



UXO SECTOR ANNUAL REPORT 2023

2023 UXO SECTOR ANNUAL REPORT

This is the annual report for the National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action in Lao PDR (NRA).

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FOREWORD



I am pleased to present the 2023 UXO Sector Annual Report for the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR). This year marks significant progress in our national effort to address the lingering challenge of unexploded ordnance (UXO) contamination, a legacy of the past that continues to impact the lives of many Lao citizens.

A noteworthy development in 2023 was the strategic transition of UXO sector supervision from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This shift recognizes the increasing importance of international collaboration in UXO/mine action. With this change, the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) Board has also been reconstituted, reflecting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' focus on strengthening partnerships and resource mobilization.

On the domestic front, we are proud to announce the establishment of 13 new humanitarian UXO/demining teams within the Lao People's Army. This significant expansion bolsters our national capacity for UXO clearance and underscores our unwavering commitment to a safer future for our people.

Furthermore, December 2023 saw the presentation of a new structure for the UXO Sector Working Group. This revamped structure fosters improved coordination and collaboration among all stakeholders – government agencies, international partners, civil society organizations and commercial operators. It signifies a renewed focus on working together for a more efficient and impactful UXO clearance programme.

This report examines in-depth the achievements of 2023, highlighting ongoing efforts to clear UXO-contaminated land, promote risk education and integrate UXO clearance into our national development strategies. We remain dedicated to a comprehensive approach that tackles both the immediate threat posed by UXOs and paves the way for long-term social and economic development across the nation.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all our partners, both domestic and international, whose tireless efforts contribute to this vital work. Through continued collaboration, we can build a future free from the fear and dangers of UXO for all Lao citizens.

H.E. Saleumxay KOMMASITH

**Deputy Prime Minister,
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Chairperson of the National Regulatory Authority for the UXO/Mine Action Board**

FOREWORD



Thanks to the continuous efforts and cooperation between the Government, local communities, and international UXO actors, Lao PDR has been able in 2023 to clear 17% of all of the Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHAs) identified nationwide since the Cluster Munition Remnant Survey approach was adopted in 2015. Some provinces have made even greater progress, for instance Champasak where most CHAs have been cleared. However, given the scale of the UXO contamination across the country, we must continue finding ways to improve effectiveness and efficiency, and make the most of available resources.

In a context of declining Official Development Assistance (ODA) and shifting donor priorities, all these considerations deserve our attention. Embracing innovation – whether it is new technological solutions or process adjustments – can transform how we work, increase efficiency, and accelerate the implementation of Lao PDR’s strategy “Safe Path Forward III” and the achievement of SDG 18 “Lives safe from UXO.”

Since taking over the responsibility of the sector in September 2023, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has accelerated the pace of UXO survey and clearance and has ensured that rural communities reap the benefits of safe access to their land. As co-chairs of the UXO Sector Working Group, UNDP and the U.S. Embassy in the Lao PDR welcome the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In 2023, increases in clearance capacity allowed the six humanitarian clearance operators to clear more land than in any year on record. As Laos approaches the half-way point to achieving its Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, it is even more important that we see increased efficiency of our work in the UXO sector. Clearing land allows local communities to cultivate new land safely and confidently, to pursue investments that support longer term socio-economic development efforts. Survey and clearance, as well as risk education, support safe access to health, education, and basic services.

We commend the dedication and hard work of all those involved in the UXO sector and look forward to another year of collaboration. Together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of UXO-affected communities and create a safer and more secure future for the people of the Lao PDR.

Ambassador of the United States of America and UNDP Resident Representative,
Co-Chairpersons of the UXO Sector Working Group

Ms. Heather Variava
Ambassador of the United States of America,
Co-Chairperson of the
UXO Sector Working Group

Ms. Martine Thérér
UNDP Resident Representative
Co-Chairperson of the
UXO Sector Working Group

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

COPE	Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise
EOD	Explosive ordnance disposal
EORE	Explosive ordnance risk education
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
HI	Humanity & Inclusion
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
Lao PDR	Lao People’s Democratic Republic
LXML	Lane Xang Minerals Ltd.
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPA	Norwegian People’s Aid
NRA	National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action Sector in Lao PDR
NSEDP	National Socioeconomic Development Plan
PM/WRA	Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (United States)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
Unit 58	Humanitarian UXO Demining Teams of Lao People’s Army
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UXO Lao	Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme
UXO	Unexploded ordnance
WEI	World Education Inc.

INTRODUCTION TO UXO

UXO facts and figures

- Lao PDR is, per capita, the most heavily bombed country in history.
- Most villages in Lao PDR that are classified as poor are also contaminated with UXO.
- All 17 provinces and the capital city suffer from UXO contamination.
- More than 2 million tons of ordnance were dropped on Lao PDR between 1964 and 1973, equivalent to 0.85 tonnes per person.
- 580,000 bombing missions were flown over Lao PDR between 1964 and 1973.
- Cluster submunitions or 'bombies' are the most common form of UXO found in the country.
- More than 270 million bombies were dropped on Lao PDR.
- An estimated 30 percent of bombies failed to detonate.
- Approximately 80 million unexploded bombies remained in Lao PDR after the war ended.
- Over 50,000 people have been killed or injured by UXO since 1964.
- From 2013 to 2023, 440 casualties were reported, resulting in 114 deaths (25.9 percent of casualties).
- In the same decade, children (under 18 years of age) comprised over 48 percent of casualties.

What are UXO?

UXO are explosive weapons that have failed to detonate when they were fired, dropped, launched or projected, and still pose a risk of exploding. UXO contamination in Lao PDR consists of large air-dropped bombs, rockets, grenades, artillery munitions, mortars, landmines and cluster munitions.

A cluster munition involves a container that opens in the air and scatters large numbers of explosive submunitions or 'bomblets' over a wide area. These submunitions are known throughout Lao PDR as 'bombies'. A cluster munition is dropped from a plane or launched from the ground.

Bombies dropped on Lao PDR had a high failure rate, with an estimated 30 percent unexploded and littered across vast tracts of land. When disturbed, even decades later, bombies and other UXO can explode, injuring and killing civilians as they carry out their daily activities.

Lao PDR today is one of the most heavily UXO- and cluster munition-affected countries in the world, with up to 25 percent of villages contaminated by these remnants of war. In addition to more than 270 million bombies, over 4 million large bombs were dropped on the country or used in extensive ground battles, predominantly in the northern provinces. They left behind substantial amounts of other kinds of UXO.

THE IMPACT OF UXO IN LAO PDR

Explosive ordnance contamination threatens lives, curtails freedom of movement, limits safe access to arable land, disenfranchises communities, and above all, instils fear and insecurity. The most vulnerable population groups are most affected.

Explosive remnants of war have forced generations of people in Lao PDR to adapt their lives to avoid the threat of UXO. Although the conflict that left it heavily contaminated ended in 1973, the UXO legacy did not.

The risk of UXO does not exist in a vacuum but in a context where differences and inequalities persist among women, men, boys and girls in terms of responsibilities, activities, access to and control over resources, and decision-making opportunities. Accordingly, even when everyone in a community is exposed to the same hazards caused by UXO, people with different vulnerabilities experience risks in different ways.

For instance, according to the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMS-MA), over 70 percent of UXO casualties in Lao PDR by the end of 2023 were men and boys. Although more research is required, this gender imbalance may be at least partially attributable to gendered practices in UXO-contaminated communities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: 2023 OVERVIEW

The Government of Lao PDR regulates the UXO/mine action sector through the NRA, which has been supervised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since September 2023. The Government's clearance capacity is administered by the Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao) and humanitarian UXO demining teams of the Lao People's Army (Unit 58), which conduct surveys and clearance. Development partners, United Nations organizations, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and commercial operators all contribute to the Government's efforts. This report will highlight progress collectively achieved in 2023 towards realizing the ultimate goal of making Lao PDR free from the threat of UXO.

The number of UXO accidents increased from 16 accidents with 20 casualties in 2022 to 22 accidents with 47 casualties in 2023. Throughout 2023, the sector continued to pursue technical survey goals, drawing on the evidence-based cluster munitions remnant survey methodology to determine the actual location of contamination (expressed as confirmed hazardous areas). The total land identified as confirmed hazardous areas through technical surveys increased from 21,577 hectares in 2022 to 23,726 hectares in 2023. Clearance increased from 5,668 hectares in 2022 to 6,252 hectares in 2023.

Survey and clearance work has been complemented by explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) activities. In 2023, 353,139 participants attended risk education sessions in 1,084 impacted villages.

In 2023, 3,262 people received victim assistance. Of these, 24 people needed medical treatment, 21 required psychological care, 489 took part in vocational training, 480 gained economic support, 360 received physical rehabilitation support and 1,888 gained awareness through EORE.

2023 saw a significant boost for the NRA's provincial offices. Staff received training on the IMSMA and acquired new Internet connections. This enhanced data collection and database functionality.

Unit 58 established new teams dedicated to UXO clearance, EORE and technical surveys, marking a significant step towards ensuring the long-term sustainability of the sector. These specialized teams are vital for safely removing and disposing of UXO, conducting EORE to educate communities on the dangers of such items, and performing technical surveys to assess and mitigate explosive hazards.

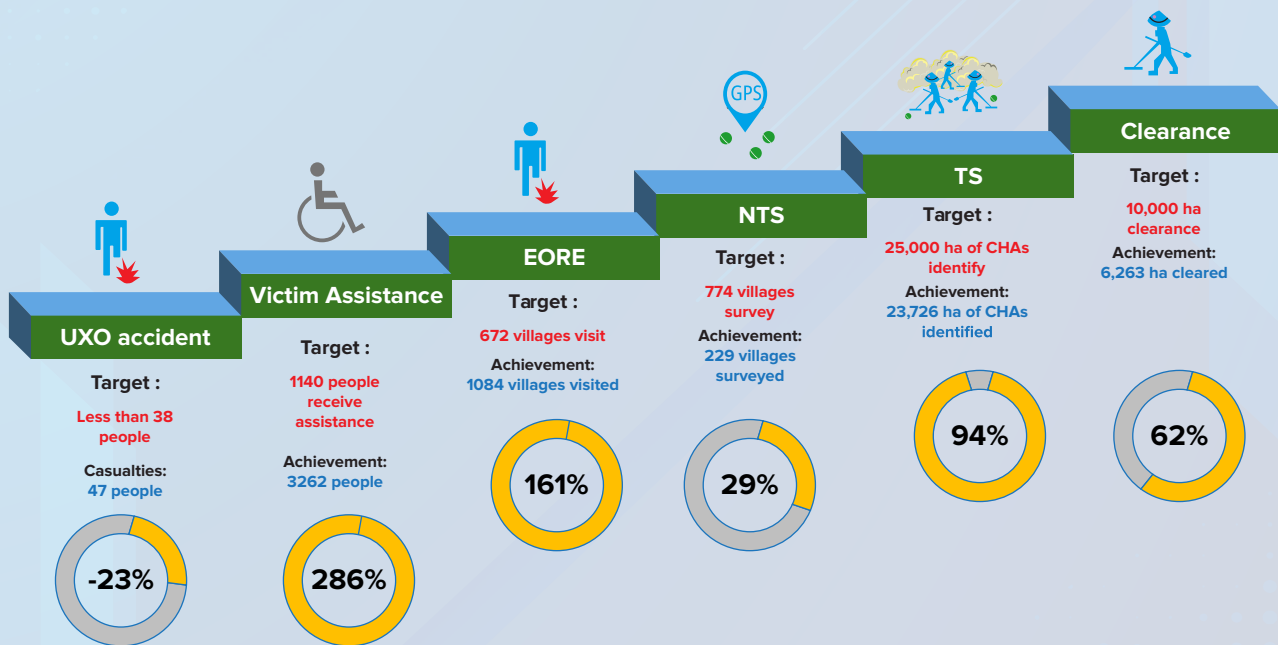
In 2023, the Quality Management Unit of the NRA conducted 25 monitoring visits covering the operations of UXO Lao, Humanity and Inclusion (HI), Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and Unit 58 in UXO-contaminated provinces. It conducted 15 further monitoring visits to assess active commercial operators. The unit also recruited two additional teams to strengthen the quality assurance and quality control functions of the NRA. The NRA continued to drive coordination within the sector. It organized technical working groups across the pillars of survey and clearance, victim assistance, EORE and information management.

Snapshot: 2023 UXO Sector Achievement

- 6,263 hectares of land cleared by humanitarian/commercial clearance operators benefiting 160,154 people in Lao PDR.
- 83,238 UXO items (58,895 cluster munitions bomblets) found and destroyed.
- 1,084 villages visited for risk education; 353,139 people from UXO-contaminated communities attended EORE sessions.
- 3,262 survivors of UXO accidents were supported.

Figure 1. 2023 UXO sectoral achievements against annual targets in Safe Path Forward III and the Ninth NSEDP

2023 UXO sectoral Achievements against SPF III & 9th NSEDP



Source: NRA IMSMA updated as of 09/05/2024

Table 1. Cumulative UXO sectoral achievements against targets in Safe Path Forward III and the Ninth NSEDP

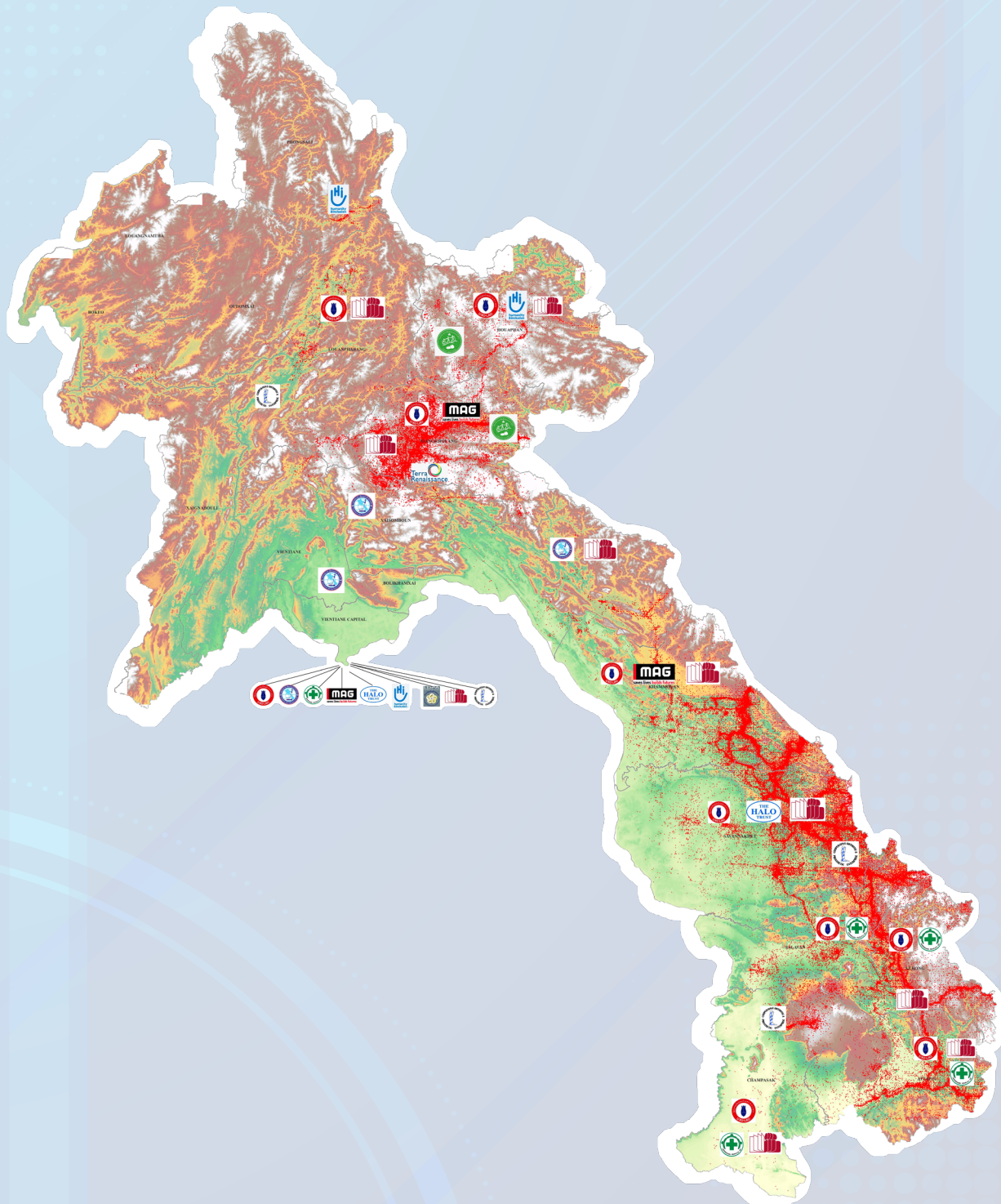
Target from Safe Forward III (2021-2030) Targets to achieve the SPF III	SPF III by 2030	NSEDP By 2025	Per year	2023
Reduce the number of UXO casualties	Less than 380	Under 40 per annum	Less than 38	47(11 death)
Undertake survey to identify CHAs	250,000 ha of CHAs	250,000 ha of CHAs	(NSEDP) 50,000 ha (SPF III) 25,000	23,726 ha of CHAs
Conduct clearance of UXO for agricultural and development purposes	100,000 ha	50,000 ha	10,000 ha	6,263 ha
Support UXO victims including livelihood development for better intergration into society	11,400 victims	5,760 victims	1,140 victims	3,262



THE UXO SECTOR IN LAO PDR

A number of organizations work to reduce the impacts of UXO on individuals and communities in Lao PDR, and to enable the development of infrastructure and the economy. They include government institutions, international non-governmental and local organizations, and commercial clearance operators. This report outlines the contributions each made in 2023 to the overall government aim of freeing Lao PDR from the impacts of UXO.

Figure 2. Map of UXO/mine action sector operators as of December 2023



International Obligations: Treaties & Agreements

Convention on Cluster Munitions

Purpose: to comprehensively ban the use and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians and secure adequate provision of care and rehabilitation to survivors and clearance of contaminated areas.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions is an international treaty involving more than 110 States that prohibits all use, production, transfer and stockpiling of these explosive weapons. In 2021, the Lausanne Action Plan (2021-2026) was adopted during the second review conference of the Convention. The plan advocates for universalization and full implementation of the Convention, and embodies the international community's persistent commitment to maintaining the spirit of the Convention in the face of many challenges, including COVID-19 and ongoing conflicts.

Lao PDR has been a State Party to the Convention since 2010 and has consistently advocated for signatories and others to comply with its obligations and commitments. The Government has focused on campaigning, mobilizing and promoting implementation globally.

Key Convention on Cluster Munitions obligations are:

- Article 4: Clear all land suspected to be contaminated with cluster munitions and sub-munitions within 10 years of the treaty coming into force for that country. Where this is not feasible, affected states can apply for extensions.
- Article 4: Conduct risk reduction education to ensure awareness among civilians living in cluster munitions-affected areas.
- Article 5: Appoint a focal point in Government for Victim Assistance.
- Article 6: Work in partnership with donors and implementing partners to reduce the risk of explosive remnants of war and support victims of cluster munitions.
- Article 7: Collect reliable relevant data with respect to cluster munitions victims and provide assistance to victims, including medical care, rehabilitation and psychological support, as well as provide for their social and economic inclusion.
- Article 9: Enact appropriate legislation to implement the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

The purpose of the Convention is to ban or restrict the use of specific types of weapons that are considered to cause unnecessary or unjustifiable suffering to combatants or to affect civilians indiscriminately.

The United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons was concluded in Geneva on 10 October 1980 and entered into force in December 1983. The Convention seeks to prohibit or restrict the use of certain conventional weapons that are considered excessively injurious or whose effects are indiscriminate.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Purpose: to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Lao PDR signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 5 January 2008 and deposited its instrument of ratification on 26 September 2009. The Convention has significant implications, particularly for the victim assistance aspect of UXO activities. In 2014, the Government adopted Decree No.137 on Disabled Persons (since updated by Law No.57 on Disabled Persons), which legally domesticated the articles of the Convention and defined “the principles, rules, and measures for the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of persons with disabilities” in the country (Article 1).

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, at the central, provincial and district levels, administers all disability-related activities under the law (Article 66). In addition, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare chairs the National Committee for Disabled Persons and Elderly, a “non-standing [inter-governmental] organization” that coordinates disability-related activities across sectors. The Ministry’s Department of Policy to Devotees, Disability and the Elderly serves as the secretariat of the committee (Article 49). Victim assistance providers in Lao PDR can begin to harmonize their own strategies with the principles of the Convention knowing that the Government is committed to meeting its obligations.

Key provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities include:

- In drafting legislation and policies to implement the Convention, and in other decision-making processes concerning issues related to persons with disabilities, States Parties shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations.
- Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions which are more conducive to the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and which may be contained in the law of a State Party or international law in force for that State. There shall be no restriction upon or derogation from any of the human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized or existing in any State Party to the present Convention pursuant to law, conventions, regulation or custom on the pretext that the present Convention does not recognize such rights or freedoms or that it recognizes them to a lesser extent.
- The provisions of the present Convention shall extend to all parts of federal states without any limitations or exceptions.

International Mine Action Standards

The International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) are in force for all United Nations mine action operations. Initially endorsed by the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action in 2001, the IMAS have remained a cornerstone of all mine action field interventions for over 17 years. In setting standards for field operations worldwide, the IMAS framework continues to actively drive safety, quality and efficiency. It ensures confidence in mine action across the sector.

The framework is the means by which a number of key disarmament conventions, such as the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions,

can be practically implemented. It is used by affected countries to develop national standards and by donors to ensure that support reaches those most in need.

Legal, Policy and Institutional Framework

National Decree

The Prime Minister Decree on the Regulatory for UXO/Mine Action was endorsed on 29 July 2023. It stipulates that the NRA will function “as the Secretariat in assisting the Government in examining, supervising and coordinating with Line Ministries, Ministry-equivalent Agencies, Local Authorities and International Organisations at all levels to address UXO issues countrywide.” It defines four levels of authority, including the Committee on Regulatory Authority at the central level, the Committee on Regulatory Authority at the provincial level, the Committee on Regulatory Authority at the district level, and the Village Network, which extends the work to the community level.

Sector Strategic Plan: Safe Path Forward III 2021-2030

Safe Path Forward III details the objectives of the Government and its development partners in reducing the humanitarian and socioeconomic threats posed by UXO. It is designed to contribute to implementing the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the ninth National Socioeconomic Development Plan (NSEDPlan). A key focus is strong integration with development mechanisms, particularly at a provincial level, and on community-level priorities for development. The overall vision combines the desire for a safer environment for people with the acceleration of the socioeconomic development of the country.

- **Vision:** By 2030, Lao people live in an environment that is safer from UXO and can accelerate the socioeconomic development of the country.
- **Guiding principles:** Safe Path Forward III was developed in line with policy directions, the Constitution, laws, national socioeconomic development plans, conventions and international agreements that Lao PDR is a state party to in order to ensure equality, fairness, transparency and accountability, and the participation of all parties in society using modern tools and approaches.
- **Overall Goal:** Ensure safer lives and better livelihoods for targeted people through effectively addressing UXO as a barrier to national development by 2030.

FOUR MAIN GOAL

GOAL 1	Ensure all Lao people recognize and understand the dangers of UXO for safer communities and reduced casualties
GOAL 2	Land is safe from UXO
GOAL 3	All UXO victims are well supported
GOAL 4	Management of the UXO sector is prompt, efficient and effective

By 2030, the UXO sector strives to achieve the following main targets

TARGET 1	Reduce the number of UXO casualties to less than 380 people over 10 years (an average of less than 38 people per year)
TARGET 2	Undertake surveys to identify 250,000 hectares of confirmed hazardous areas
TARGET 3	Conduct clearance of UXO from 100,000 hectares of land for agricultural and development purposes
TARGET 4	Support 11,400 UXO victims, including livelihood development for better integration into society
TARGET 5	UXO activities are integrated into relevant sector plans

Ninth National Socioeconomic Development Plan 2021-2025

The Ninth NSEDP, approved by the Minister for Planning and Investment in March 2021, includes five-year targets and indicators for clearance and surveys under Outcome 3, aimed at gradually enhancing people's material and mental well-being through greater food and income security. The plan notes that UXO contamination is a priority issue with important implications for poverty alleviation, land use for agricultural production, habitation, tourism and access to natural resources. It poses a major challenge to socioeconomic development and a threat to human lives. Despite progress in clearing UXO from land for agriculture, construction and other development projects, the area cleared is not yet sufficient to meet needs. Table 2 details UXO targets and priorities based on the Ninth NSEDP.

Table 2. Targets and priorities of Output 6 of the Ninth National Socioeconomic Development Plan

<p>Targets and indicators¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake EORE to inform communities about risks and safe practices associated with UXO in 3,000 target villages, and roll out the UXO curriculum in 500 schools to reduce the number of UXO casualties to less than 40 persons per year. • Conduct non-technical surveys to identify confirmed hazardous areas in 2,776 villages, and technical surveys to identify areas within 250,000 hectares, an average of 50,000 hectares of land per year. • Clear UXO on 50,000 hectares of land for agriculture, communities and economic activities, an average of 10,000 hectares of land per year. • Assist 5,760 victims of UXO, out of a total of 9,607 victims, with medical treatment, psychological support, health care and rehabilitation, vocational training and employment opportunities; of these, provide medical treatment to 250 people, psychological support to 250 people, rehabilitation to 750 people, and vocational and on-the-job training to 2,010 people; raise awareness on the rights of people with disabilities among 2,500 people.
<p>Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to address the issue of UXO so that people can live their lives safe from it and the SDGs can be achieved, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing EORE to the wider community and timely assistance to victims so that they can continue their livelihoods and contribute to development. - Conducting more non-technical and technical surveys and increasing UXO clearance operations. - Strengthening UXO clearance agencies in terms of technical capacity, coordination, effective planning and responsibility; increasing the mobilization of domestic and international financial support; and increasing coordination between the Government and civil society organizations, which play an important role in assisting the Government with UXO clearance.

¹According to a review of the past 10 years of achievement (2012-2023), the Lao UXO sector has realized around 50 percent of the ambitious targets of the Ninth NSEDP. Some underachievement could be addressed through improved efficiencies, increased funding and a shift away from the cluster munitions remnant survey approach to clearance (where there has been significant progress in completing surveys).

Stakeholders

Multilateral, intergovernmental organizations	
UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages donor funds and works to strengthen capacity and provide other support to the NRA and UXO Lao. The current UNDP project runs from 2022 to 2026. • Places technical, advisory and support personnel in the NRA and UXO Lao • Co-chairs the UXO sector working group meeting.
Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the NRA and operators with training and capacity-building. • The IMSMA database was developed in 1999 with the centre's support.

National Government	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides strategic oversight on UXO in Lao PDR. • Chairs of the NRA. • Serves as the focal point for reporting on Lao PDR's commitments in implementing the Convention on Cluster Munitions at the annual meetings of States Parties, through the Department of International Organizations.
Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for UXO Lao. • Administers all disability-related activities under Law No. 57 on Disabled Persons (Article 66). • Chairs the National Committee for Disabled Persons and Elderly.
Ministry of National Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the humanitarian UXO teams of the Lao People's Army. • Supports salary costs.
Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre for Medical Rehabilitation works with the Cooperative Prosthetic and Orthotic Enterprise (COPE) to ensure that people with physical disabilities have local, affordable access to a quality, nationally managed rehabilitation service. • COPE partners with Ministry of Health rehabilitation centres to provide nationwide physical rehabilitation services, including for UXO survivors.
Ministry of Education and Sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct annual workshop with the NRA on UXO radio program and UXO curriculum in primary school.

Lao Women's Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joined UN Women to produce the manual for trainers on gender mainstreaming in the UXO sector in Lao PDR in 2018, with support from the Government of Canada. • Supported a gender analysis of the UXO sector to establish the Gender Action Plan (2023-2026). • Serves on the NRA Board and will continue supporting the NRA in mainstreaming gender in UXO sector management.
Lao Youth Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperates with village volunteers in Bolikhamxay and Salavan provinces and implements EORE activities in communities.

National UXO operators – Government

UXO Lao	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UXO Lao was originally established in 1996 with support from UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund and other partners. • The mandate was updated and endorsed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare on 19 April 2023. • It is mandated to contribute to reducing the number of UXO casualties and accidents, and to increase the amount of land available for food production and other socioeconomic development activities. • Undertakes non-technical surveys, technical surveys, area clearance, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), roving tasks and EORE. • Key funding support comes from the governments of Japan and the United States of America, and the governments of Luxembourg and New Zealand through UNDP.
Unit 58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in 2013, Unit 58 focuses on EORE, non-technical surveys, technical surveys and area clearance. • Key funding support comes from KOICA via UNDP. • Salaries and some operational costs are paid by the Ministry of National Defence.

Humanitarian organizations – international NGOs

The HALO Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertakes non-technical surveys, technical surveys, area clearance, EOD and EORE.
HI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducts non-technical surveys, technical surveys, area clearance, EOD and EORE, within a comprehensive framework that includes post-clearance socioeconomic development.

Japan Mine Action Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes UXO clearance with the cluster submunition clearance machine, which cuts vegetation on site and mechanically disposes of cluster submunitions.
MAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has pioneered UXO action in Lao PDR since 1994 and assisted with the establishment of UXO Lao. • Undertakes non-technical surveys, technical surveys, area clearance, EOD and EORE.
NPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertakes non-technical surveys, technical surveys, area clearance and EOD. • Provides capacity needs assessments and support to the NRA, and assists the NRA's information management unit through VPN (virtual private network) access for the IMSMA database. • Implements the Information Management Capacity Development Project for nine provinces and 55 districts.
Terra Renaissance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertakes EORE activities in UXO-impacted areas
WE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists UXO survivors and their families through the War Victims Medical Fund. • Provides a comprehensive EORE programme, including school curricula development on UXO and teacher training on EORE.

Commercial organizations/UXO operators accredited in 2023

- AUSLAO UXO Clearance Co., Ltd.
- Lane Xang Minerals, Ltd. (LXML)
- Insee Clearance and Disposal Co., Ltd.
- Milsearch Lao EOD Sole Co., Ltd.
- SG Unexploded Ordnance Service Sole Co., Ltd.
- Sengphet UXO Company Co., Ltd.
- L&B UXO Clearance Co., Ltd
- Oumma UXO Clearance Co., Ltd.
- LCY Unexploded Ordnance Sole, Ltd.
- Great Corporation Co., Ltd.
- Silavan UXO Survey Clearance and Disposal Co., Ltd.
- SDK Clearance and Disposal Co., Ltd.

The Lao PDR UXO Sector Donor Countries (2023)



Australia



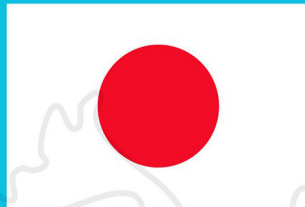
Canada



Ireland



Luxembourg



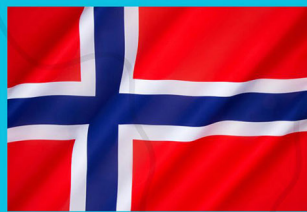
Japan



Netherlands



New Zealand



Norway



Laos



Republic of Korea



United Kingdom



United States

Figure 3. Donor countries as of 31 December 2023

SDG 18. LIVES SAFE FROM UXO

In 2016, Lao PDR adopted the country-specific SDG 18, “lives safe from UXO,” with the following targets:

- By 2030, ensure that annual casualties from UXO accidents are eliminated to the extent possible.
- By 2030, undertake clearance of UXO in priority contaminated areas.
- By 2030, ensure that all identified UXO survivors and victims have their needs met in health, and that support is provided for livelihoods/employment to the most at-risk survivors.

Table 3. Progress in achieving SDG 18 on lives safe from UXO

SDG 18: Remove the UXO obstacle to national development				
SDG 18 targets	Indicators	Year	Progress	Source
18.1. By 2030, ensure that annual casualties from UXO accidents are eliminated to the extent possible	18.1.1. Number of reported UXO casualties (disaggregated by age group and sex): total/male (boy)/female (girl)	2023	Total: 47 Injured: 36 (15 boys, 8 men, 7 women, 6 girls) Deaths: 11 (4 men, 4 boys, 2 women, 1 girl)	MoFA, NRA
	18.1.2. Percentage of population in contaminated villages where the population has received information on UXO confirmed hazardous areas	2023	Total: 0.342 percent of 13,685 of 22 village accidents Men: 0.227 percent of 6,749 of 22 village accidents Women: 0.117 percent of 6,936 of 22 village accidents	MoFA, NRA

18.2. UXO contamination cleared from high-priority areas and villages defined as 'poor'	18.2.1. Percentage of high-priority confirmed hazardous areas remaining to be cleared	2023	99.02 per cent of an area of 87,000 square kilometres	MoFA, NRA
	18.2.2. Number of villages defined as 'poor' with confirmed hazardous areas remaining to be cleared	2023	1,850 villages in 3,860 villages from statistic 2020	MoFA, NRA
18.3. Identified UXO survivors' health and livelihoods needs	18.3.1. Percentage of registered active age UXO survivors unable to earn sufficient income with access to basic income security	2023	93.72 percent	MoFA, NRA
	18.3.2. Percentage of registered UXO survivors mainstreamed into health, education and employment service	2023	21.26 percent	MoFA, NRA

Source: IMSMA database as of March 2024.

2023 UXO SECTOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND TRENDS

Due to challenges in data management, including collection and processing, the NRA is constantly updating historical data in the IMSMA database according to newly received information. The figures presented below are from the NRA Operations Dashboard as of 26 March 2024. Information management capacity-building is in progress.

Sector Achievements: Accidents and Casualties in 2023

Table 3. 2023 sector achievements: number of UXO accidents and casualties

Province	Accidents	Injured				Deaths				Total victims
		Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	
Attapeu										
Bokeo										
Bolikhamxay										
Champasak										
Huaphanh	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Khammouan	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Luangnamtha										
Luangprabang										
Oudomxay										
Phongsaly										
Salavanh	3	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	6
Savannakhet	2	4	0	4	2	0	0	1	0	11
Xayaboury	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	4
Xaysomboun										
Xekong	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Xiengkhuang	10	4	1	5	4	2	0	2	1	19
Vientiane										
Vientiane Capital										
Total	22	13	4	12	7	4	1	4	2	47

Sector Trends: Accidents and Casualties, 2011-2023

Table 4. UXO accidents and casualties, number, 2011-2023

Year	Accidents	Injured				Deaths				Total casualties
		Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	
2011	64	32	9	34	4	6	0	14	0	99
2012	36	17	11	11	2	6	1	6	2	59
2013	18	9	2	12	5	5	0	7	1	41
2014	22	8	5	9	7	4	0	12	0	45
2015	27	15	1	16	1	6	1	2	0	42
2016	35	17	3	24	5	2	0	8	0	59
2017	19	12	8	11	6	3	0	0	1	41
2018	17	4	8	4	5	2	1	0	0	24
2019	20	5	2	4	5	8	0	1	0	25
2020	23	12	10	2	2	5	2	0	0	33

2021	35	15	8	15	9	6	0	8	2	63
2022	16	8	2	5	0	4	0	1	0	20
2023	22	12	7	13	4	4	2	4	1	47

Figure 4. UXO accidents and casualties, percentage, 2011-2023

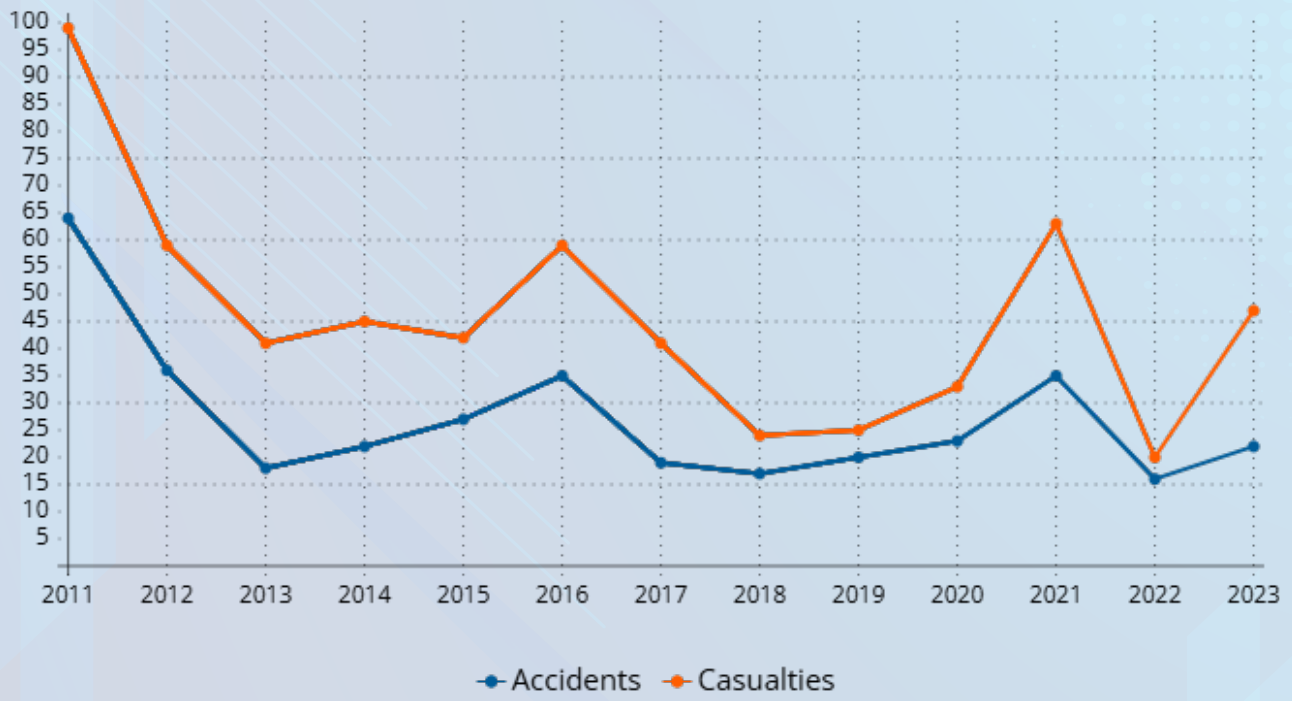


Figure 5. UXO casualties by gender and age, percentage, 2011-2023

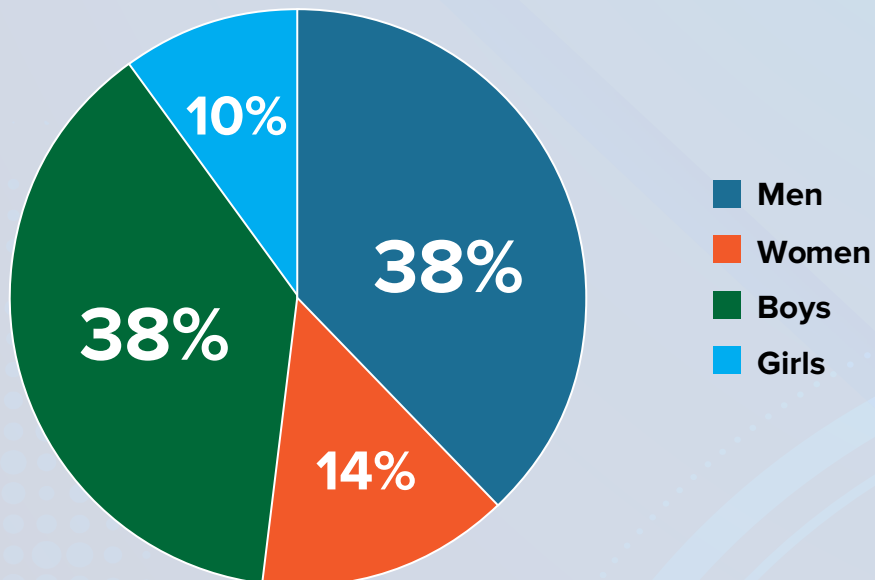


Table 5. Causes of UXO accidents and casualties per year, number, 2015-2023

Cause	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Lighting a fire for cooking and slash-and-burn agricultural techniques	13	11	11	3	9	10	14	8	8
Agricultural excavation	5	6	2	2	2	5	6	1	4
Playing with UXO items	2	12	1	5	3	4	6	2	5
Unintentional disturbance of UXO	1	4	1	5	4	0	4	5	1
Attempting to destroy or dismantle UXO items	6	2	2	2	3	2	3	0	1
Cutting grass and wood	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	2
Other									1
Total accidents	27	36	18	17	21	23	35	16	22

Figure 6. Causes of UXO accidents and casualties, percentage, 2015-2023



Sector Achievements: Technical Surveys and Clearance, 2023

Table 6. Sector achievements in technical surveys to establish confirmed hazardous areas, 2023

Province	Villages (number)	Injured		Area (hectares)		UXO found during technical surveys (number)				
		Technical surveys	Confirmed hazardous areas	Technical surveys	Confirmed hazardous areas	Bombs	Cluster munitions	Mines	Other UXO	Total
Attapeu	30	45	39	744.00	463.90	0	732	0	25	757
Bolikhamxai	19	43	3	401.75	23.25	0	91	0	0	91
Champasak	10	19	16	165.75	94.36	0	138	0	203	341
Huaphanh	2	2	2	40.75	25.63	0	78	0	5	83
Khammouan	28	61	79	2,229.12	1,968.73	0	1,136	0	192	1,328
Phongsaly	5	6	6	97.00	52.63	0	150	0	4	154
Salavanh	31	67	68	1,214.25	744.99	0	872	0	208	1,080
Savannakhet	81	166	84	2,059.45	831.37	0	1,295	1	392	1,688
Xekong	16	41	17	298.75	136.28	0	152	0	39	191
Xiengkhuang	89	187	171	19,833.38	16,343.49	1	6,860	0	699	7,560
Vientiane	6	7	2	55.25	9.60	0	11	0	0	11
Total	317	644	487	27,139.45	20,694.21	1	11,515	1	1,767	13,284

Table 7. Sector achievements in area clearance and roving tasks, 2023

Province	Area (hectares)			Benefi-ciaries (number)	UXO (number)				
	Agriculture	Develop-ment	Total		Bombs	Cluster munitions	Mines	Other UXO	Total
Attapeu	722.5	43.9	766.5	22,022	4	4,537	0	300	4,841
Bokeo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bolikhamxay	25.6	-	25.6	17,976	0	446	0	167	613
Champasak	160.7	15	175.8	5,960	2	1,321	5	937	2,265
Huaphanh	884.3	23.5	907.8	907,8	0	1,723	6	603	2,332

Khammouan	506.8	209.1	715.9	31,937	17	7,378	1	2,601	9,997
Luangnamtha	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Luangprabang	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oudomxay	-	40.8	40.8	939	0	0	0	0	0
Phongsaly	15.1	1.2	16.3	5,225	3	380	6	280	669
Salavanh	482.5	9.8	492.4	54,965	6	5,943	0	697	6,664
Savannakhet	1,276.4	121.6	1,398	71,488	24	11,302	22	7,597	18,945
Xaysomboun	0	151.6	151.6	12,134	0	39	0	471	510
Xekong	321.2	31.1	352.3	8,191	12	5,274	2	490	5,778
Xiengkhuang	2,007.5	24.1	2,031.6	137,368	4	20,436	16	8,577	29,033
Vientiane	5.6	-	5.6	18,286	5	107	3	526	641
Vientiane Capital	-	-	-	9,568	0	9	6	953	968
Total	5,612.7	650.9	6,263.6	398,966	77	58,895	67	24,199	83,238

Table 8. Sector achievements in area clearance, 2023

Province	Tasks	Area (hectares)			Beneficiaries (number)	UXO destroyed (number)				
		Agriculture	Development	Total		Bombs	Cluster munitions	Mines	Other UXO	Total
Attapeu	31	722.5	43.9	766.5	14,810	2	3,459	0	238	3,699
Bolikhambxai	6	25.6	-	25.6	176	0	220	0	99	319
Champasak	34	160.7	15	175.8	4,215	0	1,128	1	350	1,479
Huaphanh	9	884.3	23.5	907.8	1,462	0	1,610	0	379	1,989
Khammouan	53	884.3	23.5	907.8	7,909	9	3,134	0	1,794	4,937
Oudomxay	1	40.8	40.8	939	939	0	0	0	0	0
Phongsaly	5	15.1	1.2	16.3	4,742	1	222	4	220	447
Salavan	41	482.5	9.8	492.4	7,897	4	4,851	0	300	5,155

Savanna-khet	121	1,276.4	121.6	1,398	39,232	6	8,034	0	5,765	13,805
Vientiane	1	15.1	1.2	16.3	249	1	90	3	54	148
Xaisomboun	9	0	151.6	151.6	2,496	0	4	0	363	367
Xekong	26	321.2	31.1	352.3	1,901	5	4,768	0	364	5,137
Xiengkhuang	129	2,007.5	24.1	2,031.6	95,422	2	10,623	4	5,424	16,053
Total	466	5,612.7	650.9	6,263.6	181,450	30	38,143	12	15,350	53,535

Table 9. Sector achievements in roving tasks, 2023

Province	Villages (number)	Tasks (number)	Beneficiaries (number)	UXO destroyed (number)				
				Bombs	Cluster munitions	Mines	Other UXO	Total
Attapeu	45	95	7,212	2	1,078	0	62	1,142
Bolikhambai	30	50	17,800	0	226	0	68	294
Champasak	46	80	1,745	2	193	4	587	786
Huaphanh	37	57	1,445	0	113	6	224	343
Khammouan	109	2,239	24,028	8	4,244	1	807	5,060
Phongsaly	20	31	483	2	158	2	60	222
Salavan	74	177	47,068	2	1,092	0	397	1,491
Savannakhet	299	1,043	32,256	18	3,268	22	1,832	5,140
Vientiane	15	18	18,037	4	117	0	472	493
Vientiane Capital	5	7	9,568	0	9	6	953	968
Xaisomboun	5	10	9,638	0	35	0	108	143
Xekong	22	90	6,290	7	506	2	126	641
Xiengkhuang	266	3,315	41,946	2	9,813	12	3,153	12,980
Total	973	7,121	217,516	47	20,752	55	8,849	29,703

Sector Trends: Clearance, 2011-2023

Table 10. Sector trends in total area clearance and number of UXO found and destroyed by humanitarian organizations, 2015-2023

Year	Area cleared (hectares)	Bombs	Cluster munitions, bomblets	Landmines	Other UXO	Total UXO	Cluster munitions per hectare
2011	3,692	22	19,088	96	19,683	38,889	5.2
2012	3,823	60	26,011	18	17,318	43,407	6.8
2013	3,288	28	22,847	48	20,626	43,549	6.9
2014	3,662	36	26,566	78	17,697	44,377	7.3
2015	2,961	55	49,497	108	13,162	62,822	16.7
2016	3,315	43	61,144	1	15,503	76,691	18.4
2017	3,852	20	64,241	16	16,462	80,739	16.7
2018	3,670	35	45,441	5	11,740	57,221	12.4
2019	4,577	30	42,085	4	11,081	53,200	9.2
2020	4,302	23	38,862	4	10,355	49,244	9.03
2021	4,617	77	39,973	8	11,021	51,079	8.7
2022	5,156	29	45,004	14	13,123	58,170	8.7
2023	5,667	29	37,693	12	14,534	52,268	6.7

Figure 8. UXO clearance in Lao PDR, 2011-2023 by humanitarian operators

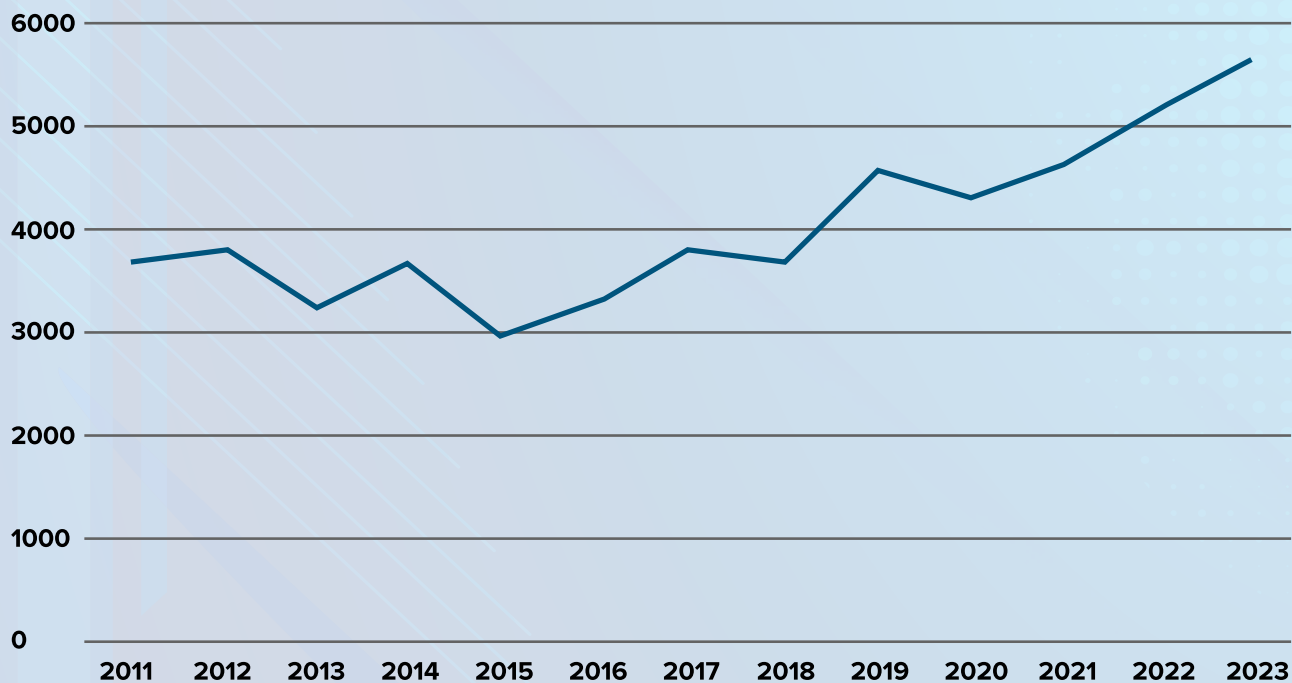
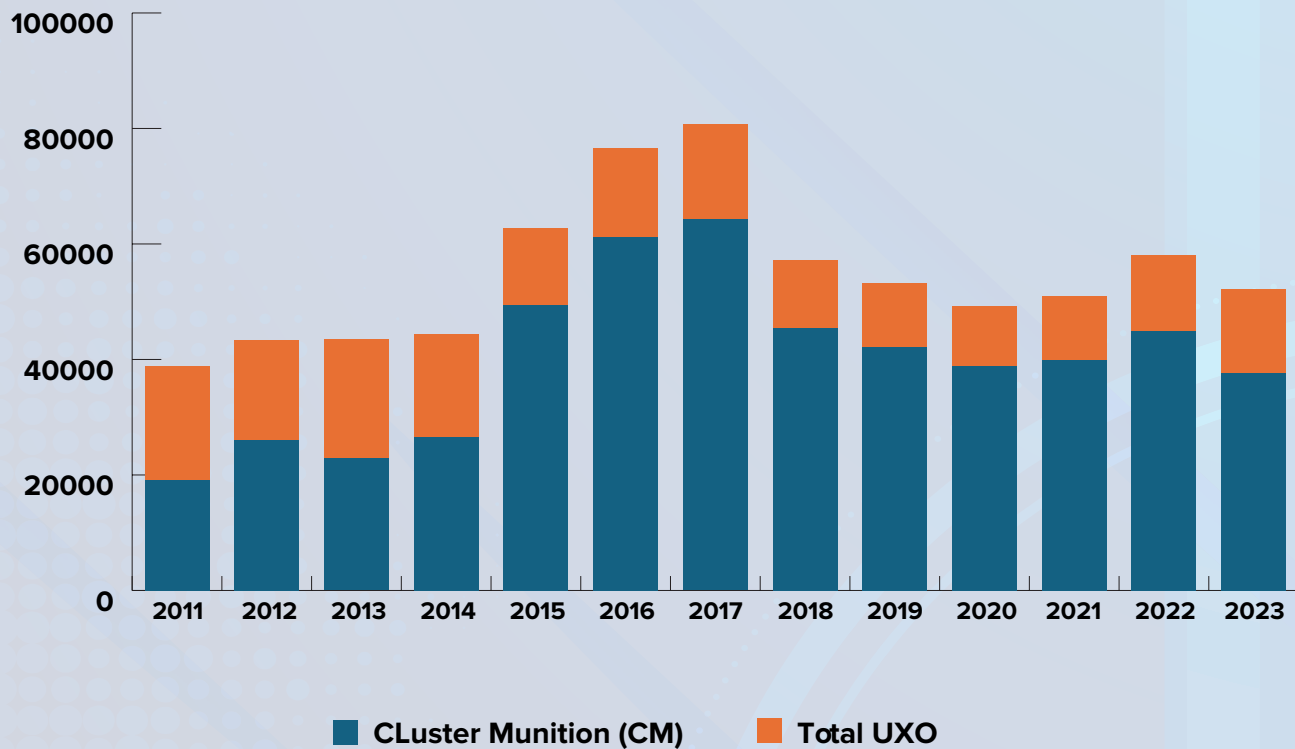


Figure 9. Number of cluster munitions in the total number of UXO cleared by humanitarian operators.

Cluster Munitions (CM) destroyed per total UXO destroyed (2021-2023)



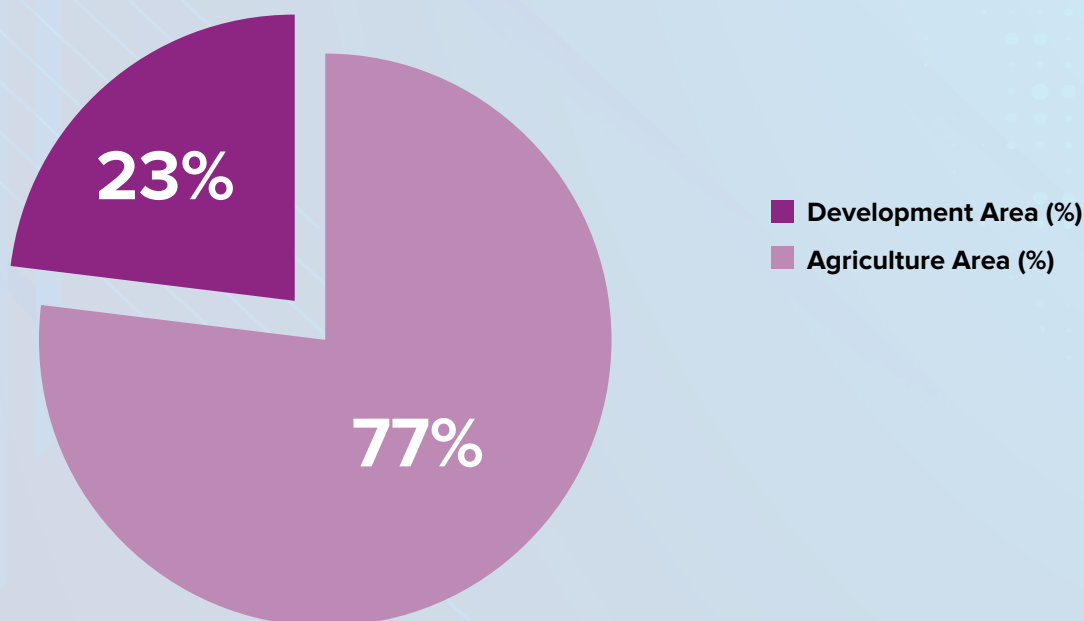
Sector Trends: Post-Clearance Land Use, 1997-2023

Table 11. Sector trends in land use following clearance, by province, 1997-2023

Province	Total area cleared (hectares)	Types of land use			
		Agriculture area (hectares)	Agriculture area (percentage)	Development area (hectares)	Development area (percentage)
Attapeu	8,078	5,960	74	2,119	26
Bokeo	80	-	-	80	100
Bolikhamxai	3,105	707	23	2,399	77
Champasak	6,452	4,719	73	1,733	27
Huaphanh	4,217	3,735	89	482	11
Khammouan	10,7732	8,898	83	1,833	17
Luangnamtha	9	-	-	9	100
Luangprabang	3,965	3,082	78	884	22
Oudomxay	169	-	-	169	100
Phongsaly	16	15	93	1	7
Salavan	8,043	6,984	87	1,059	13
Savannakhet	14,486	12,206	84	2,280	16
Vientiane	73	9	13	63	87
Vientiane Capital	134	-	-	134	100
Xaisomboun	2,065	582	28	1,483	72
Xekong	5,457	4,031	74	1,428	26
Xiengkhuang	19,477	17,321	89	2,155	11
Grand Total	86,558	68,249	79	18,309	21

Figure 10. Land use following clearance in Lao PDR, percentage, 1997-2023

Land use following clearance in Lao PDR (1997-2023)



Sector Achievements: Explosive Ordnance Risk Education, 2023

Table 12. Sector achievements in explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), 2023

Province	Villages (number)	Tasks (number)	Audience (number)		
			Men	Women	Total
Attapeu	61	226	22,420	23,512	45,932
Bolikhambxai	80	150	9,886	8,435	18,321
Champasak	36	61	13,670	12,418	26,088
Huaphanh	17	24	2,440	2,131	4,571
Khammouan	84	284	17,266	16,787	34,053
Luangprabang	16	19	1,881	1,630	3,511
Phongsaly	12	46	3,601	3,600	7,201
Salavan	94	275	15,226	13,470	28,696

Savannakhet	479	1,708	40,717	40,265	80,982
Vientiane	42	64	3,794	2,969	6,763
Xaisomboun	6	13	907	736	1,643
Xekong	40	74	18,238	18,852	37,090
Xiengkhuang	115	515	29,474	28,679	58,171
Total	1,084	3,461	179,607	173,532	353,139

Table 13. Non-technical surveys, 2023

Province	Villages (number)	Tasks (number)	Evidence points (number)	Cluster munitions (number)	Beneficiaries (number)
Attapeu	15	15	13	70	160
Bokeo	-	-	-	-	-
Bolikhamxai	55	55	36	136	4,725
Champasak	17	17	1	2	1,572
Huaphanh	-	-	-	-	-
Khammouan	12	12	29	250	6,665
Luangnamtha	-	-	-	-	-
Luangprabang	-	-	-	-	-
Oudomxay	-	-	-	-	-
Phongsaly	11	11	3	17	1,538
Salavan	12	13	26	328	948
Savannakhet	18	18	24	107	1,535
Xaisomboun	5	5	3	118	198
Xekong	2	2	5	16	1,421

Xiengkhuang	40	40	47	386	4,932
Vientiane	42	42	5	5	3,990
Vientiane Capital	-	-	-	-	-
Total	229	230	192	1,435	27,684

Sector Achievements: Victim Assistance, 2023

According to the Lao Ministry of Health and humanitarian organizations providing victim assistance for UXO victims, 183 survivors received assistance in 2023. This included medical treatment, physical rehabilitation, psychological support, vocational training and economic support. Assistance was coordinated through the Centre for Medical Rehabilitation under the Ministry of Health and the NRA. It entailed working with UXO victims, their families and partners to ensure that all survivors received the help they needed. With UNDP, and in coordination with UXO sector stakeholders, the NRA is planning to update the victim assistance database in the IMSMA.

Table 14. Sector achievements in victim assistance, 2023

Types of services	Beneficiaries (number)
Medical treatment	24
Psychological treatment	21
Vocational training	489
Economic support	480
Physical rehabilitation support	360
Received advocacy awareness	1,888
Total	3,262

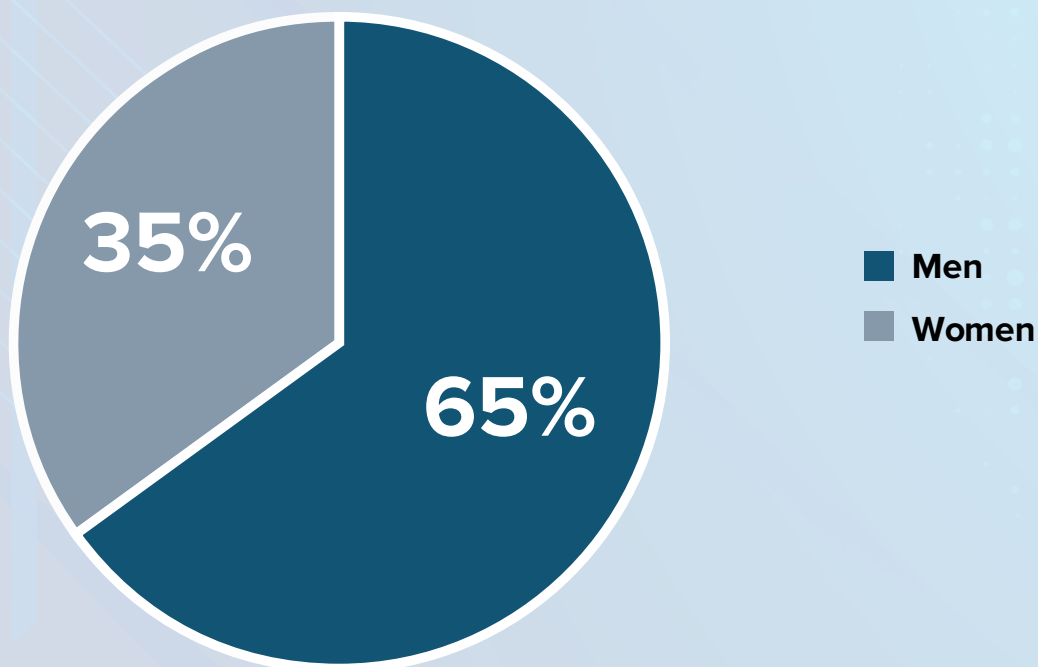
2023 UXO SECTOR STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 15. UXO sector staff demographics per organization, 2023

Organization	Operational (number)				Support (number)				Total
	National		International		National		International		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	
NRA	0	0	0	0	50	19	2	2	73
National UXO operators									
UXO Lao	192	116	7	0	762	240	4	0	1,321
Unit 58	174	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	190
Humanitarian organizations									
COPE	2	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	8
HALO Trust	63	42	-	-	638	660	5	4	1,142
HI	22	6	1	0	25	21	1	0	76
MAG	54	39	1	3	724	413	7	1	1,242
NPA	36	20	3	1	442	298	6	0	806
Terra Renaissance	1	3	1	0	3	2	0	0	10
WE	1	3	0	1	12	4	1	2	24
Commercial organizations*									
AUSLAO	2	2	0	0	10	0	0	0	14
LXML	3	3	1	0	82	27	0	0	116
Milsearch	3	5	2	1	152	12	5	0	180
Oumma	5	0	0	0	30	4	0	0	39
Total									5,511

*Ten out of 17 accredited commercial operators in 2023 were not operational. One out of seven operating commercial operators did not submit information.

Figure 11. UXO sector staff and gender parity, percentage, 2023



2023 UXO SECTOR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Summary of cash contributions received and actual expenditures from 1 January to 31 December 2023

	Financial support received in 2023 (US dollars)	Actual expenditure in 2023 (US dollars)
Government		
NRA	3,141,271.66	2,903,076.65
UXO Lao	9,127,869.00	9,558,500.00
Subtotal	12,269,140.66	12,461,576.65
International NGOs		
COPE	662,722	662,722
HALO Trust	12,119,523.00	12,119,523.00
HI	712,957.00	741,323.00
MAG	11,836,432.00	10,789,379.00
NPA	8,698,516.00	8,698,516.00

Terra Renaissance	259,460.00	259,460.00
WE	1,512,833.00	1,457,479.00
Subtotal	35,811,443.00	34,728,402.00
Commercial organizations*		
AUSLAO	-	37,038.00
LXML	-	1,351,450.00
Milsearch	2,271,100.00	1,929,900.00
Oumma	-	-
Subtotal	2,271,100.00	3,318,388.00
Total		50,508,366.65

*Ten out of 17 accredited commercial operators in 2023 were not operational. Two out of seven operating commercial operators did not submit their financial management information.

Summary of in-kind government contributions received from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Types of services	Beneficiaries (number)
Bilateral	
AEON Leasing Service (Lao) Co. Ltd.	3,904.00
Freeman Foundation	429,736.00
ISC-ITO	8,000.00
Japan International Cooperation System	133,087.00
Japan Mine Action Service	41,320.00
Michael Ambler	112,269.00
Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees (Fagforbundet)	32,377.00
Government of Canada	19,000.00
Government of Ireland	350,749.00

Government of Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	259,460.00
Government of the Netherlands, BUZA Dutch, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	712,957.00
Government of New Zealand	18,000.00
Government of Norway	1,541,178.00
Government of the Republic of Korea, KOICA	1,401,183.51
Government of the United Kingdom, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office	1,387,745.00
Government of the United States of America, Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA)	35,317,373.00
Government of the United States of America, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	1,059,348.00
World Without Mines	39,074.00
Restoration Laos	106,232.00
Subtotal	42,681,155.51
UNDP-managed funds	
Government of Ireland	537,056.93
Government of Canada	182,540.56
Government of New Zealand	2,115,089.00
Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	372,555.00
Government of the Republic of Korea, KOICA	2,705,941.00
UNDP (TRAC-2)	40,000.00
Subtotal	5,953,182.49
Government contribution and others	
Government of Lao PDR	Building rental, Unit 58 Salary, and other support documents (Tax and etc)
Subtotal	
GRAND TOTAL	48,634,338.00



NATIONAL REGULATORY AUTHORITY FOR UXO/MINE ACTION IN LAO PDR

The NRA has its own office supervised by the International Organization Department, its secretariat, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The NRA is responsible for providing policy direction, accreditation management and coordination for national and international UXO operators within the country. It also acts as the technical focal point for all matters associated with mine-related international conventions and treaties. It has a mandate to participate in international meetings and conferences on UXO/mine action and explosive remnants of war.

The NRA is responsible for the development and implementation of the national strategic plan for the UXO/mine action sector through a consultative process with implementing agencies. External quality assurance, post-clearance impact assessment and overall monitoring are also NRA responsibilities.

The NRA is directed by a high-level interministerial board comprising representatives from 12 government ministries and each province: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Chair), the Ministry of National Defence (Vice-Chair); the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (Vice-Chair); the Ministry of Planning and Investment; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism; the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry; the Ministry of National Resources and Environment; the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation; the Ministry of Public Security; the Ministry of Education and Sports; the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union and the Lao Women's Union.

The NRA provides comprehensive secretarial and administrative support to the NRA Board and implements required operational activities. Established in partnership with UNDP, it continues with the latter's ongoing support. Two main organizational divisions are support and operations, with several subunits under each. They are supervised by two deputy directors.

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

International Cooperation and Treaty Unit

The International Cooperation and Treaty Unit is responsible for implementing and documenting the Government's compliance with UXO and mine action-related international treaty obligations and promoting cooperation among Lao UXO and mine action stakeholders. In 2023, the unit:

- Conducted project monitoring of UXO humanitarian operators, including monitoring of memorandums of understanding (MoUs).
- Submitted a Convention on Cluster Munitions Article 4 extension report on 30 April 2023.
- Attended the eleventh meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.
- Conducted a workshop for operators on MoU procedures and processes.

Quality Management Unit

The Quality Management Unit is responsible for quality assurance and quality control of UXO and mine surveys and clearance. In 2023, the unit:

- Conducted quality assurance/control missions to review the operations of UXO humanitarian operators in line with the National Standards.
- Held a meeting to review draft National Standards.
- Increased capacity-building for the quality management team on the GIS intermediate level.

Information Management Unit

The Information Management Unit is responsible for managing IMSMA. In 2023, the unit:

- Conducted three technical working group meetings.
- Monitored the use of IMSMA in eight provincial offices.
- Hosted the Information Management Conference.
- Held a capacity-building workshop on IMSMA for provincial and district authorities as well as Information Management Unit staff.

Public Relationship Unit

The Public Relationship Unit raises UXO/mine action awareness among international and domestic public audiences and promotes resource mobilization for UXO/mine action in Lao PDR. In 2023, the unit:

- Organized media and donor field visits to UXO-contaminated provinces.
- Organized a ceremony to commemorate the International UXO/Mine Awareness Day on 4 April, and sponsored a press conference on 1 August to celebrate the twelfth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

UXO Survey and Clearance Unit

The UXO Survey and Clearance Unit is responsible for driving efficiency and effectiveness among clearance operators. In 2023, the unit:

- Conducted four technical working group meetings, one in each quarter.
- Held an introductory workshop to identify prioritization criteria at the district level.
- Monitored UXO survey and clearance work in Savanhnakhet, Huaphan, Xekong and Attapue provinces.

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Unit

The unit is responsible for ensuring the coordination and collaboration of operators conducting EORE activities. It helps operators work to national standards and assists in the development of appropriate materials. Key achievements in 2023 included:

- Conducted four technical working group meetings, one in each quarter.
- Monitored EORE activities conducted by operators.
- Conducted and monitored the progress of broadcasting EORE sessions through 10 radio stations in different provinces.
- Conducted a workshop with the Lao Youth Union.

UXO Victim Assistance Unit

The unit is responsible for ensuring the establishment of a national database on UXO/mine casualties and making sure that the specific needs of survivors of mine/UXO accidents are addressed by relevant operators. Key achievements for 2023 included:

- Conducted four quarterly technical working group meetings.
- Held a workshop on the establishment of a victim assistance database and a training workshop for victim assistance operators.
- Conducted victim assistance coordination for district authorities, village chiefs, cluster villages chiefs and health centres.
- Carried out field missions to follow up and collect data on new UXO/mine accidents and provide support for UXO/mine victims in provinces across the country.

Programme, and Finance and Administration Units

The NRA programme and finance and administration units are responsible for preparing draft funding proposals and meeting narrative and financial reporting obligations set by donors, United Nations organizations and other stakeholders. The units manage the preparation of narrative reports for the Government, draft the NRA annual report, produce UNDP quarterly reports and consolidate internal monthly reports from all NRA units. Furthermore, the units play a key role in consolidating the UNDP annual workplan and annual project report to ensure implementation of the NRA workplan. Other tasks are to communicate monitoring results and recommendations to management and to liaise with different ministries and authorities, UNDP and other stakeholders. Key achievements in 2023 included:

- Organized the NRA board meeting in April 2023.
- Organized sector working group meetings in June and December 2023.
- Organized one project board meeting in June and December 2023.
- Met all reporting obligations as required by donors.



UXO Lao

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

UXO Lao continued to implement activities across nine of the most heavily contaminated provinces in Lao PDR. Activities in 2023 included the following.

Explosive ordnance risk education: UXO Lao conducted EORE to increase awareness in UXO-affected areas, including through various educational activities such as songs, dances, plays, questions and answers, and puppet shows.

Non-technical surveys: UXO Lao conducted non-technical surveys by reviewing all UXO-related data on a village-by-village basis and consulting with as many households as possible to locate all known UXO contamination. In addition, non-technical surveys identified UXO for roving tasks and cluster munitions evidence for follow-up technical surveys. The non-technical surveys generated sketch maps of villages showing UXO-related information such as previous clearance, confirmed hazardous areas and evidence points.

Technical surveys: UXO Lao conducted technical surveys by using cluster munition evidence points to position detectors that search systematically outwards in all directions to find the limits of contamination. Boxes of 50 by 50 metres are used to manage and control the task. Boxes are searched until either a cluster munition is found or 50 percent of the area is covered. If a box contains cluster munition evidence, then the search continues in the adjacent boxes. Once the boundaries of contamination have been identified, the contaminated area is recorded and reported to the NRA as a confirmed hazardous area.

Area clearance: UXO Lao undertook area clearance by focusing on the clearance of confirmed hazardous areas. As a government organization, UXO Lao sometimes carries out donor-approved area clearance for development projects. Area clearance involves dedicated teams detecting and clearing land to a depth based on the intended land use. For agriculture, this depth is normally 25 centimetres. During area clearance, all UXO items are removed from the cleared area to the required depth.

Roving tasks: UXO Lao conducted roving or spot tasks that involved the on-demand removal and destruction of UXO reported by villagers or survey teams.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

The following information summarizes UXO Lao's achievements against annual targets in 2023.

Tasks	Targets	Achievements	Percentage achieved	Outcomes
EORE	422 villages to be visited	275 villages	65%	Reached 166,494 people (85,117 male, 81,377 female) to increase awareness of risks associated with UXO
Non-technical survey	101 villages to be surveyed	63 villages	62%	107 evidence points and 1,067 cluster munitions found
Technical survey	5,450 hectares to be marked as confirmed hazardous areas	5,005 hectares (264 sites)	92%	6,489 UXO items found during technical surveys (79% were cluster submunitions)
Area clearance	3,133 hectares to be cleared	2,035 hectares	65%	2,022 hectares were allocated for agriculture and 13 hectares for development purposes; 22,053 UXO items were destroyed (68% were cluster submunitions) with 26,786 beneficiaries
Roving tasks	N/A	931 visits made to 384 villages across nine provinces	N/A	10,771 UXO items destroyed (78% were cluster submunitions)
UXO destroyed	N/A	32,824 items of UXO destroyed	N/A	UXO items destroyed, including 23 large aerial bombs, 23,393 cluster munitions, 8 mines and 9,400 other UXO

Detailed achievements by activity

Explosive ordnance risk education/community awareness activities			
Village visits	Beneficiaries		
	Male	Female	Total
275	85,117	81,377	166,494



The UXO Lao EORE team in Xiengkhouang, funded by the New Zealand Government through UNDP, conducts EORE activities in the primary school of Dong Village during a visit by development partners and media.

Area clearance (hectares)					
Agricultural	Development	Total	Hectares of confirmed hazardous areas cleared	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
2,022	13	2,035	2,024	99.4	0.13



UXO Lao promotes gender equality in both field operations and management. Currently, UXO Lao has 356 female staff working across nine provinces and the national office, representing 27 percent of total staff.

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, UXO Lao undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
EORE	<p>Xiengkhouang Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Pek, Kham, Morkmay, Phoukoud <p>Khammuane Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Mahaxay, Hinboun, Boualapha, Xebangfai, Xaybouathong <p>Savannakhet Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Atsaphangthong, Phin, Sepon, Nong, Vilabouly, Thaphalanxay <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Salavan, Ta Oi, Toumlane, Vapy, Khongxedon, Lao Ngarm, Samuay <p>Sekong Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Lamam, Kaleum <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Paksong, Champasak, Sukuma, Mounlapamok, Khong <p>Attapeu Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Saysettha, Samakkhixay, Sanamxay, Sanxay, Phouvong
Non-technical surveys	<p>Xiengkhouang Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Pek, Kham, Phoukoud <p>Khammuane Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Mahaxay, Boualapha, Xebangfai, Xaybouathong <p>Savannakhet Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Phin, Sepon, Nong, Vilabouly, Thaphalanxay <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Salavan, Ta Oi, Toumlane, Vapy, Khongxedon, Lao Ngarm, Samuay <p>Sekong Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Lamam, Kaleum <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Pakse, Champasak, Sukuma, Mounlapamok <p>Attapeu Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Sanamxay, Sanxay, Phouvong

Technical surveys

Xiengkhouang Province

- Districts: Pek, Kham, Phoukoud

Khammuane Province

- Districts: Mahaxay, Nhommalath, Boualapha, Xaybouathong

Savannakhet Province

- Districts: Outhoumphone, Sepon, Nong, Vilabouly, Thaphalanxay

Salavan Province

- Districts: Salavan, Ta Oi, Toumlane, Khongxedon, Lao Ngarm, Samuay

Sekong Province

- Districts: Lamam, Kaleum, Dakcheung

Champasak Province

- Districts: Paksong, Pathoumphone, Sukuma, Mounlapamok

Attapeu Province

- Districts: Saysettha, Samakkhixay, Sanamxay, Sanxay, Phouvong

Area clearance

Xiengkhouang Province

- Districts: Pek, Kham, Phoukoud

Khammuane Province

- Districts: Mahaxay, Nhommalath, Boualapha, Xaybouathong

Savannakhet Province

- Districts: Atsaphangthong, Phin, Sepon, Nong, Thapangthong, Vilabouly, Thaphalanxay

Salavan Province

- Districts: Salavan, Ta Oi, Toumlane, Vapy, Khongxedon, Lao Ngarm, Samuay

Sekong Province

- Districts: Lamam, Kaleum, Dakcheung, Thateng

Champasak Province

- Districts: Sanasomboun, Bachiengchaleunsouk, Paksong, Sukuma, Mounlapamok

Attapeu Province

- Districts: Saysettha, Samakkhixay, Sanamxay, Sanxay, Phouvong

Luang Prabang Province

- Districts: Luang Prabang, Nambak

<p>Roving or spot tasks</p>	<p>Xiengkhouang Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Pek, Kham, Morkmai, Phoukoud, Phaxay <p>Khammuane Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Mahaxay, Nongbok, Hinboun, Nhommalath, Boualapha, Nakay, Xebangfai, Xaybouathong <p>Savannakhet Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Atsaphangthong, Phin, Sepon, Nong, Xonbouly, Vilabouly, Thaphalanxay <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Salavan, Ta Oi, Toumlane, Lakhonepheng, Khongxedon, Lao Ngarm, Samuay <p>Sekong Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Lamam, Kaleum, Dakcheung, Thateng <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Pakse, Sanasomboun, Bachiengchaleunsouk, Paksong, Pathoumphone, Champasak, Sukuma, Mounlapamok, Khong <p>Attapeu Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Saysettha, Samakkhixay, Sanamxay, Sanxay, Phouvong
<p>Post-clearance assessment</p>	<p>Salavan Province</p>
<p>Quality management</p>	<p>Xiengkhouang Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Pek <p>Khammuane Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Mahaxay, Nhommalath, Boualapha, Xaybouathong <p>Savannakhet Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Phin, Sepon, Nong <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Salavan <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Pakse

BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023



The ethnic school construction project in Mahaxay District, Khammuane Province is an important project for educational development. The Provincial Department of Education and Sports planned to construct the school in a 34,464 square-metre forested area but found there was some UXO contamination.

The department requested UXO Lao to clear the contamination. A clearance team funded by the World Without Mines Foundation carried out surveys and clearance on 6 November 2022 and completed clearance on 21 November 2022. In the process, 34 UXO were found and destroyed, of which 18 items were BLU26 and 16 items were 20-millimetre mortars. School construction will start in February 2023, and will include facilities for a boarding school, primary-secondary school and vocational classes for various ethnic groups as well as a garden area. An estimated 3,800 students will come from five districts: Mahaxay, Nhommalath, Nakay, Xaybouathong and Boualapha.

Mr. Sengphet Phong Udom, Head of Department of Education and Sports of Khammuane Province, said: “In a former time, when this area was not cleared, some UXO were found by villagers, and they burned those UXO with fire; suddenly, those UXO exploded, but fortunately, nobody injures or die. After the land has been cleared, we are confident to construct a school as planned for children to get education. Thank you UXO Lao and donor for supporting clearing UXO from this area and support the school construction to be proceeded securely and all students will stay safe from UXO.”



PRIORITIES FOR 2024

UXO Lao priority activities and targets for 2024 are as follows.

Provinces	EORE (villages)	Non-technical survey (villages)	Technical survey (hectares)	Area clearance (hectares)
Luang Prabang	40	12	300	110
Huaphan	54	14	250	175
Xiengkhuang	50	20	1,300	715
Khammuane	52	12	800	340
Savannakhet	50	12	900	665
Salavan	60	12	700	380
Sekong	20	20	300	240
Champasak	50	16	250	160
Attapeu	50	20	350	385
Total:	426	138	5,150	3,170

Challenges and Opportunities in 2023

UXO Lao faced difficulties in running its operations in some provinces, including Luang Prabang, Huaphan, Salavan, Sekong and Champasak, due to funding shortfalls. These affected the annual workplan and outcomes in 2023. UXO Lao will resume its full operations across nine provinces in 2024 as the funding situation has been resolved through support from the governments of Japan and the United States.

Many vehicles and equipment are ageing and need to be replaced. In 2023, UXO Lao received new vehicles and equipment with support from the Government of the United States through Tetra Tech and the Government of Luxembourg through UNDP. For 2024, UXO Lao will continue to receive new vehicles and equipment for operations due to the support of the Government of Japan through Crown Agents and the Government of New Zealand through UNDP.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, UXO Lao collaborated with and was supported by many local and international partners, including:

- NRA
- UNDP
- Government of Japan
- Government of Lao PDR
- Government of Luxembourg
- Government of New Zealand
- Government of the United States of America
- Cambodian Mine Action Centre
- Japan International Cooperation Agency
- Japan International Cooperation System
- Japan Mine Action Service
- Crown Agents
- Tetra Tech
- World Without Mines Foundation
- Aeon Leasing Service(Lao) Co.,Ltd

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Donor contributions to UXO Lao from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Fund sources	Earmarked (US dollars)	Unearmarked (US dollars)	Total (US dollars)	Total (percentage)
UNDP-managed funds				
Government of New Zealand	2,115,089.42	-	2,115,089.42	-
Government of Luxembourg ²	-	-	-	-
Total UNDP-managed funds	2,115,089.42	-	2,115,089.42	-
Bilateral funds				
Tetra Tech (United States)	6,791,525	-	6,791,525	81.27
Japan International Cooperation System	133,087	-	133,087	1.59
World Without Mines Foundation	39,074	-	39,074	0.47
Japan Mine Action Service	41,320	-	41,320	0.49
Total bilateral funds	7,005,006	-	7,005,006	83.82
Government contribution and others				
Government of Lao PDR ³	-	-	-	-
AEON Leasing Service (Lao) Co., Ltd	3,904	-	3,904	0
Other-LP sales proceeds		870	807	0
Total	8,356,130	870	8,357,000	100
Percentage of total	100%	0%	100%	100

2. The government of Luxembourg sent the 2023 budget in advance in 2022.

3. Building rental, Unit 58 Salary, and other support documents (Tax and etc)

Funds received between 1 January and 31 December 2023

Donors	Amount (US dollars)
Luxembourg ⁴	-
New Zealand	2,115,089
Japan International Cooperation System	133,087
Japan Mine Action Service	41,320
Tetra Tech (United States)	6,791,525
World Without Mines Foundation	39,074
AEON Leasing Service (Lao) Co., Ltd	3,904
Others	870
Total	7,009,780

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4. The government of Luxembourg sent the 2023 budget in advance in 2022.



Humanitarian UXO Demining Teams of Lao People's Army 58

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

In 2023, Unit 58 established 13 new teams and implemented various activities funded by the Government of the Republic of Korea through UNDP. The five main activities included: EORE, non-technical surveys, technical surveys, area clearance and roving tasks. Activities were conducted in two provinces, Vientiane and Bolikhamxay.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

Provinces	EORE (number of villages)	Non-technical surveys (number of villages)	Technical surveys (hectares)	Area clearance (hectares)
Bolikhamxai	76	55	401.5	26
Vientiane	41	42	55.5	5
Xaisomboun	6	5	0	2
Xayaboury	2			
Total	125	102	457	33

*Of 456 hectares surveyed, 66 were identified as confirmed hazardous areas in 2023.

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, Unit 58 undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
EORE	Bolikhamxay Province • Districts: Khamkeuth, Viengthong
	Vientiane Province • Districts: Kasi, Vangvieng
Non-technical surveys	Bolikhamxay Province • Districts: Khamkeuth, Viengthong
	Vientiane Province • Districts: Kasi, Vangvieng

Technical surveys	<p>Bolikhambxay Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Khamkeuth, Viengthong <p>Vientiane Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Kasi, Vangvieng
Area clearance	<p>Bolikhambxay Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Khamkeuth, Viengthong <p>Vientiane Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Kasi, Vangvieng
Roving tasks	<p>Bolikhambxay Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Khamkeuth, Viengthong <p>Vientiane Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Kasi, Vangvieng <p>Xaisomboun Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District: Longcheng

Detailed achievement per activity

EORE/community awareness activities					
Village visits (number)	Beneficiaries (number)				
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
125	14,601	12,098	-	-	26,699

Area clearance					
Agricultural (hectares)	Development (hectares)	Total (hectares)	Confirmed hazardous area cleared (hectares)	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
31	2	33	66	50	No data available



BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023



A field in Hua Meung Village, Kasi District, Vientiane Province. The local villagers can reuse the land after it is released from UXO. The land is used for harvesting rice, sweet potatoes and seasonal vegetables.

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

Training and new team establishment

- Training on EOD 2 for 14 people, EOD 3 for 15 people, SEOD 4 for 3-5 people, IM for 30 people, field medical for 9 people.
- Revised training on technical surveys for 10 people, clearance for 20 people, field medical for 12 people, IM for 5 people and National Standards for 30 people
- Training on general English for five people.
- Establish two quality assurance/quality control teams and two brush-cutting teams.

EORE and non-technical surveys

- Continue to conduct EORE in two provinces with the targeted 120 villages, 124 schools.
- Non-technical surveys: 100 villages and 100 schools.

Technical surveys

- 22 villages in two provinces with 29 evidence points; the 2024 target is the identification of 450 and 150 hectares of confirmed hazardous areas per province, respectively.

Clearance

- In 2024, the targets in two provinces are over 200 hectares.

Roving teams

- 10 times per year in provinces with no UXO operators.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

- **Government of Lao PDR, Ministry of National Defence**
- **NRA**
- **Provincial and district authorities in Vientiane, Bolikhamxay and Xaisomboun**
- **UNDP**
- **Government of the Republic of Korea**

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Amounts received from 1 January to 31 December 2023	
Donors	Amount (US dollars)
Government of the Republic of Korea	934,781.49
Other donors	No data available
Total*	934,781.49

*Funded by the Republic of Korea, the UNDP-NRA UXO Project allocated \$808,513 for Unit 58's activities in 2023.

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Cooperative Orthotic Prosthetic Enterprise

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

In 2023, COPE provided 1,372 clients with assistive and other devices through the Centre for Medical Rehabilitation and its four provincial subcentres. Among the 1,372 clients, 747 received orthotic devices and 445 prosthetic devices. A total of 97 UXO clients accessed services.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

COPE's key achievements for 2023 included conducting:

- Refresher training on prosthetics and orthotics for technical staff at the Centre of Medical Rehabilitation and four subcentres.
- Quality audit on knee, ankle and foot orthosis at the Centre of Medical Rehabilitation and four subcentres.
- Management trips to four subcentres.
- Wheelchair training on intermediate and training of trainers at the Centre of Medical Rehabilitation and four subcentres, delivered by external trainers
- Refresher training on prosthetics and orthotics at the Centre of Medical Rehabilitation and four subcentres.
- Wheelchair training an intermediate and training of trainers by a core trainer.
- Mobile rehabilitation services in Houaphanh Province (Shorn, Sobbao, Houamenag, Mueang huem, Xiengkor and Att districts).
- Mobile rehabilitation services in Xiengkhouang Province (Khoun, Mokmai, Phaxay districts)

COPE also built a client dormitory for the Luangprabang subcentre.

Detailed achievement per activity

Victim assistance										
Financial support (number of beneficiaries)					Physical rehabilitation support (number of beneficiaries)					Total
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total	
0	0	0	0	0	121	14			135	135

BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023



*Dalaphone when she was 7 years old,
photo by Dalaphone's mother*

Today Dalaphone studies at secondary school. The device enables her to walk comfortably, play sports and enjoy other activities with friends independently. In her free time, she helps her family at home and sometime assists her mother who works at a beauty salon. Dalaphone can roller skate very well. In the future, she wants to roller skate for Lao PDR in the Paralympic Games. "I feel very attach to my orthoprosthesis. Without this device it would be very difficult for me to move around and do activities for my daily life," Dalaphone said

Dalaphone Phongladkeo, 11, lives in Parkhead Village, Naxaithong District, Vientiane Capital. She was born with a birth defect, an abnormal left leg, that had left her walking with one leg since she was a small kid.

Dalaphone received her first orthoprosthesis when she was 4 years old from the Centre of Medical Rehabilitation. She was asked to come to the centre every six months to check the fitting of the device. She is now using is her seventh orthoprosthesis.



*Dalaphone with ortho-prosthesis while playing roller skate,
photo by Dalaphone's sister*

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, COPE undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
Victim assistance	Xiengkhouang Province <ul style="list-style-type: none">Districts: Kham, Nonghed, Khoud
	Houaphane Province <ul style="list-style-type: none">Districts: Viengxay, Xam Nuea
	Saravane Province <ul style="list-style-type: none">Districts: Toum Ian, Taouy
	Khammouane Province <ul style="list-style-type: none">Districts: Nakaly, Yommalath, Boualapha

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

In 2024, COPE will continue providing support for people with disabilities, including UXO victims.

It anticipates challenges related to the availability of government partners; some activities are delayed because schedules do not match. Further, there is a lack of funding for production materials.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, COPE collaborated with and was supported by many local and international partners, including:

- Government of Norway
- USAID-Okard
- Embassy of New Zealand
- ISC-ITO
- Small Grant Programme (Embassy of Australia)
- KOICA-NRA
- Government of Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Summary of funds received and managed by COPE from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Donors	Amount (US dollars)
Government of Norway	287,481
USAID-Okard	201,241
Embassy New Zealand	18,000
ISC-ITO	8,000
KOICA-NRA	129,000
Government of Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development	19,000
Total	662,722

CONTACT PERSON

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The HALO Trust

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

In 2023, HALO expanded clearance operations by recruiting, training and deploying 257 new operational staff across Savannakhet Province, bringing the total number of HALO staff to 1,412 by December 2023. The programme expansion was due to an increase in United States Government funding from 2023 to 2025. Clearance teams funded by the United Kingdom and United States continued clearing high-priority confirmed hazardous areas across the province, with the addition of a short period of funding from the Government of Ireland for UXO clearance and risk education. The United States-funded survey, EOD and risk education teams continued with work as planned.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

With continued support from the United States Government, HALO increased its capacity by 25 percent during 2023, with the programme expanding from 1,128 staff in January 2023 to 1,412 staff in December 2023.

The HALO Trust's key achievements for 2023 included:

- Clearance of over 1,010 hectares of high priority land.
- Mine clearance of 2.67 hectares as the first dedicated mine clearance task in Laos PDR.
- Non-technical surveys in three villages, technical surveys in 82 villages and clearance in 121 villages.
- 861 EOD roving tasks.
- Destruction of 15,484 dangerous items of UXO, including 8,731 cluster munitions.

Detailed achievement per activity

EORE/community awareness activities					
Village visits (number)	Beneficiaries (number)				
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
465	19,627	20,105	8,973	9,337	58,042

Area clearance					
Agricultural (hectares)	Development (hectares)	Total (hectares)	Confirmed hazardous area cleared (hectares)	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
1005.607	7.836	1,013.443	1,005.607	99	0.051

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, HALO Trust undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
EORE	Savannakhet Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Atsaphantong, Atsaphon, Nong, Phalanxai, Phin, Sepon, Vilabouly
Non-technical surveys	Savannakhet Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Atsaphantong, Atsaphon, Nong, Phalanxai, Phin, Sepon, Vilabouly, Thapangthong, Kaison, Outhomphon, Champhone, Xaiphouthong, Songkon, Xaibouli, Xonbuly
Technical surveys	Savannakhet Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Atsaphantong, Atsaphon, Nong, Phalanxai, Phin, Sepon, Vilabouly, Kaison, Thapangthong, Champone, Xonbuly
Area clearance	Savannakhet Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Atsaphantong, Nong, Phalanxai, Kaison, Phin, Sepon, Vilabouly
Roving tasks	Savannakhet Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Atsaphantong, Atsaphon, Nong, Phalanxai, Phin, Sepon, Vilabouly, Thapangthong, Kaison, Outhomphon, Champhone, Xaiphouthong, Xaibouli, Xonbuly
Post-clearance assessment	Savannakhet Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Atsaphantong, Nong, Phalanxai, Phin, Vilabouly, Xepon

BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023



Local beneficiary Bounpun showing HALO his fish farm on his land in Phin district.

Photo by Kiattiphoum Phanouvong



Local beneficiary Bounpun with one of his cows on HALO-cleared land in Phin district.

Photo by Kiattiphoum Phanouvong



A HALO team leader prepares to connect a firing device to a detonator to destroy UXO found in Somsanouk Village.

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

In 2024, HALO will maintain its UXO clearance capacity following the successful programme expansion in 2023. Survey, EOD, mine clearance and risk education activities will continue across Savannakhet Province, with an emphasis on follow-up surveys of areas initially surveyed over five years ago. Mine clearance operations will continue in Kalong Nua Village, the site of the largest minefield found by HALO to date.

Following the signing of the Phase III MoU for the clearance project funded by the Government of the United States, PM/WRA, HALO hopes to import mechanical assets to help improve clearance productivity through brush cutting. This would allow it to quickly clear UXO from village centres and the UXO depot site in Kaison District.

The following activities are planned for 2024:

- Conduct non-technical and technical surveys, EOD roving tasks, clearance and EORE in support of district and provincial priorities in Savannakhet.
- Continue to assess ways to improve operational efficiency and increase clearance productivity levels.
- Work with district and provincial authorities in Savannakhet Province and the central Government to complete the MOU process for new funding from the Government of Ireland, commencing in May 2024 for UXO clearance and risk education.
- Continue to improve communication and coordination with the NRA, provinces and districts throughout 2024, particularly regarding the prioritization of clearance.
- Continue to improve the ability to hire and support people with disabilities to work in the office and field.



HALO clearance technician operating a detector close to village houses in Kiattiphoum Phanouvong.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, HALO Trust collaborated with and was supported by many local and international partners, including:

- Government of Lao PDR
- NRA
- Provincial and district authorities in Savannakhet
- Government of the United States of America
- Government of the United Kingdom
- Government of Ireland

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2022

Summary of funds received and managed by the HALO Trust from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Total amount received from donors (including headquarters overhead): \$12,119,523	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	713,425
Operational costs	9,005,448
UXO/mine risk education cost	198,098
UXO survey and clearance	8,807,350
Administrative costs	1,356,876
Monitoring and evaluation costs	71,244
Equipment costs	972,531
Total	12,119,523

Funds received per project

Project name	Period	Total amount received from donors in 2023 (US dollars)	Donor
UXO Clearance Project in Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR Phase IV	1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023	103,830	Government of the United Kingdom, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)

UXO Clearance Project in Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR Phase V	1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023	209,348	Government of the United Kingdom, FCDO
UXO Clearance Project for Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR	1 March 2023 to 30 June 2023	350,749	Government of Ireland
UXO Survey and Clearance for Savannakhet Province	1 September 2022 to 31 March 2023	3,102,070	Government of the United States, PM/WRA
UXO Survey and Clearance Project in Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR	1 April 2023 to 30 April 2025	8,353,526	Government of the United States, PM/WRA

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Amounts received from 1 January to 31 December 2023	
Donor	Amount (US dollars)
Government of the United Kingdom, FCDO	103,830
Government of the United Kingdom, FCDO	209,348
Government of Ireland	350,749
Government of the United States, PM/WRA	3,102,070
Government of the United States, PM/WRA	8,353,526
Total	12,119,520

CONTACT PERSON

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ACTIVITIES IN 2023

HI continued humanitarian mine action through the new Resilient Integrated Mine Action project in Houaphan and Phongsaly, covering four districts: Houameuang, Hiem, Khoua and Mai.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

Explosive ordnance disposal

- **Non-technical surveys** : completed in 45 villages (Houameuang, 19; Hiem, 5; Xone, 5; Khoua, 8; Mai, 8); 255 UXO found at 98 evidence points (cluster munitions, 36; other UXO, 213).
- **Technical surveys** : completed on 1,377,5000 square metres; confirmed hazardous areas 782,500 square metres (HPN – Houameuang, 407,500 square metres total, 256,250 square metres of confirmed hazardous areas; Khoua, 280,000 square metres total, 157,500 square metres of confirmed hazardous areas; Mai, 690,000 square metres total, 368,750 square metres of confirmed hazardous areas) in 7 villages (Houameuang, 2 villages, Khoua, 2; Mai, 3).
- **Area clearance** : completed on 1,050,526 square metres for agriculture and 1,036,150 square metres for development; 14,376 square metres in 11 villages (HPN-Houameuang, 886,533; Khoua, 75,606; Mai, 88,387)
- **Roving tasks** destroyed 517 UXO (cluster munitions, 269; bombs, 2; mines, 1; other UXO, 239) in 55 villages (Houameuang, 21; Hiem, 5; Xiengxai, 1; Xone, 6; Khoua, 10; Mai, 11); 100 percent of explosive ordnance was destroyed.

Risk education

- **EORE** sessions (44 times) were completed in 11 new villages in Khoua and Mai districts, Phongsaly Province; 2,338 people (776 women, 748 men, 399 girls and 415 boys) received UXO impact information.
- 25 primary teachers were trained on the EORE curriculum and applied it in their learning and teaching in 21 villages in Mai and Khoua districts.
- HI provided EORE training to 60 community safety focal points from 21 villages in Mai and Khoua districts. They held risk educations sessions in their villages according to their action plans.
- Local authorities of Houameuang, Houaphan Province handed over the certified GALS champion families in three selected villages (Homphan, Homthong and Namthip villages).



An aircraft bomb was found at Thabuck Village and destroyed



EORE safety briefing with risk education posters at Yangteaiy Village, Khoua District, Phongsaly Province.

Victim assistance

- Supported 139 cases of UXO survivors and people with disabilities to access health-care services and assistive materials (Phongsaly, 16 cases; Houaphan, 2 cases).
- Provided diversity and inclusion training to 60 people in communities and local authorities (25 staff and village authorities, and community safety focal points; 35 villagers in Khoua and Mai districts).
- Provided first aid training to 40 community safety focal points from 21 villages in Khoua and Mai districts.

Capacity-building

- Seven staff from provincial NRA offices and district labour and social welfare offices were trained on non-technical survey and clearance standard operating procedures, coordination, and database management under the IMSMA programme. This included support for office equipment/materials and monitoring costs.

Detailed achievement per activity

EORE/community awareness activities					
Village visits (number)	Beneficiaries (number)				
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
11	748	776	415	399	2,338

Area clearance					
Agricultural (hectares)	Development (hectares)	Total (hectares)	Confirmed hazardous area cleared (hectares)	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
104	1	105	103.6	72.53%	0.067

Financial support – animal support					Health support – health access					Total
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total	
21	9	0	0	30	88	36	8	7	139	169

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, HI undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
EORE	Houaphan Province • Districts: Houamuang and Hiem
Non-technical surveys	Houaphan Province • Districts: Houamuang and Hiem
Technical surveys	Houaphan Province • Districts: Houamuang and Hiem
Area clearance	Houaphan Province • Districts: Houamuang and Hiem
Roving tasks	Houaphan Province • Districts: Houamuang and Hiem
Post-clearance assessment	Houaphan Province • Districts: Houamuang and Hiem
Quality management	Houaphan Province • Districts: Houamuang and Hiem
Victim assistance	Houaphan Province • Districts: Houamuang and Hiem

BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023

Ms. Xouaxong, 33, is a UXO survivor who lost her right arm in a tragic accident involving an explosion while gathering grass when she was 9 years old. Today she lives in Khangkhao Village, Houamuang District, Houaphan Province. Her story showcases resilience and determination in the face of adversity, highlighting her aspirations for a better life for her family.

Support provided by the Organization for Humanitarian Affairs and Participation has helped her and could bring positive change to her community. The family faced significant financial challenges, relying primarily on her husband's income from raising livestock, which amounted to 4 million to 5 million kip per year. Daily necessities, such as clothing, were often hard to afford, leading the family to borrow money from their parents and siblings, resulting in a debt of 2.5 million kip. Ms Xouaxong received an arm at a rehabilitation centre in Phon-savanh District and livestock, including a goat, to help alleviate their economic challenges.

The intervention brought about significant changes in Ms Xouaxong's life. She gained new

skills, such as making cakes, and was able to contribute more to her family. The prospect of developing a career, such as by selling cakes, has given her hope for the future.

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

Explosive ordnance disposal

- **Roving tasks:** Based on evidence points reported by villagers and authorities; 100 percent destruction of explosive ordnance in every village.
- **Area clearance:** 40,000 square metres to meet the MoU indicator, with a final target of 200,000 square metres in Phongsaly Province.

Victim assistance

- Support 32 survivors/people with disabilities to access better health-care services/rehabilitation centres (Khou and Mai districts, Phongsaly Province).

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Funds received and managed by HI from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Total amount received from donors (including headquarters overhead): \$741,323	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	180,00
Operational costs	113,250
EORE	330,087
Victim assistance	63,500
Equipment costs	26,120
Headquarters overhead	N/A
Total	741,323

Funds received per project

Project name	Period	Total amount received from donors in 2023 (US dollars)	Donor
Resilient Integrated Mine Action, Houaphan	January to August 2023	470,432	Government of the Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Resilient Integrated Mine Action, Phongsaly	January to December 2023	242,825	Government of the Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Amounts received from 1 January to 31 December 2023	
Donor	Amount (US dollars)
Government of the Netherlands, BUZA Dutch, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	712,957
Total	712,957

CONTACT PERSON

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Mines Advisory Group

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

In 2023, with funding from the governments of Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States, along with support from a number of smaller foundations and trusts, MAG deployed over 89 mine action teams in Xiengkhouang and Khammouane, two of the country's most heavily contaminated provinces.

As part of its UXO work, MAG's community liaison teams continued to engage with local communities, carrying out EORE sessions, non-technical surveys and community mapping exercises.

By the end of December, MAG had deployed 17 teams to conduct technical surveys to identify confirmed hazardous areas based on cluster munitions evidence, and 47 clearance teams to clear land of UXO, allowing individuals and communities to utilize their land safely and productively. Additionally, MAG performed over 5,000 EOD spot tasks to eliminate immediate explosive hazards. To ensure high standards and operational effectiveness, quality management teams consistently monitored and evaluated all activities during the year.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

MAG achieved the following results against targets in 2023.

- **Area clearance:** Over 1,660 hectares were cleared, of which 1,624 hectares of agricultural land and 39 hectares of development areas were returned to communities for safe and productive use.
- **Technical surveys:** Over 17,100 hectares of confirmed hazardous areas were established across Xiengkhouang and Khammouane provinces.
- **Non-technical surveys** were carried out in 28 villages in Xiengkhouang Province.
- **UXO destroyed:** Over 19,430 items, including more than 15,650 cluster submunitions, 13 aircraft bombs, 10 mines and 3,750 items of other UXO were destroyed through technical surveys, clearance and EOD spot tasks.
- **Roving tasks:** Over 5,000 EOD spot tasks were responded to, resulting in the destruction of more than 11,900 items of UXO.
- **EORE sessions:** 380 sessions were conducted in 65 villages, benefitting more than 9,560 individuals (including 4,565 women and 4,995 men).

Detailed achievements per activity

EORE/community awareness activities					
Village visits (number)	Beneficiaries (number)				
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
65	2,891	2,649	2,106	1,918	9,564

Area clearance					
Agricultural (hectares)	Development (hectares)	Total (hectares)	Confirmed hazardous area cleared (hectares)	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
1,624	39	1,663	1,653	99	0.175

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, MAG undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
EORE	Khammuane Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Bualapha, Gnommalath, Mahaxai, Xaybuathong
	Xiengkhoaung Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Khoun, Phaxai, Nonghed, Phaxai
Non-technical surveys	Xiengkhoaung Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Kham, Khoun, Nonghed, Phaxai
Technical surveys	Khammuane Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District: Boualapha
	Xiengkhouang Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Kham, Khoun, Nonghed, Pek, Phaxai, Phoukout
Area clearance	Xiengkhouang Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Khoun, Nonghed, Pek, Phaxai, Phoukout, Mokmai

Roving tasks	<p>Khammuane Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Bualapha, Gnommalath, Khounkham, Mahaxai, Xaybua-thong, Xebangfai <p>Xiengkhouang Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Kham, Khoun, Nonghed, Pek, Phaxai, Phoukout
Post-clearance assessment	<p>Xiengkhouang Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Kham, Khoun, Nonghed, Pek, Phaxai, Phoukout <p>Khammouan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Bualapha, Gnommalath and Mahaxai
Quality management	<p>Internal quality management in Xiengkhouang and Khammouane</p>

BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023

Case study 1: *Land clearance and community-built water supply in Thamtmlung Village*



Thamtamlung village in Pha Xay District, Xiengkhouang Province, is located around 30 kilometers from Long Tieng, a former highly secret military airbase. Today, the village is home to 456 people and known for its fertile grazing lands and high-quality cattle.

In 2005, the families of Mr. Pakao, Mr. Chue and Mr. Kayeayang settled in Thamtamlung, attracted by its good grazing land. Although they did not experience the conflict first-hand, they have heard accounts of it from their parents and elders, and witness its aftereffects every day.

“Our village is heavily contaminated with unexploded bombs,” explains Mr. Chue. “We must exercise extreme caution because this area was fiercely fought over during the conflict and served as the sole access point to Long Tieng. These bombs continue to cause injuries and fatalities, making it challenging to clear the land for farming, raising livestock, accessing water sources and hunting in the jungle.”

Prior to establishing a water supply system, the villagers relied on a local creek as their primary water source. Bamboo pipelines connected the creek to the village but frequent repairs were required, and water availability was limited. Every day, the villagers had to stand in long queues to collect water, often waiting until late at night due to the limited water supply. This was a time-consuming effort, especially for women and girls, who typically bear the responsibility of gathering water for their families.

The Government sought assistance from MAG to clear the land and establish a water supply system. During the initial survey, MAG’s community liaison teams found 33 explosive remnants of war, which were safely destroyed by MAG’s roving team within 48 hours. In June 2023, a MAG clearance team, funded by PM/WRA, cleared 8,707 square metres of land and safely destroyed 36 additional unexploded bombs. With support from Caritas, the villagers built a water supply system in August 2023, bringing water from mountain creeks to each of the village’s 76 houses.





IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, MAG collaborated with and was supported by many local and international partners as follows:

- Government of the United States, PM/WRA
- Government of the United Kingdom, FCDO
- Government of Norway, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- UK Aid Match
- The Freeman Foundation
- Restoration Laos
- NRA
- Provincial and district authorities in Xiengkhouang and Khammouane provinces

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Summary of funds received and managed by MAG from 1 January to 31 December 2023.

Total amount received from donors (including headquarters overhead): \$10,789,379	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	1,001,454
Operational costs	6,674,138
EORE	47,298
UXO clearance	5,222,688
Non-technical surveys	25,662
Technical surveys and EOD	1,378,490
Equipment costs	376,621
Headquarters overhead	2,582,965
Others (running and monitoring and evaluation costs)	154,201
Total	10,789,379

Funds received per project

Project name	Period	Total amount received from donors in 2023 (US dollars)	Donor
UXO Survey and Clearance in Xiengkhouang Province, Lao PDR (Phase III)	January 2023 to 30 April 2025	9,619,749	Government of the United States, Department of State, PM/WRA
Enabling the Community of Vangkhon Village, Boualapha District Khammouane Province, Lao PDR to Build Their Lives and Livelihoods in Safety Through the Clearance of Unexploded Ordnance	April 2023 to March 2024	238,853	United Kingdom Aid Match, FCDO
Integrate Survey and Clearance of Cluster Munitions Contamination in Boualapha District, Khammouane Province Lao PDR (Phase VIII)	August 2022 to December 2025	606,148	Government of Norway, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
UXO Clearance to Saving Lives in Boualapha District, Khammouane Province, Lao PDR, Phase II	April 2023 to March 2024	106,232	Restoration Laos
Clearing Cluster Munitions and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) from Rural Poor Communities in Langkang-Vangmaner Focus Development Areas, Boualapha District, Khammouane Province Lao PDR, Phase V	September 2022 to August 2023	221,334	The Freeman Foundation

Clearing Cluster Munitions and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) from Rural Poor Communities in Langkang-Vangmaner Focus Development Areas, Boualapha District, Khammouane Province Lao PDR, Phase V	September 2023 to March 2024	208,402	The Freeman Foundation
UXO Clearance in Khammouane Province, Lao PDR, Phase IV	January 2023 to March 2023 (extension)	278,571	Government of the United Kingdom, FCDO
UXO Clearance in Khammouane Province, Lao PDR, Phase V	April 2023 to September 2023 (extension)	557,143	Government of the United Kingdom, FCDO
Total		11,836,432	

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Amounts received from 1 January to 31 December 2023	
Donor	Amount (US dollars)
Government of the United States, Department of State, PM/WRA	9,619,749
United Kingdom Aid Match, FCDO	238,853
Government of Norway, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	606,148
Restoration Laos	106,232
The Freeman Foundation	429,736
Government of the United Kingdom, FCDO	835,714
Total	11,836,432

CONTACT PERSON

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Norwegian People's Aid

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

The main activities in 2023 were surveys, clearance, EOD roving tasks and EORE inside the NPA area of operations.

As part of increased funding under PM/WRA, NPA commenced EORE activities in August 2023 with four teams of 12 staff (3 staff per province, a team leader, deputy team leader and operator). The teams conducted 369 interpersonal EORE sessions and delivered 97 mass media materials, reaching over 53,550 females, males, girls and boys, including over 370 persons with disabilities.

To accommodate rapid expansion under the increased funding, NPA carried out staff training and skills development initiatives. This included three five- and six-week-long trainings on EOD Level 1 (deminer), two on EOD Level 2 (deputy team leaders), two on EOD Level 3 (team leaders), two on immediate care provision (ICP/medic), and EORE and quality management trainings.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

As recorded in IMSMA, NPA's key achievements in 2023 included the following.

- **Clearance:** 9.3 square kilometres (935.7 hectares) of contaminated land cleared and handed over for use by local communities.
- **Technical surveys:** Approximately 4.9 square kilometres (491.7 hectares) covered by technical surveys with 32 areas confirmed as hazardous, with a size of approximately 2.1 square kilometres (218 hectares).
- **EOD clearance and survey:** Over 8,946 items, including 8,128 cluster munition remnants and 818 items of other UXO, were found and destroyed during clearance and survey activities.
- **EOD/roving tasks:** Completed 594 EOD/roving tasks, destroying 348 cluster munition remnants and 246 items of other UXO.
- **EORE:** Conducted EORE in 51 villages with 402 sessions (number of working days with activities).
- **Beneficiaries:** 72,983 persons directly benefited and 154,969 persons indirectly benefited from survey and clearance activities in 2023.

- **Gender and diversity:** NPA remains committed to gender and diversity mainstreaming in all aspects of its work. In 2022, with support from Proud To Be Us Laos, a national organization campaigning for the rights of all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, gender, identity and expression, over 430 national field staff members received gender and diversity trainings.
- **Policy introductions:** A large number of old and new staff attended introductions to gender, diversity and safeguarding policies. In November, the policies were introduced to four offices in the southern provinces, covering all NPA staff in Champasak, Salavan, Sekong and Attapue. Sessions focused on:
 - The Gender and Diversity Policy, especially for new staff, and working with LGBTQ+
 - Gender balance in the workplace
 - The Safeguarding Policy
 - The Policy on Sexual Abuse in the Workplace
 - The Policy on Child Abuse in the Workplace
 - Working at NPA and what to do and not do

Participants

No :	Provinces	Number	New staff	Women
1	Champasak	252	33	24
2	Salavan	178	30	23
3	Sekong	173	31	22
4	Attapue	176	31	15
Total:		779	125	84

- **Environmental protection:** NPA is committed to reducing its environmental footprint and promoting environmental awareness and sustainability. Throughout 2022, it continued to work in cooperation with a national youth volunteer organization, Zero Waste Laos. Annual environmental trainings for over 430 field staff focused on resource and energy efficiency, climate change awareness, and reinforcing waste management and recycling activities

Detailed achievements per activity

EORE/community awareness activities					
Village visits (number)	Beneficiaries (number)				
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
51	15,466	14,964	11,536	11,590	53,556

Area clearance					
Agricultural (hectares)	Development (hectares)	Total (hectares)	Confirmed hazardous area cleared (hectares)	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
1,624	39	1,663	1,653	99	0.175

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, MAG undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
Non-technical surveys	<p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Bachingchaleunsook, Moonlapamok, Paksong, Pathoomphone, Xanasomboun
Technical surveys	<p>Attapeu Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District: Sanxai <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Bachingchaleunsook, Moonlapamok, Paksong, Pathoomphone, Xanasomboun <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Salavan, Ta-Oy <p>Sekong Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Dakcheung, Kalum, Lamam, Thateng
Area clearance	<p>Attapeu Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Sanxai, Phouvong, Xaysettha <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Bachingchaleunsook, Paksong, Pathoomphone, Xanasomboun <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Khongxedone, Laongarm, Salavan, Ta-Oy, Toumlan <p>Sekong Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts: Dakcheung, Kalum, Thateng

<p>Roving tasks</p>	<p>Attapeu Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District: Sanxai <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Bachingchaleunsook, Moonlapamok, Paksong, Pathoomphone, Xanasomboun <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Khongxedone, Salavan, Ta-Oy <p>Sekong Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Dakcheung, Kalum, Lamam, Thateng
<p>Post-clearance assessment</p>	<p>Attapeu Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Sanxai, Phouvong, Samakkhixay, Sanaxay, Xaysettha <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Bachingchaleunsook, Paksong, Pathoomphone, Xanasomboun <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Khongxedone, Laongarm, Salavan, Samouay, Ta-Oy, Toumlan, Vapi <p>Sekong Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Dakcheung, Kalum, Lamam, Thateng
<p>Quality management</p>	<p>Attapeu Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Phouvong, Sanxai, Xaysettha <p>Champasak Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Bachingchaleunsook, Moonlapamok, Paksong, Pathoomphone, Xanasomboun <p>Salavan Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Khongxedone, Laongarm, Salavan, Samouay, Ta-Oy, Toumlan, Vapi <p>Sekong Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts: Dakcheung, Kalum, Lamam, Thateng

BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023



Ms. Keo and her grandson Kham, who affectionately wraps his arm around his grandmother's shoulder as she recounts memories from the war. Story and photo credit: Arianne Gijsenbergh, volunteer professional photographer.

Ms. Keo, a resident of Maknao-Noy Village in Salavan District, Salavan Province, has experienced the lingering fear caused by cluster munition remnants and other UXO throughout her life. During the war, Ms. Keo, along with her husband and children, sought refuge in an improvised underground bunker to protect themselves from bombs. Although she personally escaped harm, her mother and sister suffered injuries from bomb fragments, resulting in significant blood loss. Thankfully, they received prompt medical treatment at a local clinic.

Ms. Keo recalls always being on high alert during those years: “We had no time to be sad or scared, we constantly had to watch out for planes or soldiers coming and be ready to escape.”

Half a century later, Ms. Keo and her family lead a happier life in a modest wooden house. She finds relief in knowing that the UXO on her land, which had remained since the war, is finally being cleared. Due to her declining eyesight, she is unable to witness the NPA clearance team in action. However, they diligently keep her informed about their progress and assist her when she needs to evacuate for controlled demolitions.

“I am very proud of the NPA team and appreciate the work you are doing here. I just want to say thank you very much for conducting this operation, it makes life safer for everyone,” Ms. Keo said.

Although the family's land is currently not under cultivation, Ms. Keo sincerely hopes that one day the cleared land will be used to provide income to sustain her grandson, Kham, and his brother as they grow up.

“My grandchildren are still young, but we must think about their future. If we manage to save some funds, we are thinking about developing this land for farming. The children can decide for themselves what they want to plant.”

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

In 2024, NPA's UXO survey and clearance programme will continue to operate on an expanded scale with increased funding from the United States Department of State and funding at a level similar to 2023 provided by Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The programme will operate with 42 battle area clearance teams, eight cluster munition remnant survey teams, four EORE teams and four mechanical vegetation cutting teams, with over 800 national staff employed. As the current MoU is valid until 31 October 2024, an additional focus in 2024 will be on securing a new MOU extension.

NPA will likewise continue its work on protecting the environment and gender and diversity inclusion.

Following the approval of the MoU to implement the Information Management Capacity Development project on 31 October 2022, staff recruitment and procurement was initiated in December. Project implementation will thus go forward from January 2023.

Key challenges for NPA remain securing the necessary MoU framework and permissions to allow project implementation, including recruitment and procurement, in a timely manner. In addition, NPA could not introduce tools such as mine detection dogs to increase the efficiency of survey and clearance operations as planned during 2023. Advocacy for the use of mine detection dogs shall continue, focused on training NRA quality management staff and NPA potential mine detection dog staff.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, NPA collaborated with and was supported by many local and international partners, including:

- NRA
- Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Provincial and district authorities in Attapeu, Champasak, Saravane and Sekong
- Government of Norway
- Government of the United States.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Summary of funds received and managed by NPA from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Total amount received from donors (including headquarters overhead): \$8,698,516	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	161,542
Operational costs	
UXO survey and clearance	3,913,756
Equipment costs	3,710,739
Headquarters overhead	912,479
Others (running and monitoring and evaluation costs)	154,201
Total	8,698,516

Funds received per project

Project name	Period	Total amount received from donors in 2023 (US dollars)	Donor
Unexploded Ordnance Survey and Clearance, Phase V (including extension for 2 months Apr-May23)	1 January 2023 to 31 May 2023	1,760,181	Government of the United States, PM/WRA
		128,495	United Kingdom Aid Match, FCDO
		7,381	Fagforbundet
Unexploded Ordnance Survey and Clearance, Phase VI	1 June 2023 to 31 December 2023	5,885,441	Government of the United States, PM/WRA
		249,425	Government of Norway, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Information Management Capacity Development Project	1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023	667,593	Government of the United States, PM/WRA
Total:		8,698,516	

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Amounts received from 1 January to 31 December 2023	
Donor	Amount (US dollars)
Government of the United States, PM/WRA	6,795,777
Government of Norway, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	647,549
Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees (Fagforbundet)	32,377
Total	7,475,703

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ACTIVITIES IN 2023

Terra Renaissance has been implementing the second phase of the project funded by the Government of Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, called “The Project to Strengthen the Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) for Young Children and Communities in Xiengkhouang Province.” The first year was from May 2023 to April 2024. Activities from May to December 2023 were as follows:

- Constructing a UXO/EORE Information Center in Phaxay District.
- Terra Renaissance staff and local government officials gained EORE coaching skills through NRA training.
- Local government officers and Terra Renaissance staff provided EORE implementation training to village coordinators and teachers to implement EORE in target schools and villages.
- Printed EORE materials for children in kindergarten and first and second grade.
- Provided EORE to children in kindergarten and first and second grade. Completed one round of EORE as planned in 25 target schools in Pek district (19 schools) and Phaxay district (6 schools).
- Assessed children’s understanding and awareness of the risk of UXO before the EORE.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

Terra Renaissance’s key achievements for 2023 included the following.

- Construction of the UXO/EORE information centre was scheduled for May to October 2023 but was not completed until March 2024. Therefore, it was not possible to install EORE information panels and establish a management structure in late 2023. This is far from the goals of not only the MoU but also the Japanese Government.
- Strengthened EORE capacities of government officials: 2 provincial department of labour and social welfare officials, 10 district officials (ES & LSW) in Pek and Phaxay districts and 10 Terra Renaissance staff joined a five-day EORE training provided by the NRA in June.
- District official and Terra Renaissance staff trained 135 teachers and 37 village coordinators on EORE in August (the MoU planned for approximately 125 teachers and 44 village coordinators).
- EORE for children in kindergarten and first and second grade: EORE materials were produced (500 posters, 50 picture story books, 250 jigsaw puzzles, 750 notebooks, 900 stickers, 500 colouring books). Terra Renaissance and district officials conducted EORE in 25 target schools reaching 1,898 pupils (3 to 7 years old). The target was 2,316, with an achievement rate of 82 percent.

- Before EORE, pupils’ understanding of UXO risks was assessed; understanding ranged from 32.8 to 65.7 percent.

Detailed achievements per activity

EORE/community awareness activities					
Village visits	Village visits				
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
25 schools	N/A	N/A	947	951	1,898

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, Terra Renaissance undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
EORE	Xiengkhouang Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District: Pek
Victim assistance	Xiengkhouang Province <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District: Pek

BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023

Terra Renaissance and district education and sports authorities provided EORE to 1,898 children in kindergarten and first and second grade in 25 target schools. Materials were designed to attract children’s interest. Before the EORE, implementation training was provided to school teachers, who have continued sessions after the initial round. It is expected that evaluation scores will increase significantly over time. One pupil, Mr. Deang, 7, from Phan primary school, found a UXO near his school. He did not touch it and reported it to his teacher. The teacher contacted UXO Lao to dispose of it.



Kindergarten children are encouraged to understand five types of UXO using Terra Renaissance’s EORE poster.



Terra Renaissance's picture story was rated by Japanese experts as superior to digital materials in effectiveness.



Children like jigsaw puzzles to help them observe and learn the features of UXO.



Training used sticker games to distinguish between UXO items and objects that are not dangerous.



Colouring books that young children love enable them to observe UXO and other items closely and remember their features.

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

- Improve the quality of EORE for children and ensure that EORE continues after the project ends.
- Enable UXO accident survivors and low-income people to generate income through Apis Cerana beekeeping. The beneficiaries would be trained in Japanese beekeeping skills to ensure sufficient harvests and expand sales channels.
- Government officials and Terra Renaissance staff will hold EORE trainings for teachers and village coordinators.
- EORE will be implemented for children in kindergarten and first and second grade at 25 target schools in two districts.
- In 22 target villages in Pek and Phaxay districts, EORE will be provided twice to each village.
- A beekeeping exhibition centre will be constructed to process and produce honey, introduce beekeeping and sell products.
- Forty UXO accident survivors and low-income people will be selected as beekeepers and will receive training on Japanese beekeeping and small business management.
- Beekeeping specialists will provide follow-up technical advice.

Pressing issues

- Since jurisdiction of the NRA changed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is uncertain whether district labour and social welfare offices can continue EORE training for teachers and village coordinators.
- The EORE centre management structure was planned to be established between January and March 2024, yet construction was not completed due to significant delays and no longer meets the Japanese Government's support objectives.
- The beekeeping exhibition centre's construction site was chosen outside the city centre, which does not align with Japanese Government goals.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, Terra Renaissance collaborated with and was supported by many local and international partners, including:

- NRA
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Department of Foreign Affairs, Xiengkhouang Province
- Department of Labour and Social Welfare, Xiengkhouang Province
- Department of Education and Sports, Xiengkhouang Province
- Pek and Phaxay district governor offices
- Pek and Phaxay district labour and social welfare offices
- Pek and Phaxay district education and sports offices
- Pek and Phaxay district agriculture and forestry offices

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Summary of funds received and managed by Terra Renaissance from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Total amount received from donors (including headquarters overhead): \$259,460	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	29,577
Operational costs	217,089
UXO/EORE information centre	30,345
EORE for school children	46,734
EORE	46,734
Monitoring and evaluation/local office administration	6,121
Equipment costs	6,693
Headquarters overhead	N/A
Others (running and monitoring and evaluation costs)	154,201
Total	259.460

Funds received per project

Project name	Period	Total amount received from donors in 2023 (US dollars)	Donor
The Project to Strengthen the Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) for Young Children and Communities in Xiengkhouang Province	January to December 2023	259,460	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Amounts received from 1 January to 31 December 2023	
Donor	Amount (US dollars)
Government of Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	259,460
Total	259,460

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World Education Inc.

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

War Victims Medical Fund

World Education (WE) in 2023 continued to operate the War Victims Medical Fund in partnership with the NRA. Following notification of a new accident, WE worked with the NRA to respond as rapidly as possible to ensure that funding was available to survivor(s) and families to cover hospital reimbursements, funeral costs, rehabilitation support or direct payments to families for care. In addition, the War Victims Medical Fund conducted a workshop on its policy for hospital staff and government stakeholders at the Xiengkhouang, Khammouan and Savannakhet provincial hospitals. In 2023, the fund supported 37 cases (35 involved first-time support and 2 required follow-up care).

Lawang ('Beware'): Expanding the Scope of EORE in Lao PDR

In collaboration with the Department of General Education, the Lawang project supported teacher training on an EORE curriculum for 1,753 people and implemented extracurricular activities in secondary schools in 88 districts of the 10 project target provinces. The project also supported the Department of Non-formal Education in developing and piloting a curriculum in five target provinces: Xiengkhouang, Khammuan, Savannakhet, Salavan and Sekong. These activities included a training of trainers on teaching and planning EORE lessons for 20 people, supporting teacher's training for 25 people, and the recruitment and training of 88 youth volunteers on EORE lesson dissemination.

A total of 17 EORE media products such as short videos, audio spots, posters, flipbooks and infographics were created and translated into the Hmong, Khmu and Brau languages. A campaign via Facebook and YouTube is being used to reach target audiences.

USAID Okard

WE implements the USAID Okard Project, which supports disability-inclusive development in Lao PDR. In 2023, in close partnership with government and civil society stakeholders, USAID Okard continued to promote and implement an integrated approach to meeting the unmet needs of people who experience permanent difficulty in functioning,

including UXO survivors in Xiengkhouang and Savannakhet. It worked through the Centre for Medical Rehabilitation and its four provincial rehabilitation centres.

Through individualized case management and community engagement to remove barriers faced by persons with disabilities in their communities, many persons with disabilities, including UXO survivors, have optimized their functioning. They have gained increased access and use of rehabilitation services and assistive products and/or have started new income generation activities to improve their living conditions.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

WE's key achievements for 2023 included the following.

War Victims Medical Fund

- The War Victims Medical Fund supports victims and their families on an as-needed basis after a UXO accident occurs. In 2023, the fund supported 37 cases (35 involved first-time support and 2 involved follow-up care).
- The fund printed 1,400 posters, 1,000 brochures and 600 stickers. The designs include information about fund eligibility criteria, exclusions, coverage, and a hotline number (#1603) to inform the NRA about UXO accidents and ask for more information about the fund.
- The fund conducted monitoring visits to follow up with survivors and victims' families in Sekong, Khammouan, Xiengkhouang and Xayyabuly provinces. During these visits, the team delivered support payments in-person, referred survivors to other relevant resources, and ensured they understood the ongoing availability of the fund for additional treatments. WE also met with provincial and district officials to discuss implementation. NRA provincial and district authorities understood that they have to report accidents promptly to WE through the NRA central office to ensure that financial needs are covered.
- The fund conducted a workshop on its policy for hospital staff and other stakeholders at the Xiengkhouang, Khammouan and Savannakhet provincial hospitals. As a result of the workshops, hospital staff will be equipped to inform patients about the fund and process payments.

Workshop participants are detailed in the table below.

Attendees	Savannakhet		Khammouane		Xiengkhouang		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Hospital staff	7	4	6	4	4	8	33
NRA staff	2	1	2	0	0	2	7
Labour and social welfare department staff	0	1	1	0	2	2	6

Foreign affairs department staff	2	0	1	1	1	1	6
Health department staff	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
Provincial rehabilitation centre staff	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Subtotals	13	6	12	5	8	13	
Total	19		17		21		57

Lawang

The table below summarizes the Lawang project's 2023 achievements

Activities	2023 target	2023 achievements	
		Actual, number	Percentage
Support secondary school teacher training on EORE curriculum	1,661 teachers in 88 districts	1,753 teachers (717 female)	105.53
Support secondary schools to conduct EORE activities	150 schools	150 schools 49,071 audience (25,084 female)	100
Conduct a training of trainers on the non-formal education curriculum for provincial and district education and sports services staff and two senior teachers from each non-formal education centre (Xiengkhouang, Khammuan, Sepon, Vapi, Darkjeung)	20 people	20 people (6 female)	100
Support teacher training in five non-formal education centres	25 teachers	38 teachers (25 female)	152
Conduct training on EORE dissemination for youth volunteers	80 people	88 people (26 female)	110
Support EORE activities in communities conducted by youth volunteers in 20 target villages	80 times	40 times with 1,388 audience (791 female)	50

Campaign for EORE lessons via Facebook and YouTube	2 posts	2 posts reaching 99,035 (48,230 female)	100
EORE media products (posters and flipbook) delivered to target (non-formal education centres, secondary schools, 20 villages, provincial and district education and sports services offices, and stakeholders at the central level)	800 sets	800 sets	100

USAID Okard

The table below summarizes the Okard project's 2023 achievements.

Activities	2023 target	January to December 2023 achievements	
		Actual	Percentage
Organize community events to raise awareness on disability and remove barriers to the inclusion of persons with disabilities	5,000	<p>Commemorated National and International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 16 December 2023 in Vientiane (863 people joined including 604 persons with disabilities, 363 females).</p> <p>392 people (students and teachers, 196 females) from one high school from Vientiane Capital and two high schools in Kham District, Xiengkhouang Province joined the disability inclusion event.</p> <p>27 participants (12 females) of Thang primary school in Kham District, Xiengkhouang Province joined the group discussion on disability inclusion.</p> <p>3,252 people (1,699 females) from 27 villages in Xayphouthong District, Savannakhet Province joined the storytelling video on disability inclusion awareness.</p>	90

Publish and distribute community mental health and psychosocial support awareness-raising materials	448	The Community Mental Health and Psychosocial Support awareness-raising materials, including 448 posters, have been distributed to central, provincial and eight district hospitals in two targeted provinces, Xiengkhouang and Savannakhet.	100
	2	Materials include two short videos; one is on a UXO survivor living with depression who has had mental and psychosocial support.	100
Conduct WCC/RSQC assessment by World Education and COPE, funded by Okard	7	7 WCC/RSQC assessments were conducted in 2023 at three central hospitals in Vientiane (Mahosoth, Setthathirath and Mitaphab), the Centre for Medical Education, 2 provincial rehabilitation centres in Xiengkhouang and Savannakhet provinces, and the Kham district hospital	100
Support the Centre for Medical Education to create a continuous professional development training programme on rehabilitation for health professionals	1	Training of 13 core trainers in Thailand Developed an essential rehabilitation intervention training handbook Delivered training to 120 health professionals from district, provincial and central hospitals	100
Adjust homes and community facilities to be accessible	25	20 accessibility modifications completed in Kham and Xayphouthong districts	80
UXO clearance	25	One household and two public spaces in Kham District, Xiengkhouang Province were cleared for UXO and received certificates of clearance from UXO Lao	60

UXO survivors who have received services through Okard funding	50	51 UXO survivors received assistance relating to health and rehabilitation services (31 by COPE, 20 by the Centre for Medical Education/Department of Health Care and Rehabilitation One UXO survivor received assistance relating to a job readiness programme	102
Hand over assistive products to the Ministry of Health	1,200	12,675 basic assistive products handed over to the Ministry of Health	105
Learning and exchange of experiences visit to Viet Nam	1	WE, HI, National Committee for Persons with Disabilities and Department of Health Care and Rehabilitation/Centre for Medical Education/Faculty of Medical Technology participated in a learning and exchange of experiences visit to Viet Nam on disability-inclusive social protection systems and rehabilitation workforce development and service provision in different health systems	100

Detailed achievements per activity

War Victims Medical Fund

Victim assistance										
Financial support (number of beneficiaries)					Medical support (number of beneficiaries)					Total
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total	
5	2	4	1	12	5	4	11	5	25	37

Lawang

EORE/community awareness activities					
Village visits	Beneficiaries				
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
216	3,737	4,256	21,972	22,393	52,358

USAID Okard

In 2023, out of 3,554 of people receiving health and related rehabilitation services from USAID Okard, 51 were UXO survivors.

UXO victim assistance provided with medical and rehabilitation support through the Okard Fund (January to December 2023)	Total	Total
Number of UXO survivors who received assistance (health and rehabilitation, assistive products, mental health and psychosocial support) in community-based inclusive development districts	0	51
Number of UXO survivors who received assistance (health and rehabilitation services, assistive products) through and reported by COPE	31	
Number of UXO survivor who received assistance (health and rehabilitation services, assistive products) reported by the Centre for Medical Rehabilitation/Department of Health Care and Rehabilitation	20	

In 2023, 0.0149 hectares in communities and near households were surveyed for UXO contamination by the UXO Laos team in Kham District, Xiengkhouang Province. UXO certificates were issued once land was confirmed as safe.

Area clearance (hectares)					
Agricultural	Development	Total	Hectares of confirmed hazardous area cleared	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
0.0039	0.011	0.0149	N/A	N/A	N/A

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, WE undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
Victim assistance	Luang Prabang, Xiengkhouang, Huaphan, Khammuane, Savannakhet, Saravane, Sekong, Champasak and Attapeu; UXO victims in other locations as requested by local authorities and approved by the NRA
Risk education	Luang Prabang, Xiengkhouang, Huaphan, Khammuane, Savannakhet, Saravane, Sekong, Champasak, Attapeu and Bolikhamxay

BENEFICIARY STORY OR CASE STUDY IN 2023

Laos and Nepal WE teams work together to ensure patients achieve the best outcomes

The War Victims Medical Fund has been supporting the needs of UXO victims in Lao PDR since 1996. Its goal is to cover the medical costs of those who are injured by UXO to ensure that victims do not fall into medical debt due to their injuries.

Lardone, 35, from Xiengkhouang Province, recently became a beneficiary of a cornea transplant through this project. In 2010, while burning brush to make room for more farmland, Lardone was injured when a UXO hidden underground exploded, damaging his right eye and blinding him in his left eye. He was able to get a cornea transplant for his right eye in 2017 that restored his vision to around 80 percent, enough to be able to retain his independence. Unfortunately, during the COVID-19 pandemic, he was unable to access medical care and his eye rejected the transplant.

In order to get another transplant, Lardone needed to access specialized services in Nepal. WE has been operating in Nepal for over 47 years. The Nepal team immediately sprang into action, connecting Lao PDR staff with the right cornea specialists.

In July 2023, Lardon was able to get a cornea transplant at Tilganga Institute of Ophthalmology, Nepal. The transplant has thus far been successful. After he returned to Lao PDR, he needed to travel to Thailand every month for check-ups with a cornea specialist, made possible due to the support of the fund. His vision is gradually getting better.

Intercountry collaborations have long been a hallmark of WE offices. They showcase how much more support can be given to beneficiaries by working together as a team



Photo 1: Lardone after receiving cornea transplant surgery at Tilganga Institute of Ophthalmology in Nepal. Photo credit: World Education Laos.



Photo 2: Cornea specialists and the WE Country Director with Mr. Lardon and his wife post-surgery.

USAID Okard: Big's Journey to Overcome Tragedy and Build a Brighter Future

“Despite a tough start, I didn’t let my disability define me. With support, I found joy in new ventures and belonging in my community. I lost my eye, but gained the strength to build a brighter future for my family,” says Big, 29, a USAID Okard Beneficiary.

Big comes from Nathong Village, Kham District, Xiengkhouang Province. At 10, he lost his right eye from a UXO accident. This tragedy cast a shadow over his childhood, and he struggled to cope with the loss at a young age.

After a long and difficult healing process, Big managed to finish seventh grade. Yet financial hardship and difficulty in functioning due to his impaired vision led him to make the tough decision to forgo further education and instead focus on supporting his family through farming.

Despite his challenges, Big didn’t let his disability hold him back. With support from the USAID Okard community-based inclusive development programme, he received a referral for an eye health assessment. The doctor suggested a cosmetic eye prosthesis, but Big felt it wouldn’t significantly impact him, so he chose not to pursue it. Instead, he focused on caring for his remaining eye, following the doctor’s advice.

Through the programme, Big started raising pigs for income. This new venture brought him joy and provided extra income for his family. He also took part in financial literacy training, learning valuable money management skills for his future.

Despite the challenges he faced, Big found a sense of community and belonging by joining social club activities with his friends. With determination and the support of the programme, Big was able to overcome his struggles and build a brighter future for himself and his loved ones.



Photo 1: Big taking care of his livestock.
Photo credit: Quality of Life Association Community-Based Inclusive Development.



Photo 2: Big at his home during the visit of the team.
Photo credit: Quality of Life Association Community-Based Inclusive Development.

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

Lawang project

- Continue to support 100 secondary schools to conduct extracurricular EORE activities; an estimated 22,126 students will receive EORE messages.
- Support 20 villages to disseminate EORE messages six times; an estimated 2,400 people will receive EORE knowledge.
- Conduct the non-formal education curriculum and VEDC&YV handbook evaluation in the pilot area.
- Conduct workshops on the EORE curriculum and handbook and create action plans for extension.
- Disseminate EORE messages via online platforms such as WE's Facebook page, radio and loudspeakers, reaching an estimated 577,500 people.
- Consult with stakeholders to store the EORE curriculum and media products on the government website.
- Conduct a media evaluation and create action plans for extension.
- Conduct a final project evaluation and submit project completion reports to stakeholders.
- **Challenges and opportunities** include possible delays in some activities due to lags in approvals and the MoU signing compared to the donor's financial time frame.

War Victims Medical Fund

- Coordinate with the donor to obtain new funds; the current MoU will be terminated in November 2024.
- Following notification of an accident, continue to support immediate and ongoing medical costs for UXO survivors and funeral costs for victims' families.
 - WE and NRA will conduct monitoring visits to UXO victims and their families three times
 - WE and NRA will conduct meetings on fund policies for hospital staff in Salavan Provincial Hospital.
- **Challenges and opportunities** include the slow process of compiling necessary documents for requesting fund support from the district to the provincial level. The reasons include difficulty in accessing roads. After receiving necessary documents, it takes time to contact the victim's family and provide support payments due to challenges with phone services. Since the fund is a unique project providing essential support to UXO victims and their families, the MoU should be extended automatically if there is no amendment.

USAID Okard

- Finalize and sign two MoUs with the National Committee for Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Department of Health Care and Rehabilitation, Ministry of Health to expand activities until June 2027.
- Expand the community-based inclusive development model to five districts in Xiengkhouang, Savannakhet and Sekong provinces.
- Support equipment for three new rehabilitation units in district hospitals and rehabilitation departments in six provincial and central hospitals and in the Centre for Medical Rehabilitation and two provincial rehabilitation centres.
- Support scholarships for rehabilitation professionals.
- Support the Ministry of Health to increase leadership and governance for rehabilitation in health systems.
- Support the National Committee for Persons with Disabilities to lead the organization of committees and implementation of disability-inclusive law and policies.
- **Challenges** include the time available from government staff to participate in activities supported by USAID Okard; competing priorities among government partners; and the need to create and train new teams to implement the community-based inclusive development model in five districts.
- **Opportunities** comprise the scope for government partners to increase their governance and leadership capacity to implement policies and strategies for disability-inclusive development and rehabilitation. More people with disabilities, including UXO survivors from more districts, will receive assistance.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, WE collaborated with and was supported by many local and international partners, including:

- Ministry of Education and Sports for the Lawang project.
- NRA for the War Victims Medical Fund.
- Ministry of Health (Department of Health Care and Rehabilitation/Centre for Medical Rehabilitation/ Faculty of Medical Technology)
- COPE
- Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, National Committee for Persons with Disabilities
- Quality of Life Association and the Association for Rural Mobilization and Improvement

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Summary of funds received and managed by WE from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Total amount received from donors (including headquarters overhead): \$1,457,479	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	341,684
Operational costs	993,645
EORE	349,964
Victim assistance	43,006
UXO survey and clearance	600,675
Equipment costs	0
Headquarters overhead	122,150
Total	1,457,479

Funds received per project

Project name	Period	Total amount received from donors in 2023 (US dollars)	Donor
Lawang: Expanding the Scope of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) in Laos Phase II	14 November 2022 to 30 September 2024	600,850	Government of the United States, PM/WRA
War Victim Medical Fund	9 June 2023 to 30 November 2024	53,876	Government of the United States, PM/WRA
USAID Okard Victim Assistance Cost	16 May 2019 to September 2023	858,107	Government of the United States, USAID

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2023

Amounts received from 1 January to 31 December 2023	
Donor	Amount (US dollars)
Government of the United States, PM/WRA	654,726
Government of the United States, USAID	858,107
Total	1,512,833

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UXO Commercials



AUSLAO UNEXPLORED ORDNANCE CLEARANCE CO., LTD.

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

In 2023, the world economy and the domestic economy returned to a better trend, which sent a good signal to trade and investment both domestically and internationally, especially in the energy and mining sectors. Although the clearance and destruction of explosives was not achieved according to plan, AUSLAO's work in 2023 was a breakthrough in preparing for the construction project that will be implemented in 2024.

Date	Activities	Venue	Area clearance, square metres	UXO	Remarks
January to 1 February 2023	Water supply project	Longcheng District, Xaysomboun Province	12,650.00	28	Completed 100%
6-31 March 2023	Electric dam project	Paksong District, Champasack Province	102,000.00	7	Ongoing
11 April to 27 May 2023	Mine project	Phaxay District, Xiengkouang Province	404,256.00	11	Ongoing
29 May to 29 June 2023	Mine project	Longcheng District, Xaysomboun Province	91,500.00	48	Ongoing
18 September to 4 October 2023	Mine project	Phaxay District, Xiengkouang Province	159,059.00	2	Ongoing
21-31 December 2023	Electric dam project	Xarnkhay District, Auttapue Province.	55,000.00	6	Completed 100%
Total:			824,465.00	102	

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

- ChalernXekong Power Company
- Bonus Lao Company
- Xiengkhuang Trading Company
- Boupaha Company

Area clearance (hectares)					
Agricultural	Development	Total	Hectares of confirmed hazardous area cleared	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
0	82.44	0.0149	N/A	N/A	N/A

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

- Continue clearance in electric dam project areas in Paksong District, Champasack Province.
- Continue surveys in mine project areas in Phaxay District, Xiengkouang Province.
- Continue clearance for the electric dam project in Xarnkhay District, Attapue Province.
- Continue clearance for the mine project in Longcheng District, Xaysomboun Province.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Summary of funds received and managed by AUSLAO from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Total amount received in 2023: \$43,804.00	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	24,772.00
Operational costs	6,766.00
UXO survey and clearance	6,766.00
Equipment costs	5,500.00
Total	43,804.00

CONTACT PERSON

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ACTIVITIES IN 2023

Since January 2023, the UXO clearance programme of LXML has focused on mining and exploration activities inside the Mineral Exploration and Production Agreement boundary. Nalou Pit is the main project for UXO clearance. There is high contamination; many UXO are found during UXO clearance, mostly along the Namkieng River. After mining activities, mine out of surface deeper than 2 metres, UXO clearance activities started finding big bombs weighing 250 to 750 pounds. Six aircraft bombs were found just in this area.



An aircraft bomb weighing 750 pounds.

UXO clearance support exploration was extended to remote areas such as Houybang, Xebanghieng Torheu and Ban Mai-Nakachan. The main support is UXO clearance for pad preparation, the IP Line programme and the drilling programme. The benefits include scope to build roads connecting to each village and clearance of a safe area for the community.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

Since January 2023, LXML has released land for UXO clearance of more than 4,765,825 square metres. Of that total, 1,728,795 square metres had surface UXO clearance 80 centimetres below the original surface. More than 700 UXO items were found and destroyed during clearance, which included 18 aircraft bombs, 258 cluster bombs and 397 others.

UXO Monthly production figure 2023

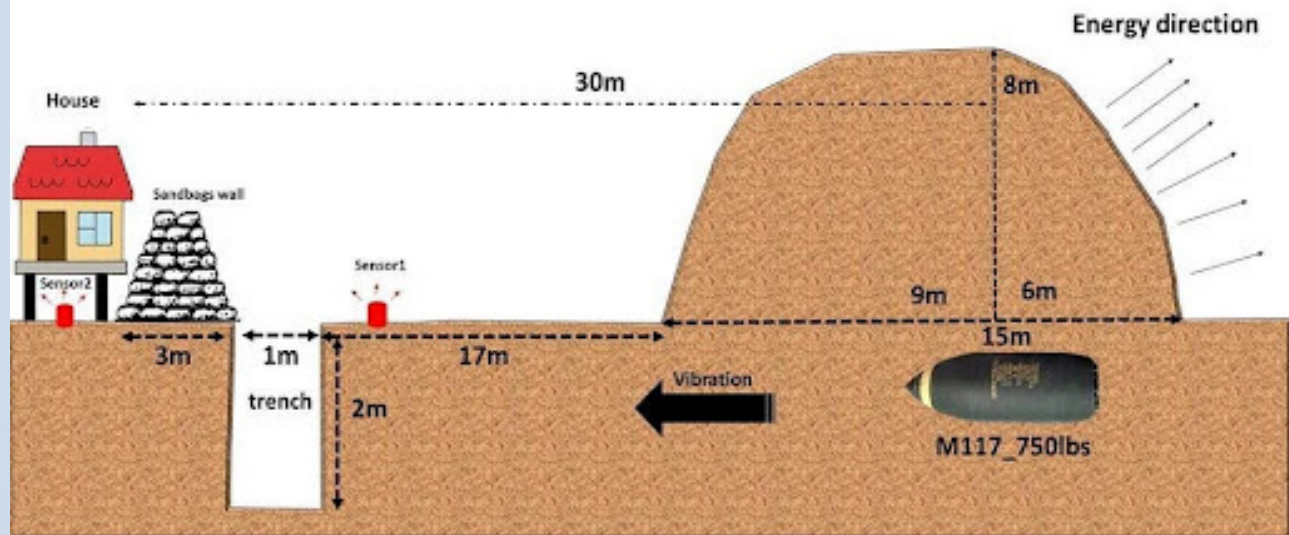
Month	Surface Clearance(m2)	Pit Clearance(m2)	Total(m2)
Jan-23	275,764	438,189	713,953
Feb-23	199,998	351,660	551,658
Mar-23	407,918	247,049	654,967
Apr-23	135,728	219,558	355,286
May-23	112,958	210,387	323,345
Jun-23	72,897	219,502	292,399
Jul-23	64,578	138,241	202,819
Aug-23	35,133	90,549	125,682
Sep-23	25,698	138,289	163,987

Oct-23	104,371	264,022	368,393
Nov-23	105,107	340,744	445,851
Dec-23	188,645	378,841	567,486
Grand	1,728,795	3,037,031	4,765,826

Source: UXO clearance data

In 2023, LXML completed a big bomb demolition trial. The scenario sought to protect a house 30 metres from the demolition point. The bomb used for the trial weighed 750 pounds; it was covered by dirt 8 metres high and 15 metres wide. A trench 1 metre deep and 4 metres long between the house and the demolition point helped to minimize ground shock; sensors measured the impact reduction. The NRA and NPA observed the demolition, which achieved a satisfactory outcome.

Scenario of Demolition plan



UXO control design and result.

Detailed achievements per activity

EORE/community awareness activities					
Village visits	Beneficiaries				
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
15	12	22	384	450	868

Area clearance (hectares)					
Agricultural	Development	Total	Hectares of confirmed hazardous area cleared	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
0	172	172	-	-	-

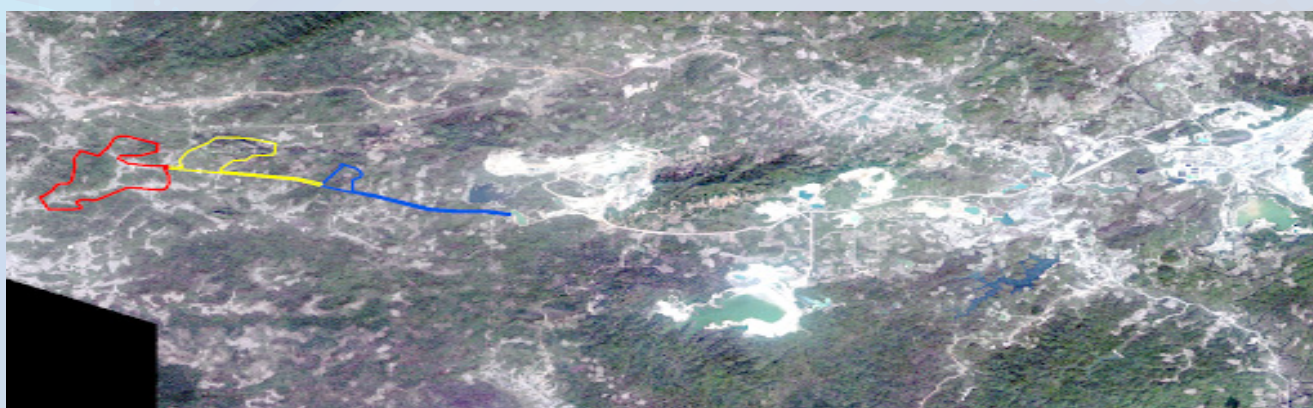
GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, LXML undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
Area clearance	Savannakhet

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

For 2024, LXML will continue to focus on the exploration programme for mine life extension. For mining activities, LXML will emphasize the far west project, which has an operation and facility area of 315 hectares. The project is located to the west of the Sepon Mine, near Ban Mai and Nakachan villages. See the map below.



Far west project map.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, LXML collaborated with and was supported by many partners, including:

- Government of Lao PDR, Ministry of National Defence, Department of Engineering
- NRA
- Provincial and district authorities in Savannakhet and Sepon

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Summary of funds received and managed by LXML from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Total amount received in 2023: \$1,351,450	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	901,439
Operational costs	328,900
EORE	3,000
Equipment costs	118,111
Headquarters overhead	-
Total	1,351,450

CONTACT PERSON

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ACTIVITIES IN 2023

In 2023, Milsearch completed 30 years of continuous operations in Lao PDR. It continued to support the mineral exploration and mining industry with explosive remnants of war remediation works with Phu Bia Mining. These works included UXO clearance as required by various departments at both the Phu Kham and Ban Houaxai mine sites as well as multiple areas outside the mines for exploration.

Milsearch was proud to continue to support the United States Department of Defence prisoner of war/missing in action accounting missions throughout 2023. Milsearch support was critical to the safe conduct of the missions and a requirement for them to take place.

Milsearch will continue to meet the growing needs of customers by employing the best industry standards and maintaining the highest levels of safety. It remains committed to the long-term reduction of explosive remnants of war hazards in Lao PDR.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

Business development

- Business growth and staff development
- Training for all key staff
- Maintaining highest industry practice/standard

Operations

- Maintaining best industry practices – explosive remnants of war clearance technologies and methodologies
- Adoption of Australian parent company HSSEQ standards
- IMSMA data entry – continual improvement
- Customer satisfaction

Detailed achievements per activity

Area clearance (hectares)					
Agricultural	Development	Total	Hectares of confirmed hazardous area cleared	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
0	156.78	156.78	-	-	-

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, Milsearch undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
Area clearance	Khammouan, Xaisomboun, Xekong, Huaphan
Roving tasks	Xiengkhuang, Huaphan, Xaisomboun

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

In 2024, Milsearch will continue to:

- Improve the quality of its product.
- Work on client/customer satisfaction.
- Build the capacity of Lao national staff.
- Improve the health, welfare and safety of Lao national staff and communities.

Pressing issues include having to reapply for UXO accreditation on an annual basis, which is both time consuming and intensive in terms of administration. Milsearch would like to discuss this with the NRA, towards streamlining this process or lengthening the accreditation period beyond 12 months.

Further, Milsearch currently has to apply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for permission to go to any site in Lao PDR on behalf of a client. This takes an excessive amount of time and includes a large amount of paperwork. Delays have had a detrimental effect on most 2023 projects. In 2024, Milsearch hopes to work with the NRA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to collectively improve these processes.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, Milsearch collaborated with and was supported by many partners, including:

- Phu Bia Mining (extractive)
- DPAA/S2S (United States Department of Defence project)
- Nam Theun 2 Power Company (energy)
- Rio Tinto Exploration (extractive)

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN 2023

Summary of funds received and managed by LXML from 1 January to 31 December 2023

Total amount received from donors (including headquarters overhead): \$1,929,900	
Detailed expenditures on direct costs:	
Item	Amount (US dollars)
Personnel costs	1,352,000
Operational costs	380,700
Equipment costs	76,000
Headquarters overhead	121,200
Total	1,929,900

CONTACT PERSON

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Oumma UXO Clearance Co., Ltd.

ACTIVITIES IN 2023

In 2023, Oumma UXO Clearance Co., Ltd. conducted UXO clearance and destruction based on the agreement with its clients. Oumma received a quality inspection according to the national standard from the Office of the Commission to solve the problem of UXO in Lao PDR.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

UXO clearance and destruction as agreed between the donor and the operator.

Detailed achievements per activity

Area clearance (hectares)					
Agricultural	Development	Total	Hectares of confirmed hazardous area cleared	Share of confirmed hazardous area within total cleared area (percentage)	Hectares of area cleared per team per day
0	194	194	-	-	-

GEOGRAPHY OF OPERATIONS IN 2023

In 2023, Milsearch undertook activities in different provinces as follows.

Activity	Provinces/districts
Area clearance	Savannakhet and Khammuan provinces

PRIORITIES FOR 2024

Oumma will focus on UXO clearance in 2024. Challenges include continuing to increase the quality of UXO clearance and destruction work within the company and to find donors for this work. There is an opportunity, based on past performance and performance, to build trust with donors and help to ensure that people are safe from UXO and can develop livelihoods.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS OR CLIENTS

In 2023, Oumma collaborated with and was supported by partners including:

- Government of Lao PDR
- NRA
- Provincial and district authorities

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