



**Minutes of the Technical Working Group Victim Assistance  
Held in the NRA Conference Room  
At 900 on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

**Present**

No	Name and Surname	Organization	Telephone	Email Address
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**Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introduction**

**Mr.Thongphone** welcomed participants to the meeting and introduced new VA Officer Mr. Mingkhoulankham Sisavath. He also reported some developments in the NRA and the VA Unit.

**Agenda Item 2: Minutes from Last Meeting (27th January 2009)**

**Mike** showed the minute on LCD and asked for any factual amendments from participants.

**Phil Bean** requested that the minutes of the meeting be amended to reflect the need to collect information from the unsurveyed 517 villages as and when the opportunity arises.

**Action:** Minutes to be amended, accordingly  
**Timing:** Immediate  
**Responsible:** Mike

**Agenda Item 3: Matters arising**

**Phil Bean** commented on the issue of unsurveyed villages. Their location, by district, should be identified and made readily available to other operators/NGOs which might be able to use the information for their work plan and assist in completing the Phase 1 Survey.

**Mike** showed the result of survey, with 517 villages to be surveyed and agreed to provide the district locations of those villages.

**Action:** List of Districts, with number of villages completed, to be provided to VA stakeholders  
**Timing:** Immediate  
**Responsible:** Bountao

**Bountao** made a statement about problems in the VA Unit: one VAPE has moved to the IT Unit and another to his former job. So that the VA Unit is advertising to replace them and asks participants if they know any qualified persons, they can encourage him/her to apply.

**Mike** added that to get abreast of the backlog of victims and accidents from 2008, those to date in 2009, and continuing accidents from henceforth, the VA Unit should plan to interview approximately 75 casualties each month, so that three VAPE will be needed to carry out the task.

**Action:** Advertise for two VAPE  
**Timing:** Immediate  
**Responsible:** Ming

#### **Agenda Item 4: Phase 1 Lao National Survey of Victims and Accidents**

**Mike** presented Draft Report of Phase 1 and gave out statistics on the survey performance (these documents are available in the record). At the time of the Meeting, the financial record had not been completed.

There was a question on the reason for the higher level of responses from the QA survey.

**Mike:** the District Enumerators visited without advanced warning and the Chiefs of villages may not have remembered all of the victims: after the enumerator left, they remembered other victims, or victims may have heard about the survey and come forward, but too late to be interviewed.

**Action:** Nothing arises

**Timing:** n.a.

**Responsible:** n.a.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Phase 2 Victim and Accident Survey: Actions in Hand**

**Bountao:** The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has been requested to assist in the appointment of Provincial and District Focal Points (PFP and DFP) for the survey. The request was submitted in late February but we have not received any responses from the Ministry, though it is understood inform that the proposal will be approved in late March 2009. After the appointment of the FP there will be seven regional training for them. After training, DFP will formulate networks of village Chiefs in their areas for reporting purposes. Reports will go from accidents site to village Chief to DFP to PFP and thence to the NRA VA Unit, which will despatch the VAPE to the site. The cost of per accident will be about 200,000 kip each.

**Mr. Thonglith:** requested that an evaluation of Phase 1 be made before starting Phase 2. Furthermore, there are Phase 1 forms from districts that have not been received. To deal with UXO requires cooperation from many sectors working together. According to NRA working procedure, the VA Unit should prepare a project document for consideration by the Board of management.

**Bountao:** responded that before submitting proposals to the Ministry, discussions were held and reported to Board

**Mike:** at each step, proposals have been put before stakeholders in the VA TWG. There are major differences between Phase 1 and Phase 2 which mean that there is not much learning from one for the other. In Phase 1, we proactively set out to visit every village in the country. In Phase 2, the NRA will react to information about accidents received from individual villages where they have occurred, and this will trigger the visit by the NRA's full-time specialist enumerators. Cooperation will be with the Labour and Social Welfare sector.

**Action:** Proceed rapidly with Phase 2

**Timing:** Immediate

**Responsible:** VA Unit and NRA Management

#### **Agenda Item 6: Victim Assistance Strategy**

**Mike:** good progress is being made with the development of the VA strategy. We have agreed a framework in which there are eight objective areas for action. Stakeholders are now engaged in the preparation of Position Papers in each of the eight areas.

**Barbara:** requested comments from all stakeholders.

**Mike:** asked for names and contact details of all stakeholders not currently on the distribution list.

General discussion on a sub meeting on VA strategy before we have the next TWG meeting, and a date was agreed for **8<sup>th</sup> April 2009 at 9:00 in NRA office.**

**Mr. Thonglith:** suggested that we should have specialists who are well-informed on emergency medical care and hospitalization. We should be open to other sector that may should be involved with the strategy development.

**Action:** NRA VA Unit and designated members of TWG to move forward on Position Papers for meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> April

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Responsible:** All

#### **Agenda Item 7: Convention on Cluster Munitions**

**Mike:** reported Lao ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (Oslo Convention) on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009. He mentioned on the First Meeting of States Parties to the Convention which will be held within six months of the 30<sup>th</sup> country ratifying. Laos will play the role as a host country of the Meeting, with 300-400 delegates from many country attending. The Meeting will possibly, the convention could be held in May-June or September-October 2010.

With the increased profile of Laos, in view of the Convention, there are likely to be proposals from outside for funds for cluster munition action in Laos, such as one from the government of Japan through UNDP. This required submission of concept notes for clearance and victim assistance activities. This particular request is focusing on the five most cluster-munition-contaminated countries, including Laos, which is number one of five.

In order to be prepared for such events in the future, stakeholders should have their concept notes readily prepared and lodged with the NRA for rapid response.

**Luc** suggested that information in the UN Portfolio should be sufficient.

**Barbara:** proposed a concept note on victim assistant strategy and she advised that every operator can send their concept note to NRA in order to avoid work overlapping.

**Action:** those interested to prepare concept notes for current or proposed projects and submit to NRA  
**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Responsible:** All

#### **Agenda Item 08: Date of Next Meeting**

Every one agreed to have the next (3<sup>rd</sup>) TWG meeting on **26<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 9:00 in NRA office.**

**Action:** Meet on 26<sup>th</sup> May  
**Timing:** As stated  
**Responsible:** All

#### **Agenda Item 09: Any Other Business**

**Mr. Vitith Chanthasiri from HIB:** informed the TWG of an accident occurred in Tang Louang village, Nong district, Savannakhet province. One child died. HIB and CARE will follow up and send information to NRA as soon as possible.

**Mr. Thongdy:** ask HIB to announce the accident via many media e.g. local radio, village loud speaker, so that people in the community would know the negative impact of UXO.

Phil: doesn't think that all roving teams are aware of how to advise victims on how to access services that they need: we have to educate villagers on service availability and means of accessing services.

**Action:** HIB to follow up and send information to NRA  
**Timing:** Immediate  
**Responsible:** Vitith

#### **Agenda Item 10: Closing Remarks**

Thank you.

**APPROVED BY:**

**PREPARED BY:  
MINGKHOUAN KHAM SISAVATH**