (ຝ່າຍລັດຖະບານ Government)(ຊື່ ແລະ ນາມສະກຸນ name and position):

Mr. Daovy VONGXAY, Director General of International Organization, MOFA.

ກອງເລຂາ Secretariat (ຝ່າຍຄູ່ຮ່ວມພັດທະນາ DPs)(ຊື່ ແລະ ນາມສະກຸນ name and position):

Ms. Minyoung Kim, Head of UXO Unit, UNDP

Mr. Olivier Bauduin, UXO Program Advisor, US Embassy to Lao PDR (Rotating Donor country)

1. ຈຸດປະສົງ ແລະ ເປົ້າໝາຍຂອງໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການຂອງທ່ານ ໃນປີ 2023 (1/2 ໜ້າ)

Main objectives and targets of Sector Working Group in 2023 (1/2 page)

The UXO Sector Working Group (SWG) is one of the 10 Sector Working Groups that serve as the key coordination platforms for each thematic area of development in Lao PDR's Round Table Process. There will be two meetings of the UXO SWG every year, one at the mid-year and one at the end of the year.

The Group serves as a discussion forum, aims to build consensus on development priorities and enhance effective cooperation in the fields of survey and clearance, risk education, victim assistance, information management, monitoring and evaluation, and quality management.

The main objective and targets set by the UXO Sector Working Group for the year 2023 revolve around reporting progress on achievement of the key outcomes outlined in the 9th National Social Economic Development Plan (9th NSEDP, 2021-2025), the 10-year National Strategic Plan "Safe Path Forward III" (2021-2030) and the Lao national Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 18, Lives Safe from UXO. The UXO Sector Working Group aims to provide comprehensive and detailed updates on the advancements made in the field of survey and clearance, risk education, victim assistance, information management and quality management. By analysing and presenting this data taken from the NRA dashboard (nra.gov.la/resources.php), the UXO Sector Working group aims to contribute towards informing policy decisions with evidence, mobilizing necessary resources and coordinating amongst stakeholders, ultimately furthering the goals of the national development plans, and ensuring a safer and more inclusive future for affected communities.

2. ຜົນໄດ້ຮັບ ແລະ ຜົນສໍາເລັດຂອງໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການຂອງທ່ານ ທຽບໃສ່ [ຄໍາແນະນໍາຂອງບົດລາຍງານກອງປະຊຸມໂຕະມົນປີ 2022](#) ແລະ [ແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມແຫ່ງຊາດຄັ້ງທີ IX](#) ແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມແຫ່ງຊາດ 5 ປີ ຄັ້ງທີ IX, ເປົ້າໝາຍການພັດທະນາແບບຍືນຍົງ ແລະ ຍຸດທະສາດຂອງຂະແໜງການ ມີຄືແນວໃດ? (1-2 ໜ້າ)

What are the key results and impacts achieved within your sector in 2023 against the [2022 RTIM policy recommendations](#), and [9th NSEDP](#), SDGs and sector strategies? (1-2 pages)

Over the past year, the UXO Sector has continuously focused on implementing its role to achieve the 9th NSEDP, the National Strategic Plan “Safe Path Forward III” period 2021-2030 (SPF III), and the SDG 18, Lives Safe from UXO. In addition, UXO work has also been integrated across various sectors, including education, sports, information, culture, tourism, public health, livelihood development and other socio-economic development activities. This integration is largely attributed to the NRA’s comprehensive guidance and execution of activities at all levels. Key areas such as Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE), Victim Assistance (VA), Information Management, survey and clearance operations and demolition procedures are being meticulously managed. These efforts are tailored to meet specific objectives at each stage of socio-economic development, emphasizing a humanitarian approach in the management of UXO operations.

In 2023, the key UXO sectoral achievement against the 9th National Social-Economic Development Plans and the National Strategic Plan “Safe Path Forward III” period 2021-2030 are as follows:

- **Reduce the number of UXO casualties:** the number of UXO accidents was 22 with 47 casualties (36 were injured and 11 deaths). This compares to a SPF III target

of less than 38 people per year and a 9th NSEDP target of under 40 people per year.

- **Undertake survey to identify Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHAs):** the areas of CHAs that have been identified in 2023 was 20.436 hectares (ha)¹. This compares to annual targets under the SPF III (25,000 ha) and 9th NSEDP (50,000 ha), of 25,000 ha and 50,000 ha, respectively. More effort and support are required to reach these national targets.
- **Conduct clearance of UXO for agricultural and development purposes:** 5,815 ha were cleared in 2023 (Agricultural areas accounted for 5.190ha while areas for development purposes totaled 625ha). Compared to the annual clearance target of the SPF III (10,000 ha) and the 9th NSEDP (10,000 ha) the sector has only achieved 54% of the national target. With the ongoing effort to develop the national prioritization system for clearance, more development lands are expected to be cleared, amplifying the development impact in UXO contaminated communities. An important number of additional clearance teams were trained, equipped, and deployed by the end of 2023 in four southern provinces. Combined with the efforts to resume UXO Lao operations in two northern provinces in early 2024, and the increased number of humanitarian clearance teams of Unit 58, the clearance capacity will continue to grow in 2024.
- **Support UXO Victims including livelihood development for better integration into society:** the number of UXO victims who received VA support in 2023 was 3,262 people. This is a great achievement compared to the previous years as well as the national targets of the SPF III (1,140 people) and the 9th NSEDP (1,152 people).

¹ Operations_Dashboard on 18/01/2024.

- **UXO knowledge products:** NRA with support from UNDP published and disseminated important UXO knowledge products for the sector. A Post-Clearance Impact Assessment (PCIA) in UXO contaminated communities was published in January 2023, highlighting the impact of ordnance contamination and the benefits of clearance for rural development. A Gender and Diversity Analysis was conducted in 2023 in close cooperation with the Lao Women's Union to help further gender integration into the UXO Sector. Two more important knowledge products were completed this year: the Ordnance Depth Distribution study, and the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Survey. A financing scenarios review for the sector beyond 2030 is being finalized.

These were the key achievements in the UXO sector in 2023 and we will continue to improve and strive for the annual targets in 2024.

3.a ອີງຕາມຄໍາແນະນໍາຂອງການປະເມີນກາງສະໄໝ ຂອງແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມແຫ່ງຊາດ ຄັ້ງທີ IX, ວຽກງານບຸລິມະສິດຂອງໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການຂອງທ່ານ ສໍາລັບປີ 2024 ຄາດວ່າຈະມີຫຍັງແນ່? (1 ໜ້າ)

Building on the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the 9th NSEDP, what are the SWG’s key priorities for 2024? (1 page)

A key priority for 2024 is the improvement of the Office of the National Regulatory Authority (NRA). In 2024, a review will be conducted of the current functioning and will provide recommendations to ensure that the NRA is fit for purpose.

With the objective to maximize the benefits of the UXO Sector clearance capacity, the NRA will lead the discussion to develop a national planning and prioritization system, including the identification of the prioritization criteria and the dissemination of guidance to all relevant stakeholders.

In addition, the UXO Sector Working Group tasks the NRA Office and the Technical Working Groups to progress on the review of the National Standards. Building on a process discussed in September 2023 on how to review and update the National Standards, the NRA will establish a technical review committee which will be inclusive of various technical stakeholders.

Starting in 2024, the Lao PDR will improve the “UXO Sector Working Group (UXO SWG)” as a dynamic and holistic dialogue platform. As part of the UXO SWG reform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented a proposal for a new Technical Working Group (TWG) at the UXO SWG meeting of December 2023, which was positively received by the stakeholders. The new “Coordinating, Policy, and Funding Strategy” technical working group will support the implementation of international obligations (SDG 18, CCM, CCW including gender mainstreaming), as well as research and development.

3.b ອີງຕາມຄໍາແນະນໍາຂອງການປະເມີນກາງສະໄໝ ຂອງແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມແຫ່ງຊາດ ຄັ້ງທີ IX, ວຽກງານບຸລິມະສິດຂອງໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການຂອງທ່ານ ຄາດວ່າຈະປະກອບສ່ວນເຂົ້າໃນການສ້າງແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມແຫ່ງຊາດ ຄັ້ງທີ X ໄດ້ຄືແນວໃດ? (1/2 ໜ້າ)

Building on the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the 9th NSEDP, what are the SWG's key priorities for the conceptualization of the 10th NSEDP? (1/2 page)

The UXO sector working group's key priorities for the conceptualization of the 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) are focused on the following:

- 1. Continue following the National Strategic Plan “Safe Path Forward III”** by Reducing the number of UXO casualties to less than 190 people in 5 years (average less than 38 people per year). Undertaking survey to identify 125.000 ha of CHAs for 5 years, conducting clearance of UXO from 50.000 ha in 5 years of land for agricultural and development purpose, supporting 5.700 UXO victims including livelihood development for better integration into society, and UXO activities are integrated into relevant sector plans.
- 2. Targeting 10.000 hectares of Areas Clearance per year against the National Strategic Plan as well as the National Social Economic Development Plan:** this goal involves the clearance of land contaminated with UXO, making it safe for agricultural, residential, or commercial use. Clearing 10.000 ha per year would contribute to reducing the risk of accidents and injuries associated with UXO as well as allow social economic development activities to take place without disruption.
- 3. Continue improving MOU process:** To address the recommendation of 2023's Round Table Implementation Meeting to streamline the process for development partner assistance and civil society participation in programmes to support national development, practical ways will be found to accelerate the signing of financing agreements and project MOUs by the Government once a project has been formulated and validated following consultations with all relevant

stakeholders. This would contribute to greater efficiency in achieving national clearance targets and unlock more donor funding for the sector.

4. **To address the indicator for Victim Assistance:** the collection of data will be improved on the access of victims and survivors to adequate medical and rehabilitative care, as well as livelihood and career supports. All victims and survivors should be aware of, and able to access, the supports that they are entitled to under existing legislation such as Law No. 57 on Persons with Disabilities and Law No.54 on Social Security.
5. **Strengthen capacity of operators across the country particularly focusing on humanitarian UXO demining teams of Lao People's Army:** This priority recognizes the importance of strengthening the capacity of the Lao People's Army to manage long-term residual contamination. Capacity building may involve training programs, acquiring advanced demining technologies, adoption of international innovations, and enhancing coordination and collaboration among demining teams and with local communities.

These priorities reflect a commitment to addressing the long-term impact of UXO contamination in Laos, a consequence of historical conflicts. Achieving these goals would contribute to the overall socio-economic development of the country by making more land available for productive use and ensuring the safety of the local population. These efforts are part of broader strategies, namely the 9th NSEDP and SDG goals, to promote sustainable development and improve the quality of life for the people of Laos.

4. ບົດຮຽນທີ່ທ່ານສາມາດຖອດຖອນໄດ້ສໍາລັບໜ່ວຍງານຂະແໜງການຂອງທ່ານ ທຽບໃສ່ການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດແຜນ ພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມ 5 ປີ ຄັ້ງທີ IX ໃນໄລຍະ 2 ປີເຄິ່ງທີ່ຜ່ານມາ ມີຫຍັງແນ່? (1/2 ໜ້າ) **What are the key lessons learned for the SWG, including from the MTR of the 9th NSEDP? (1/2 page)**

Since recognizing the abundance of UXO in the Lao PDR, we established the national strategic goals “Safe Path Forward III” period 2021-2030, in compliance with the 9th NSEDP. In the past, several factors have prevented us from achieving our objectives, including the following:

1. **Coordination among stakeholders:** We recognize the importance of a smooth, effective coordination mechanism to ensure the successful implementation of UXO clearance activities. To address the issue at hand, we have initiated a comprehensive review of the existing coordination mechanisms to identify areas of improvement. The review will encompass examining communication channels, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and enhancing collaboration among all stakeholders involved in the UXO Sector.
2. **Diversifying funding strategies in the UXO Sector:** We recognize the importance of diversifying funding strategies in the UXO sector to ensure sustainable and sufficient resources for UXO activities. Relying on a single source of funding can create vulnerabilities and limits possibilities in addressing the scale and complexity of UXO contamination. We will continue to seek international donor support from governments, non-governmental organizations, and international institutions. Raising awareness of UXO issues and its impact on affected communities is crucial in attracting funding from these sources. We will explore partnerships and networks to connect with potential donors who align with our mission and can provide the necessary financial assistance. Contributions from more donors will help to achieve the set goals in the future.

3. Embracing innovation: Innovation plays a crucial role in improving outcomes in the UXO sector. By integrating new technologies and approaches, we can enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and safety of UXO clearance activities. However, it is essential to ensure that these innovations are context-specific, considering local conditions, cultural factors, and community needs. Regular monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of innovative technologies and approaches will help ensure the effectiveness and suitability in the UXO sector.