The Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Problem and Operational Progress in the Lao PDR

Official Figures

- Laos is the most heavily bombed country, per capita, in history
- Approximately 25% of villages in Laos are contaminated with Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)
- More than 580,000 bombing missions were conducted over Laos
- Over 2 million tons of ordnance were dropped on Laos between 1964 and 1973
- Cluster sub-munitions or ‘Bombies' (as they are known locally) are the most common form of UXO remaining
- More than 270 million bombies were dropped onto Laos
- Up to 30% failed to detonate
- Approximately 80 million unexploded bombies remained in Laos after the war
- All 17 provinces of Laos suffer from UXO contamination
- 41 out of the 46* poorest districts in Laos have UXO contamination**
- Over 50,000 people have been killed or injured as a result of UXO accidents in the period 1964 -2008
- Over 20,000 people have been killed or injured as a result of UXO accidents post-war period, 1974-2008

Of this 50,000 total casualties figure:

- 60% were killed
- 40% were injured
- 23% were children
- 13% were female
- 15% were caused by cluster bombs
- 20,000 plus survived the accident

Of this 20,000
- Some 13,500 lost a limb

- 25% of total casualties were in Savannakhet Province
- 12% of total casualties were in Xiengkhuang Province
- Over the last decade there have been approximately 300 new casualties annually
- Over the last decade accidents caused by cluster bombs rose to 30% of total casualties
- Over the last decade 40% of total casualties were children
UXO/Mine action operations, over the period 1996 to 2009, have produced:

- **1,090,228** items of UXO destroyed, including:
  - **5,242** big bombs destroyed
  - **480,297** cluster sub-munitions/bombies destroyed
  - **6,095** mines destroyed
  - **597,405** other UXO items destroyed
- **23,070** hectares of land **cleared**. Of this figure;
  - **15,931** hectares were used for **agricultural** purposes
  - **7,139** hectares were used for **development** purposes
- **914** hectares of land released via **ETS** (Enhanced Technical Survey). Of this figure;
  - **746** hectares were used for **agricultural** purposes
  - **168** hectares were used for **development** purposes
- **12,039** Risk Education village visits (including re-visits) were conducted.

* Previously a figure of 47 poorest districts has been referred to in many documents. In late 2009 BoriKhan District in Bolikhamsay Province, included in this figure of 47, was formally elevated off this list having met multiple development objectives.

** Poorest as defined by the Government of Laos in the National Socio-economic Development Plan

**Authorised by the Director of the NRA**

[Signature]

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**References Documents**

- UXO Sector Operational reports - consolidated data held at the National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action in the Lao PDR
- US Congressional Records - available at the National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action in the Lao PDR
- Lao Census data - available at the National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action in the Lao PDR
- National Study on the socio-economic Impact of Unexploded Ordnance, HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL, 1997
- The National UXO Accidents and Victim Survey Phase 1 Report prepared by the National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action, NRA, Vientiane, December 2009
- Master plan Study: integrated agricultural development in Lao People’s Democratic Republic, JICA, Vientiane, October 2001

Last Updated: June 2nd 2010