

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

An Evaluation of UNICEF-Supported UXO Risk Education Projects in the Lao People's Democratic Republic



Final report

Geneva, October 2005

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The authors would like to pay tribute to the kindness and generosity of the people of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and their representatives. This evaluation would not have been possible without them and it was made all the more enjoyable because of them.

The cover photo is of Lao children singing the popular “Cricket Song”. © Stuart Maslen/GICHD 2005

Executive Summary

Background to the evaluation

Education about the dangers of unexploded ordnance (UXO risk education) has been undertaken in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) for more than a decade, notably by UXO Lao and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and its partners. The majority of funding for the various projects has been contributed through UNICEF. Specifically, since 2002 UNICEF has supported the Lao government with implementation of two related projects; the introduction of UXO risk education as a supplementary curriculum activity within the primary school system, a project implemented by Consortium¹ with the Ministry of Education; and "Sport in a Box", a project implemented by the Lao Youth Union. Main financial support was provided by AusAID/Australian Committee for UNICEF, and the UK Committee for UNICEF, co-funded by the Parthenon Trust and the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

Purpose

In March 2005, UNICEF requested the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to conduct an independent evaluation of its support to UXO risk education projects in Lao PDR. The terms of reference for the evaluation were to:

1. Assess the relevance of UXO risk education to the particular needs, expectations and priorities of the target group with a specific focus on children, parents, village volunteers, teachers and district and provincial authorities.
2. Assess the effectiveness of the project in meeting its stated objectives.
3. Assess the efficiency of the project (qualitative and quantitative) achieved in relation to the outputs (resources and costs).
4. Determine the impact of the project, both intended and unintended including political, socioeconomic and cultural issues.
5. Review the sustainability of the project and the probability that benefits achieved will continue after donor funding and technical support has been withdrawn.

The work of UXO Lao, notably its community awareness teams, does not fall within the scope of the evaluation.

Methodology

The evaluation began in April and May 2005 with a review of relevant literature made available to the team by the various stakeholders. In June 2005, interviews were conducted with key informants in Vientiane, as well as with the former UNICEF Laos Child Protection Section Head, now based in Bangkok. This enabled the development of a results-based

¹ According to Consortium, the US Agency for International development (USAID), under the War Victims Assistance Project, provided initial funding for the Consortium UXO awareness program, and continued as a major contributor until 2004, providing many of the costs for running day-to-day operations of the Project. Comments by Consortium on the first draft of the evaluation, 22 September 2005.

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management framework, adapted to mine/UXO action, for its evaluations; this looks at project rationale, impacts, outcomes, outputs, efficiency and safety, attached as Annex 1.

In July 2005, field visits were conducted to beneficiaries and other project stakeholders in Luang Prabang province and Savannakhet province. Information was obtained by a combination of in-depth interviews with key informants at provincial and district level (see Annex 4), and by focus group discussions with the beneficiaries of the two projects: children, teachers, and village volunteers (see Annex 5).

In Luang Prabang province, two schools were visited: Huawna school (Nambak District) and Namthuaom school (Nambak District). In Savannakhet province, a further two schools were visited: Phalanxay school (Phalanxay District) and Nonyang school (Phin district). The selection of the sites for these visits was made on the basis of recommendations from, and consultations with, the main project partners. It should, however, be noted that as the field visits for the evaluation were conducted during the school holidays, the UXO awareness supplementary curriculum sessions observed in schools were inevitably somewhat artificial.

To evaluate the Sport in a Box project, two villages were visited: Somthavone village (Phin district) and Vangkod village (Sepone district). The selection of the sites for these visits was made on the basis of recommendations from, and consultations with, the main project partners.

The evaluation has been conducted in accordance with the relevant international mine action standards, specifically IMAS 14.20 – Evaluation of mine risk education programmes and projects. The relevant IMAS recommends that issues to be evaluated include: stakeholder involvement; coordination: integration; community participation and empowerment; information management and exchange; appropriate targeting; education; and training.

The evaluation team was made up of two GICHD consultants: Stuart Maslen and Lamphane Vannachack. Assistance for interviews and during the field missions was provided by Ounheuang Keoamphone, Assistant Project Officer, Child Protection Section, UNICEF Vientiane. Technical input was provided by both the Socio-Economic Section and the Evaluation Section at the GICHD in Geneva. In addition to ongoing assistance from UNICEF, staff from Consortium, the Ministry of Education and its provincial departments, and the Lao Youth Union were also present during much of the field work.

On 29 July 2005, an initial draft report was submitted to UNICEF in Vientiane for comment. A presentation of the main conclusions, findings and recommendations of the evaluation was made to stakeholders at a workshop organised by UNICEF in Vientiane on 31 August 2005. The draft report has been revised, following the workshop, based on comments from UNICEF and on the basis of input during the workshop and comment by project stakeholders. Comments were received from Consortium, Handicap International, the Lao Youth Union,² the UNDP Chief Technical Advisor to UXO Lao, and UNICEF. Following the receipt of comments from AusAID at the end of September 2005, the report was finalised and submitted to UNICEF.

² The lack of a Lao translation of the revised draft report of the evaluation appears to have impeded the Youth Union in making detailed comments on the content.

Main conclusions and findings

Relevance

The scale and extent of UXO contamination in Lao PDR and its mandate to protect those at risk through communication and education means that seeking to reduce the impact of that contamination is a relevant objective for UNICEF. Thus, the desire to reduce casualties from UXO – one of the primary objectives for the two projects – is also relevant. In addition, a significant (and growing)³ percentage of total victims are children, making its support all the more important.⁴

There are clearly, however, limits to what education on its own can provide to those at risk, particularly given the underlying social and economic fundamentals in Lao PDR. This means that integration of risk education into broader UXO action as well as into development is all the more critical. The evaluation team found that the two projects supported were complementary to each other as well as to other efforts to mitigate the impact of UXO on the lives of affected communities. UNICEF could probably have made greater efforts to integrate them into broader UXO action and into developmental actions likely to make sustained inroads into risk-taking behaviour.

For example, concrete linkages between UNICEF and its supported projects, on the one hand, and the community awareness teams of UXO Lao, on the other, appear to have been negligible. In addition, data collection, analysis and use (notably in the case of the ‘Sport in a Box’ project), has been unsystematic and inadequate. Approaches to managing the UXO threat in Lao PDR are potentially complex, and UNICEF is not responsible for a lack of a coordinated approach to UXO action in Lao PDR. However, there is insufficient evidence that it adapted the focus of the projects, even as UXO casualty figures, especially of children, began to rise.

One appropriate response to this increase, as part of its ongoing obligation to monitor the projects – also required by the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)⁵ – would have been to commission or conduct an assessment of needs for risk education,⁶ to ensure that its projects were focusing on the right at-risk groups, in the right places, with the right strategy. There is no evidence that this (or other possible responses) was considered.

³ UXO Lao data for 2001 reported that 40 per cent of the casualties were children, but during the duration of the UNICEF-supported projects this percentage has climbed significantly: recent data for 2005 shows an increase to 57 per cent, and a total that is higher than the total number of casualties in 2001.

⁴ Although UNICEF, as the UN focal point for mine risk education nominated by the 1998 UN Policy on Mine Action, has a responsibility for all civilians at risk from mines and UXO, not only children.

⁵ Thus, IMAS 07.41 states that: “Monitoring is a ‘critical management tool’, at all levels, and an essential part of the MRE project cycle. Monitoring systems should be included in the project plan and built to be sustainable. Monitoring is essential for evaluation to take place. Monitoring should take into consideration both the progress made by MRE organisations against stated project objectives; and the change in nature of the environment and the threat from mines and UXO.” The emphasis is original.

⁶ According to IMAS 08.50, “a community based and integrated needs assessment will form the basis of all MRE projects, allowing for informed planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the entire MRE programme within the wider mine action programme.”

Impacts

Both projects, however, appear to have positively contributed to broader development in the country: by building the skills of many teachers amid an education system beset with difficulties;⁷ by enabling project volunteers in poor rural community to develop their capacity for conducting ‘Sport in a Box’ activities; and by building social capital in bringing children together in participatory social and learning activities.

Effectiveness

There is little evidence to support a conclusion that the projects have significantly reduced casualties from UXO in the areas of implementation. There is also a concern that the selection of project sites, especially in the case of the supplementary curriculum, does not appear to have been targeted to the most at-risk communities.⁸ Remote, difficult-to-access communities, where the impact of UXO may often be the highest,⁹ only appear to have been a specific focus for the ‘Sport-in-a-box’ project.¹⁰

A number of surveys, especially the National Survey on Socio-Economic Impact of UXO in Lao PDR and UXO Lao accident data, fed into the preparation for the projects, but does not seem to have taken into account subsequent clearance activities by UXO Lao with the result that the villages studied during the field visits were in communities that suffer minimal impact from UXO. In addition, there could have been incorporated a more explicit focus on questions such as the following:

- Who is most at risk from UXO in Lao PDR (broken down by age, gender, livelihood/occupation, and activity)?
- Why are they at risk (i.e. what are the reasons for any risk-taking behaviour)?¹¹
- Where are they most at risk?

⁷ Consortium notes, for example, that it worked with more than 300,000 students and 1,000 teachers in the 2004–2005 school year. Comments by Consortium on the first draft of the evaluation, 22 September 2005.

⁸ According to Consortium, “[t]he most heavily impacted areas were targeted first during implementation of the Project. In addition, easily accessible schools are trained first, after which more remote school [sic] are assisted by the program.” Consortium also notes that: “Initially villages were selected on the basis of impact of UXO as determined by UXO Lao Province authorities and Education authorities, the Handicap International UXO Socio-economic Impact survey, larger population levels, and ease of access to build capacity of Province and District counterparts in Project management and instructional follow-up.”

⁹ According to Consortium: “To assume that schools located close to a road are less at risk is misleading. B-52 bombing records clearly show a concentration along rural roads throughout the country. Indeed, road building in Xieng Khouang as recently as 2003 revealed higher contamination near roads as construction teams simply moved UXO they encountered aside.” Comments by Consortium on the first draft of the evaluation, 22 September 2005.

¹⁰ According to information provided by project staff at the Lao Youth Union, 31 August 2005. Indeed, villages in remote areas may not even have a school. As UNICEF notes, “The National Strategic Plan emphasizes the need for ‘stepped-up technical surveys’ at village level as part of a process to obtain a ‘reasonably accurate estimate of total suspected contaminated areas.’ ‘UXO Lao staff have begun entering data from completed surveys and destroyed devices into the newly installed IMSMA version 2.2’ – this is not done yet but when available could be used for planning.” Comments by UNICEF on the first draft of the evaluation, 16 September 2005.

¹¹ Noteworthy, however, is the UNICEF-supported study on the impact of scrap metal on UXO accident rates. This study, also conducted by the GICHD, represents an important first step in identifying key factors influencing risk-taking in Lao PDR.

To the credit of Consortium, however, the materials produced were changed over time to respond to perceived risk-taking behaviours by children during the duration of the project, for example in providing advice on building fires in safer areas or ways.¹²

Efficiency

Expenditure on the two projects over the three-year period amount to around US\$1 million. The multiplier factor, through training of trainers, has, according to Consortium, resulted in more than 3,000 teachers' general pedagogical capacity and ability to conduct risk education being developed. In terms of sustainability, it is highly likely that many of the teachers trained by Consortium and the provincial departments of education will continue to apply their acquired skills even after the project has ended. Some will also pursue UXO risk education activities within the schools and perhaps extent to other areas.

The sustainability of the 'Sport in a Box' project is more questionable, given that daily subsistence allowance (DSA) payments have so far been made to volunteers, although according to project staff the activities will continue even after UNICEF's support ends.¹³ To date, the Lao Youth Union declares that it has trained 825 village volunteers and 462 child volunteers.¹⁴ UNICEF notes that in June 2004 – July 2005, "[c]ommunity-based safe play activities were active in 14 target districts in six provinces. During the reporting period a total of 208 villages (116 target villages and 92 villages covered by outreach activities) participated in activities, reaching more than 39,000 children (13,000 girls). A total of 462 child volunteers (220 girls) assisted in mobile teams to conduct outreach activities in nearby villages. A total of 21 district and provincial trainers (eight females) undertook TOT on child-to-child. Four thousand copies of four UXO cartoon books, 2,000 posters, 1,000 CDs and 1,000 cassettes of UXO songs and 120 handbooks on UXO awareness and play materials at local level were produced and distributed to target villages and districts."

"Project monitoring forms developed and used for monitoring and data collection in target villages; 2,558 children's forms and 1,921 parent's forms were received and analysed. A total of 208 villages (116 target villages and 92 villages covered by outreach activities) participated in activities, reaching more than 39,000 children including 13,000 girls. Of this number about 9,000 children are out-of-school youth. 462 child volunteers (220 girls) assisted in mobile teams to conduct outreach activities in near by villages."¹⁵

Outputs

The projects appear to have been implemented in accordance with their plans. Teachers and community volunteers have been trained; activities have been conducted, both in the schools and in the communities; materials have been produced (although, in the case of the supplementary curriculum project, fewer colour publications and a broader dissemination of

¹² According to Consortium: "These changes came about as a result of the annual review and evaluation meetings that the Consortium held with the stakeholders, the materials produced were changed over time to respond to perceived risk-taking behaviours by children during the duration of the project." Comments by Consortium on the first draft of the evaluation, 22 September 2005.

¹³ According to information provided by project staff at the Lao Youth Union, 31 August 2005.

¹⁴ Comments by the Lao Youth Union on the first draft of the evaluation, 19 September 2005.

¹⁵ Comments by UNICEF on the first draft of the evaluation, 16 September 2005.

materials to students would have been welcome);¹⁶ and progress reports have been drafted and submitted to UNICEF. In short, capacity to conduct UXO risk education has been developed in Lao PDR in certain sectors of the community.

Lessons learned and recommendations

Strengthened programme coordination

First and foremost, the UXO risk education sector in Lao PDR needs to strengthen overall programme coordination. National programme coordination is required:

- to allocate resources effectively to MRE based on an objective assessment of need;
- to ensure high quality interventions through monitoring both of activities and of changing circumstances;
- to share information on priorities, current activities and future plans; and
- to avoid the risks of duplication or contradictory messages within and across provinces and between different actors.

It is generally accepted within mine/UXO action, and constitutes a guiding principle of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) issued by the United Nations, that “the primary responsibility for mine action lies with the government of the mine-affected State”,¹⁷ in this case the government of Lao PDR. Further, the IMAS recommends that, at national level, overall mine/UXO action strategy be set by an inter-ministerial body, often known as a national mine action authority. Operational coordination of activities is assured by a national mine action centre working under the authority’s auspices.

In Lao PDR, the key national institutions are the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) – a national authority responsible for regulating the UXO sector – and UXO Lao, a national body responsible for implementing clearance and awareness, and formerly also an operational coordination body.

The formal mandate for the NRA was provided by Prime Ministerial Decree on 17 March 2004, but more than a year later the Authority is still under development. To date, although facilities have been secured to house the Authority, no national director has been selected and appointed, as well as many of the national technical staff that will support the UXO action programme in the country, although UNDP has had a Chief Technical Advisor in place since February 2005.

Success in filling the coordination gap would therefore enable significant progress towards the aim of an effective, well-run national UXO risk education programme. Discussions are ongoing between donors, the United Nations and the government of Lao PDR on how to set up an effective NRA. UNICEF should play a stronger role in promoting the effective establishment of the NRA, based on its role as focal point for risk education in the UN system.

¹⁶ Indeed, Consortium has recognised this issue and is now printing student handbooks in black and white.

¹⁷ IMAS 01.10, Second Edition, 1 January 2003, p. 3.

Project management

Second, project design and management skills for UXO risk education need to be reinforced, in particular the targeting of interventions, not only by UNICEF but also other major actors in this area such as the Lao Government, UNDP, UXO Lao and the NRA.¹⁸ These should be based on: objective assessments of the needs for MRE; support for continued building of social capital at community level; and the maintenance of a sustainable surveillance system.

Assessing the needs for UXO risk education

As required by the IMAS (drafted by UNICEF on behalf of the UN system) all assessments of UXO risk education in any country should identify first and foremost the needs of the communities who are affected by explosive devices. As is well known, massive UXO contamination results from the bombings of Lao PDR by the United States of America in the 1960s and early 1970s. Much of Lao PDR territory remains affected by their legacy. But how that contamination leads to deaths and injuries, and how development projects are negatively affected, inevitably varies from area to area and between communities, depending on a variety of variables, including the level of UXO clearance conducted and prevailing socio-economic realities.

It is not yet possible to say with certainty how many Laotians are killed and injured each year by these explosive devices. In 2004, UXO Lao recorded 194 victims across the country. This is a major increase from previous years (109 in 2003, and 98 in 2002), and the numbers appear to be even higher in 2005. It is also not possible to know for sure whether the increase is due to better data recording or an overall increase in the number of victims, or both. Anecdotal evidence and the views of most informants attribute the bulk of the rise to an increase in risk-taking through scrap metal collection, itself a reflection of higher prices paid for scrap metal in China and Vietnam and cheap and ready access to metal detectors from Vietnam.

But it is clear to the evaluation team that **a thorough national assessment of needs should be carried out in Lao PDR as soon as possible.** The IMAS 08.50 (Data collection and needs assessment for mine risk education) provides guidance on the information to be collected as part of such a needs assessment. A suggested model framework for adaptation to Lao PDR is attached to this report as Annex 7. In addition, UNICEF New York is set to issue a series of practical guides to support the implementation at field level of the IMAS on risk education.

Planning for the future

A national strategic plan for UXO action in Lao PDR for the period 2003–2013 was adopted in 2004 by the Prime Minister's Office.¹⁹ Following the conduct of a needs assessment, it is an obvious requirement that the UXO risk education components of the strategy be revisited and revised, as necessary and appropriate, with the involvement and participation of all relevant stakeholders. Thus, the assessment would enable the development of a coherent

¹⁸ Comments by UNICEF on the first draft of the evaluation, 16 September 2005.

¹⁹ "National Strategic Plan for the UXO Programme in the Lao People's Democratic Republic 2003–2013, 'The Safe Path Forward'", Prime Minister's Office, Vientiane, 2003.

communication strategy for UXO action in broad terms and facilitate the appropriate allocation of resources to the implementation of that strategy.

It is therefore recommended that UNICEF consider further support to these two activities only after at least province-wide risk assessments and appropriate planning processes for UXO risk education are undertaken.²⁰

A sustainable surveillance system

Linked to these two initiatives is the creation and maintenance of a sustainable victim and risk-taking surveillance system. It is an axiom of any humanitarian or development intervention that not everyone is at equal risk – and therefore in equal need. The primary challenge in programme implementation is in targeting those most in need. Recommendations were made to support such a system in earlier evaluations of its work dating back at least to 2000,²¹ and although this is the responsibility of Lao PDR, not UNICEF, and UNICEF certainly raised concerns about the lack of data with programme stakeholders on a number of occasions,²² there could have been a more proactive approach to promoting the establishment of a comprehensive victim surveillance and risk-taking system.

Accordingly, **the UXO risk education programme in Lao PDR would benefit greatly from an effective and efficient victim surveillance system.** It is therefore welcome that moves to set up such a system are being moved forward by the UN Development Programme in particular, based on a feasibility study conducted by Handicap International in early 2004.²³ UNICEF should liaise closely with other stakeholders on this matter, to ensure that the data needs for UXO risk education are fully met.

In addition, **data on risk-taking – and the community response to that risk-taking – does not appear to be collected systematically.** This needs to be rectified as a matter of urgency. This means identifying and reporting on how communities are themselves managing the risks associated with interaction with UXO, including through informal, village-level clearance activities and scrap metal collection,²⁴ as well as those promoted by external actors. A suggested village profile framework is attached as Annex 7. Participatory rural appraisal or

²⁰ Handicap International notes that at the workshop convened to discuss the preliminary findings of the evaluation, “One working group of participants during the stakeholder presentation discussed possible options to this proposition such as establishing a monitoring system, asking support of UXO Lao and other UXO implementing partners to gather information, and cooperating in assessment and UXO risk education planning.” Comments by Handicap International on the first draft of the evaluation, 16 September 2005.

²¹ See for instance A. Delneville, “UXO Awareness Education Activities Supported by UNICEF in the Lao P.D.R, External Evaluation by Amy Delneville, June–July 2000”, Vientiane, pp. 9-11.

²² In addition, according to Handicap International Belgium, “UNICEF did also contact HIB to conduct a study on psychosocial effects of UXO accidents on children. Districts with a high incidence of UXO-injured children were identified in six provinces. Approximately 300 people were interviewed, including 150-200 injured children and their parents. The fieldwork and analysis were extensive, and the report was only finalised in December 2004. In 2005, UNICEF and HIB will analyse the findings in an attempt to identify potentially feasible and effective intervention.” Comments by Handicap International Belgium on the first draft of the evaluation, 16 September 2005.

²³ Handicap International, “Feasibility Study in a National Network for UXO Accidents in Lao PDR, January–February 2004”, UNDP/HIB, Vientiane., 2004

²⁴ Annex 9 contains the Executive Summary of a separate study of scrap metal collection in Lao PDR.

participatory learning for action techniques are effective ways of obtaining the necessary information.

Future international support and assistance for capacity development

UNICEF has the primary responsibility among UN agencies to support actors in developing the capacities of the UXO risk education programme in Lao PDR. **As soon as the NRA is effectively up and running, helping to develop its capacities to coordinate UXO risk education would constitute a relevant and appropriate role for UNICEF.**

Based on requests from the NRA and Government officials, UNICEF should consider providing direct technical assistance to the NRA, through the provision of a technical advisor, for at least a period of three years. The task of such an advisor could be as follows:

- Training of local counterparts in techniques and approaches to the overall management of a UXO risk education programme;
- Technical support for the elaboration of a national strategic plan for UXO risk education in Lao PDR, including communication and community liaison activities.
- Training of local counterparts in project monitoring and evaluation, including data gathering and analysis;
- Technical support for the drafting and adoption of national standards for risk education, including community liaison activities.

UNICEF should also continue its efforts to mobilise resources for UXO risk education in Lao PDR; these would obviously be greatly facilitated by Lao PDR's early accession to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and Protocol V on explosive remnants of war annexed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.²⁵

Learning from evaluations

It is recommended that UNICEF widely share the results of this evaluation and disseminate the final evaluation report.

²⁵ Lao PDR is a party to the Convention as a whole but not to Protocol V.

Introduction

Lao PDR is afflicted by huge contamination from, mainly, unexploded ordnance (UXO), resulting from the US bombing of Lao in 1964–1973. Although some awareness activities were conducted previously, it was not before the mid-1990s that a full-scale awareness programme began to be implemented in Lao PDR. UNICEF was heavily engaged in providing technical and financial support to the newly created national implementation and coordination body, UXO Lao.

In 2002, however, UNICEF decided to change track and it concentrated its support on implementation on two projects: the introduction of UXO risk education as an extra-curricular activity within the primary school system, a project implemented by Consortium with the Ministry of Education; and “Sport in a Box”, a project implemented by the Lao Youth Union.

In March 2005, as the two projects were drawing to a close, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) was invited to submit a proposal to conduct an evaluation of UNICEF’s support to UXO risk education programme in Lao PDR. The GICHD was subsequently selected and contracted to carry out the evaluation. The proposal by GICHD is included in Annex 8 to the present report.

Terms of reference

The primary goal of the evaluation is to provide an independent and impartial assessment of UNICEF’s support to UXO risk education in Lao PDR, especially its effectiveness in responding to the needs of affected communities. Using a standard results-based approach to evaluation adapted for mine action, the evaluation has sought to assess the rationale, impacts, effectiveness, outputs, efficiency and safety of the projects implemented.

In accordance with the International Mine Action Standards applicable to risk education, the evaluation has looked at the following issues: stakeholder involvement; coordination; integration with other mine action, humanitarian and development activities; community participation and empowerment; information management and exchange; appropriate targeting; communication and education methodologies and tools; and training needs.

The evaluation presents recommendations to UNICEF for its future support to programme design, funding, implementation and coordination.

Report layout

Section 1 of this report reviews the context for UXO risk education in Lao PDR, including key milestones in the programme and programme coordination mechanisms. Section 2 assesses the UXO awareness supplementary curriculum project. Section 3 assesses the Sport in a box project. Section 4 sets out the main conclusions, findings and recommendations of the evaluation, as described in the Executive Summary above.

AN EVALUATION OF UNICEF-SUPPORTED UXO RISK EDUCATION PROJECTS IN LAO PDR
GENEVA, OCTOBER 2005



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1. The UXO risk education programme in Lao PDR

1.1 An overview of the UXO action programme in Lao PDR

Existing UXO action programme structure and capacity

It is generally accepted within mine/UXO action, and constitutes a guiding principle of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) issued by the United Nations, that “the primary responsibility for mine action lies with the government of the mine-affected State”,²⁶ in this case the government of Lao PDR. Further, the IMAS recommends that, at national level, overall mine/UXO action strategy be set by an inter-ministerial body, often known as a national mine action authority. Operational coordination of activities is assured by a national mine action centre working under the authority’s auspices.

In Lao PDR, the key national institutions are the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) – a national authority responsible for regulating the UXO sector – and UXO Lao, a national body responsible for implementing clearance and awareness, and formerly also an operational coordination body.

The formal mandate for the NRA was provided by Prime Ministerial Decree on 17 March 2004,²⁷ but more than a year later the Authority remains under development. To date, although facilities have been secured to house the Authority, no national director has been selected and appointed, and many of the national technical staff that will support the UXO action programme in the country have not been chosen. UNDP has had a Chief Technical Advisor in place since February 2005.

The current situation has been criticised by key donors to the UXO programme. This led to a *demarche* by a number of donors to the government of Lao PDR in June 2005, calling for the effective establishment of the NRA and a separation of reporting responsibilities of the NRA and UXO Lao. This is urgently needed. A funding crisis for UXO Lao in 2002 looked likely to be repeated in the middle of 2005, as the evaluation team was beginning its work in Vientiane. It seems that a crisis has been averted and that UXO Lao will survive the current calendar year, but future programme sustainability demands that adequate funding be secured.

In terms of the coordination of risk education, the absence of a functioning NRA has created difficulties. The evaluation team believes that UNICEF could have done more to support effective programme coordination, given its role as the UN focal point for risk education. Thus, as far as the aspect of the evaluation – coordination with other stakeholders – more concerted efforts could have been made. Sharing of information in any context is invaluable in building knowledge and skills and ensuring complementarity of efforts.

²⁶ IMAS 01.10, Second Edition, 1 January 2003, p. 3.

²⁷ See Regulations by Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman of the National Regulatory Authority, on the Statute, Roles and Responsibilities of the National Regulatory Authority for the UXO Sector in Lao PDR, 25 August 2004.

Existing UXO action capacity

The following humanitarian agencies and bodies²⁸ are currently engaged in technical support to, or implementation of, UXO clearance activities in Lao PDR:

- UXO Lao,
- Gerbera,
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG),
- Handicap International Belgium (HIB),
- Norwegian People's Aid,
- the Belgian military, and
- the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

In addition, the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) was planning to initiate clearance operations, once approval from the Lao Government had been secured.

Organisations currently engaged in UXO risk education are fewer. To date, a key player has been UXO Lao, which has established a series of five-person community awareness teams. Apart from the UNICEF-support projects, HIB and MAG are both planning to become more involved; both have considerable experience in this sector, especially in community liaison and other community enabling methodologies.

In this regard, it appears that community liaison has so far not constituted a significant component of the UXO action programme in Lao PDR. According to the IMAS, community liaison is “a strategic principle of mine [UXO] action”. It affords the possibility to engage affected communities more actively in risk management, while helping to identify and facilitate necessary UXO action and relief and development interventions. This may be an important element to consider in planning future interventions in the risk education sector.

Adherence to relevant international law

Lao PDR is not a party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, although it has been more positive in recent months on the likelihood of its future accession. Lao is also not yet a party to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, adopted in Geneva in November 2003 within the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

1.2 The importance of targeting in UXO risk education

Effective targeting of interventions is critical to effective UXO risk education. Such targeting is dependent on understanding and monitoring the interaction between people and UXO contamination in and around their communities. The level of risk faced by individuals or groups is a variable of:

- the level of knowledge of that individual or group about the hazard;
- their ability and determination to conduct their livelihoods in safety notwithstanding the existence of that hazard; and

²⁸ A number of commercial companies have also operated successfully in Lao PDR.

- the variety of individual and social pressures that will influence their behaviour.

The extent of the hazard is, of course, a factor, but it is the social and economic interaction with the hazard not the quantity that is the crucial factor in determining risk.

There are a number of different reasons for risk-taking at community level. People tend to be put into one of four categories:

The Unaware (the person doesn't know about the existence of mines or UXO and the danger they pose);

The Uninformed (the person knows about mines but doesn't know about safe behaviour);

The Reckless (the victim knows about safe behaviour but deliberately ignores it); and

The Forced (the victim has little or no option but to intentionally adopt unsafe behaviour in order to survive physically or economically).

Unintentional risk-taking (the unaware and the uninformed) can often be the result of pure curiosity or lack of knowledge about the actual threat. This tends to happen to children and individuals on the move such as refugees and the internally displaced. Overall knowledge and perception of risk are important issues to assess early on.²⁹ Changes in the overall scope and awareness as well as the perception of risk can be a strong indicator of success or progress.

Intentional risk-taking (the reckless and the "forced") is more nuanced and therefore much more difficult for a risk education project or programme to attempt to modify or change. Information on belief in fate, feelings of invincibility, adventure seeking and economic necessity are all required.

It is important not to ignore the issue of intentional risk-taking, but at the same time to remember that a series of negative "do not" messages are inadequate. As UNICEF and its partners have recognised, in such circumstances, messages need to be realistic and achievable, otherwise they lose credibility and be ignored. Additionally, organisations need to ensure that messages are practical and "doable" and provide realistic alternative ways of doing things that reflect resources available to the population.

Of course, any given community may have a mix of different risk-takers and risk-taking categories. Individual perception and understanding of the issue of UXO is therefore an important issue to monitor as the programme or project continues, and this and other socio-economic factors start to bring changes to the community.

1.3 UXO action information management

Data collection and analysis is the backbone of effective targeting. To know who to target with risk education (and also clearance), we need to know who is at risk, where they are at risk, and why. We often make assumptions about who we think is most at risk from mines and

²⁹ According to Consortium, pre-testing is conducted with students every year. Comments by Consortium on the first draft of the evaluation, 22 September 2005.

UXO. We are often wrong. That is why we collect as much data as we can, while making sure that we are still able to implement our overall programme effectively.³⁰

UXO risk education/action programmes collect this information in two main ways:

First, we need to get data on the victims of UXO:

- Who are they? (e.g. men, women or children; shepherds, farmers, or scrap metal collectors.)
- Where are they being killed or injured? (In which communities and in which places?)
- Why were they in a place of danger?
- Did they know that what they were doing was dangerous?
- If they didn't, why not?
- If they did, why did they do it?³¹

Of course, if the victim(s) died, as often occurs in UXO accidents, their family or friends will be the primary source of information.

Second, we need to know who is taking risks with UXO. In many communities, people will be daily living with the threat and may sometimes be taking risks. Sometimes these risks will be because people are not aware of the dangers of mines and UXO, often they will be intentional. We therefore need to know, in each community, who is taking risks, where they taking risks, and why. There are a variety of participatory rural appraisal techniques that can effectively collect this information.

It is generally accepted that data collection in Lao PDR on UXO victims is inadequate. It does not collect data comprehensively or reliably. Handicap International, with the support of UNDP, conducted a feasibility study at the beginning of 2004 and recommended the establishment of a victim surveillance system; discussions on this system are ongoing, but appear to be moving forward. In practice, any system can be UXO-specific or integrated into broader public health surveillance mechanisms. The NRA will likely be the repository for a new database.

1.4 Resource allocations to UXO risk education 2002–2005

Based on the available information, the evaluation team finds that UNICEF has contributed around US\$1 million to the two UXO risk education projects in Lao PDR in the three-year period from mid-2002 to mid-2005. The majority of these funds have been received from the AusAID/Australian Committee for UNICEF, the UK Committee for UNICEF, co-funded by the Parthenon Trust and DFID.

³⁰ According to Consortium, "Consortium is able to get a lot of data from patient records of the WVMF, which is shared with UXO Lao. This has helped us to understand numerical trends as well as types of accidents." Comments by Consortium on the first draft of the evaluation, 22 September 2005.

³¹ UXO Lao data contains some of this information, albeit to a limited extent.

2. Findings from field visits

This section sets out the findings from the field visits conducted in two provinces in Lao PDR: Luang Prabang and Savannakhet. The choice of provinces was the result of consultation with project stakeholders, particularly Consortium, and the specific districts, schools and villages visited were selected by the stakeholders. An itinerary was prepared by UNICEF, which also provided logistical support for the visits.

Luang Prabang province

The UXO supplementary curriculum project was observed in two schools in Nambak district in the province. As the school year had officially ended, the sessions were “mock”, as explained above.

Namthuaom school (Nambak District)

In Namthuaom school in Nambak District, the evaluation team attended a mock session in which a teacher gave a lesson in UXO awareness to 20 schoolchildren of 11 and 12 years of age. The teacher was experienced, having spent 23 years in teaching, although he had only been at Namthuaom school for one year. There were 18 teachers for 1,001 students at the school; all had been given instruction on how to teach UXO awareness through the project. In addition to receiving three periods of instruction on appropriate pedagogy and UXO awareness from Consortium staff (including a one-week basic training and a one-week training in puppetry), teachers at the school had also been getting assistance in teaching methodology from Save the Children at the same time.³²

The teacher wrote up questions on the blackboard. This included a complicated calculation about the medical costs of UXO that appeared to confuse everyone, including, at times, the teacher himself. Overall, the approach was largely “chalk and talk”, although there were some efforts to initiate a discussion about the effects of UXO and how UXO is detonated. The teacher then handed out the Consortium student books to the pupils; there were three books for 20 children. The children were given the books in groups of six or seven to read out aloud to each other for about ten minutes, and then questions were given to each group for which they had to find the answer in the book. Answers were to be given by children using and through glove puppets.

In a focus group discussion after the lesson had been completed, the children stated that they were aware of safe behaviour around UXO, and gave examples of such behaviour. Several claimed to have discussed the issue with brothers and sisters after classes. Two of the children had seen UXO in their villages (the devices had been destroyed by UXO Lao) and eight had seen UXO on the surface at some time during their lives. However, only one child had ever met a UXO victim, an adult.

After the children had been thanked for their time and had departed, the teacher was interviewed by the evaluation team. He informed the team that he provided the lessons twice-

³² An obvious coordination issue, specifically raised as such by the provincial education department in discussions with the evaluation team.

weekly for a total of two hours. He noted that class sizes were sometimes 30 to 40 and of mixed ages as there were not enough teachers at the school.

Subsequently, a focus group discussion was held with the provincial education coordination team, the school director, several teachers, a representative of Consortium, and the central coordinator from Vientiane. The group noted that a considerable amount of UXO had been cleared over the last five years by UXO Lao.

The group claimed that the Consortium and Ministry of Education supported project, as well as the training in pedagogy from Save the Children Norway and UK, had resulted in a sea change in teaching methodology. This revolved around more group work and a concentration on developing the skills knowledge of the children, developing their ability to think through greater involvement.

The group claimed that there had been two victims in the area two years previously: a 40-year-old blacksmith and his son-in-law. There had also been an explosion of UXO when rubbish was being burnt in a yard in 2004, but thankfully no one had been injured.

The teachers claimed to have confidence in the UXO awareness they were giving but wanted more training, especially in technical information so that they could respond to requests from students on how to defuse UXO! They also sought additional stationery and teaching materials, particularly for puppet shows. Members of the group also declared that it would be important in the future to extend the project to more remote and difficult-to-access locations where the need was greater.

Huawna school (Nambak District)

In Huawna school in Nambak District, the evaluation team attended a mock session observed by the provincial education coordination team in which a male teacher gave a lesson in UXO awareness to 17 schoolchildren (eight boys and nine girls, seated separately by sex) of nine to 13 years of age. The teacher referred to the teacher's manual extensively during the lesson.

The main activity involved attaching questions on rolled-up scrolls to the blackboard, which the students then had to go up, take, unravel and answer. The exercise involved extensive preparation and took far too long. The teacher did, however, make valiant efforts to engage the pupils in discussions about UXO. In focus group discussions following the lesson, the children stated that none had actually seen any UXO or a UXO victim. They were, however, aware that UXO came in many sizes, shapes and colours.

In a subsequent discussion with two teachers from the school who had been trained by the project, they stated that they had received a one-week training in September 2004 and a further four-day training in January 2005. They both claimed to appreciate the teacher's manual but hoped for more instruction from the project, specifically wishing to be trained in puppetry. One teacher had received a six-week training from UNICEF and Save the Children Norway, described as a standard "upgrading" of teaching skills.

Savannakhet province

Phalanxay school (Phalanxay District)

Phalanxay school is beside a main road in Phalanxay District. The evaluation team observed a UXO awareness lesson given by a female teacher for nine children aged between 11 and 13. The teacher referred to the teacher's manual extensively and did not seem either confident without it, or familiar with its contents. This was despite considerable training having been provided by the project, although no other assistance in teaching pedagogy had been received.

The lesson began with the "cricket song", which the children knew well and clearly enjoyed singing; after this, however, the lesson was barely participatory. It continued with a laborious, individual question-and-answer session in which no discussion was envisaged. Only the teacher had any of the books printed by Consortium (said to be equal to one shared between five pupils) but none was handed out during the lesson.

In a focus group discussion with the children following the lesson, the children noted that there had been three victims (a six-, nine- and 15-year-old) in a UXO explosion in the area 12 months previously. Two boys had been killed and one other injured; the accident had been caused by the boys throwing UXO. However, none had themselves seen any UXO.

In a focus group discussion with teachers from the school, it was claimed that the accident took place outside the project area. The project was said to be implemented in five of the 20 schools in the district. The teachers noted that there was considerable scrap metal collection in the area but they claimed that there were no accidents as people "knew how to find UXO safely" using Vietnamese metal detectors.

Nonyang school (Phin district)

Nonyang school in Phin district had been newly renovated using solid wood. A female teacher revised a previously conducted UXO awareness lesson for 22 children aged between 8 and 13 years. The first exercise involved dividing the class into two groups and then asking one male member of each group to take off his shirt and put it back on using one arm only (as if a UXO survivor). Following the exercise, the teacher skilfully initiated a discussion on what it is like to be disabled. Indeed, the teacher demonstrated excellent pedagogical skills throughout a dynamic lesson that involved and motivated all the schoolchildren.

In subsequent focus group discussions with teachers from the school it transpired that in 2004, an item of UXO had been found in the district and had been reported to UXO Lao, which came and cleared it. There was, though, believed to be no remaining UXO in the school catchment area, according to both the teachers and the students. As a result, the lessons were conducted once a month rather than once a week, as per the Consortium teacher's manual.

Somthavone village (Phin district)

In this village in Phin district, 20 children aged eight to 13 participated under the auspices of village volunteers in some of the activities of the "Sport-in-a-Box" project. The visit was taking place during the rice production season and it was noted that children were used on

farms by their families so participation was lower. The activities began with the cricket song. Some of the sporting activities were curtailed because of the weather.

In a focus group discussion with the volunteers, they noted that all of the children were attending school regularly and that there had been no UXO accidents in the area in the past three or four years. They did remark, though, that children in the area were collecting scrap metal using a metal detector, as 1kg of scrap metal was worth 1,500 kip.

Vangkod village (Sepone district)

In this village in Sepone district, the activities of the “Sport-in-a-Box” project were carried out for the evaluation team by some 40 children aged three to 11 years. The activities began with the cricket song (*see report cover photo*), with the children wearing what appeared to be brand new costumes. The children were then broken into groups with each one carrying out a different activity. The only group that seemed really engrossed was the one continuing to sing songs about UXO. One of the groups, for example, involved a turgid question-and-answer session (example question: what do you do if you see UXO; answer: I inform UXO Lao), that bored not only the students but also the volunteers and quickly came to a halt.

Project activities were reported to be carried out once a week for around three hours. Five volunteers were said to be normally present to facilitate the activities. The volunteers stated that there had been no victims in the area during the past five years and little UXO was found close to the village, although there were said to be many items close to a mountain some 10 kilometres away. They noted that they did not understand the per diem system for trainers and that the amounts paid had varied over time.

3. UNICEF support to the UXO awareness supplementary curriculum project

In 2002–2005, UNICEF supported a project implemented by Consortium and the Ministry of Education in Lao PDR that sought to:

1. Reduce the risk of UXO accidents amongst children and families in UXO-affected areas of Lao PDR, particularly in the most heavily contaminated provinces and districts; and
2. Improve the capacity of teachers, education officials and local communities to implement UXO awareness activities.

Given the context in Lao PDR, these two objectives appear to be generally acceptable in terms of relevance. One might question whether children attending school are less likely to be victims of UXO than children outside school, and therefore not a high-risk group, but it is also fair to note that children outside the schools were a target for the ‘Sport in a Box’ project discussed in Section 3.³³

However, insofar as the UXO awareness supplementary curriculum project is concerned, the evaluation team concludes that greater progress has been made in meeting the second of these two objectives than the first. Consortium has noted that anecdotal evidence supports the claims that the project has reduced casualty levels. This position is hard to back up given the fact that casualty levels generally appear to be increasing. If, as has also been suggested a number of times to the evaluation team, they are increasing “only outside the project areas”, the concern is then about the effective targeting of the project.

For example, when questioned by the evaluation team, the overwhelming majority of the children in the areas visited were not affected by UXO in any way, and there had been no victims in the majority of the areas for three years or more. Clearance had been carried out by UXO Lao in a number of communities several years prior to the visit. Moreover, in this regard and based on the available evidence, it may be that the project has, to a surprising degree, concentrated on communities close to main roads that are at minimal danger from UXO. This position is supported by repeated requests from programme stakeholders to the evaluation team that, in the future, the project be extended to “more remote” areas.

The main project outputs were intended to be the following:

- UXO primary school curriculum³⁴ revised with specific components focused on child-centred activities;
- Training of teachers in the revised primary school curriculum³⁵ and child-centred activities in six provinces (15 districts);

³³ One might also wonder whether the education system, currently facing huge challenges (recruitment, payment of teacher’s salaries, school equipment and materials, etc.), could effectively sustain a new project. In response, it could be argued that the project is building the capacity of teachers to teach (i.e. objective 2) and therefore a positive contribution to children’s schooling.

³⁴ This is as written. Thus, the project objectives do not include the word “supplementary” before curriculum.

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- Lower secondary UXO school curriculum³⁶ pilot produced with specific components focused on child-centred activities; and
- Training of teachers in new secondary curriculum³⁷ and child-centred activities in two provinces.

The decision was taken by UNICEF, Consortium and the Ministry of Education not to pursue the objective of training teachers in secondary schools.³⁸ In addition, the quality of teaching – inevitably – varies, as was evidenced by the field work conducted for this evaluation. Pedagogy in the lessons taught varied from excellent in the school visited in Phin district in Savannakhet province to distinctly non-participatory in another school in the same district. Similarly, familiarity with the teaching manuals varied widely, but there was general praise for the way the manual was constructed and its consequent ease of use.

It was difficult to assess the added value of the project in the schools visited in Luang Prabang, as the teachers had received other instruction and training in participatory methodologies from other organisations outside the project, and were clearly applying them. (This also raised issues of coordination with other stakeholders, a point raised by the provincial education department, as both organisations were apparently building pedagogical skills at the same time in the same school.)

In terms of messages, the project has understood that, over the long-term, negative messages (i.e. don't do this, don't do that) are not conducive to sustained behavioural change. But behaviour change is a complex phenomenon, not the product of a pure increase in the level of knowledge or awareness. The solutions proposed in some of the materials do not appear to be very sophisticated or necessarily realistic given the socio-economic realities in Lao PDR.

In terms of sustainability, support for the UXO awareness supplementary curriculum project has been ongoing for five years now, but the initiative has not yet been handed over to the Ministry of Education. Most stakeholders believe that at least some of the benefits from the project would remain even were it to close for good tomorrow. Based on the field visits, the evaluation team would concur with this assessment. In terms of mainstreaming the project into other subjects on the curriculum, limited headway was made.

The evaluation team, however, noted evidence of some effort to broaden the scope of the project to include other issues, such as an understanding of the needs of the disabled, but these efforts are welcome nonetheless.

³⁵ This is as written. Thus, the project objectives do not include the word “supplementary” before curriculum.

³⁶ This is as written. Thus, the project objectives do not include the word “supplementary” before curriculum.

³⁷ This is as written. Thus, the project objectives do not include the word “supplementary” before curriculum.

³⁸ According to Consortium: “It was decided with the Ministry of Education not to enter lower secondary schools as the NRIES was still determining what a national risk behaviour curriculum would include. The curriculum was being developed by NRIES with the assistance of GTZ and consultants. That was agreed with UNICEF at the end of school year 2003–2004.”

4. UNICEF support to the ‘Sport in a Box’ project

In 2002–2005, UNICEF supported a project implemented by the Lao Youth Union in Lao PDR that sought to:

- Reduce the risk of UXO accidents amongst children and families in UXO-affected areas of Lao PDR, particularly in the most heavily contaminated provinces and districts; and
- Improve the capacity of the Lao Youth Union and local communities to implement UXO awareness activities.

The main project outputs were intended to be the following:

- Supplementary program of child-developed material and activities developed and produced for in-school and out-of-school youth; and
- Community based safe play areas and activities established in six provinces.

The idea for the project reportedly came from Lao Youth Union staff. It is centred on a process of training “volunteers” in villages to facilitate games, songs, and other activities for school- and out-of-school children that incorporate safety messages about UXO. These activities are normally conducted at weekends, typically over a period of three hours. Based on the observations of the evaluation team, the children enjoy singing and dressing up, but are less enthusiastic about the quizzes and other activities. The link to UXO casualty reduction is tenuous at best, and, as UNICEF points out, cannot be measured without data (but no relevant data was apparently collected as part of the project to enable such a measurement).

Thus, many of the comments made with respect to the UXO awareness supplementary curriculum project are equally applicable to the ‘Sport in a Box’ project. The intention to capture ‘out of school’ children is a valid one, as it might instinctively be expected that these children would be more vulnerable than those attending school.³⁹

The evaluation team again questions how far the project has reduced the dangers to children at risk. For example, when questioned by the evaluation team, most of the children in the areas visited were not directly affected by UXO, and there had been no victims in the majority of the areas for three years or more. Clearance had been carried out by UXO Lao in a number of communities several years prior to the visit. Moreover, in this regard and based on the available evidence, it may well be that the project has, to a surprising degree, concentrated on easy-to-access, rather than high-risk, communities. This position is supported by repeated requests from programme stakeholders to the evaluation team that, in the future, the project be extended to “more remote” areas.

In terms of sustainability, support for the project has been ongoing for five years now (i.e. it began before the current project framework), but the initiative seems to remain largely

³⁹ Though data does not appear to be available to sustain this assumption and none was apparently collected prior to the decision to initiate the projects.

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dependant on donor funding. The material (cymbals, clothing, skipping ropes, football, etc.) that has been provided to the villages would clearly continue to be used.

5. Main conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

Conclusion 1. The two projects supported by UNICEF – UXO risk education in primary schools and Sport in a Box – appear largely to have been implemented in accordance with their plans.

Conclusion 2. There is insufficient evidence to conclude that the two projects have been successful in significantly reducing casualties from UXO, due to limited data currently available in Lao PDR.⁴⁰

Conclusion 3. The relevance of the UNICEF-supported strategy towards UXO risk education in Lao PDR could be improved, in particular by concentrating on national capacity development for risk education programme coordination and management.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. UNICEF should advocate for and work with the NRA and other actors for initiation of a multi-province UXO risk education needs assessment as soon as possible.

Recommendation 2. Based on the results of the UXO risk education needs assessment, a strategic planning process for the overall programme should be engaged with all relevant stakeholders.

Recommendation 3. UNICEF should strengthen its support for ongoing efforts to establish a national victim surveillance system, making sure that it fully covers risk education needs, including by incorporating data gathering on risk-taking.

Recommendation 4. UNICEF should continue actively to support the effective establishment of the National Regulatory Authority. As soon as the NRA is effectively functioning, UNICEF should respond positively to a request to provide technical assistance and training to help the NRA develop its capacities to coordinate UXO risk education in Lao PDR.

⁴⁰ Though, as Consortium rightly notes, “Accidents prevented are not only those seen or reported but those unseen and not countable such as those prevented by using a spade, by building up a fire mound, by cutting above the ground and so on.” Comments by Consortium on the first draft of the evaluation, 22 September 2005.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
MAC	mine action centre
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UXO	unexploded ordnance

Annexes

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Annex 1. Results-Based Management Framework for the GICHD evaluation of UNICEF-supported UXO risk education projects in Lao PDR

Focus	Major Questions	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Data	Data Collection Methods
Relevance	How many people in Lao PDR are at risk from UXO? Where? How are they affected? What does UXO risk education provide to those at risk? How is risk education integrated into UXO action? How is risk education integrated into development?	Reports of contamination Assessments of impact of contamination Numbers of killed and injured each year. Impact on risk-taking behaviour Response to community requests for assistance/prioritisation. Response to community requests for assistance.	Existing surveys Interviews with: • UXO Lao • UNDP • UNICEF • NRA • Consortium • Ministry of Education • Lao Youth Union Victim data collection (including IMSMA) Survey data	Document review Interviews Analysis of records in databases
Impacts	What are the planned impacts? Are the planned impacts achieved (or likely to be)? How many people have benefited and in what way? Unintended impacts (positive or negative)?	Goals stated for programme. Assessments of people affected by contamination. Numbers and types of beneficiaries Reports of unintended impacts.	Project agreements Annual work plans Strategic plan Village visits and interviews with: • Provincial authorities • District authorities	Document review Interviews Field visits
Effectiveness	Were the at-risk people targeted as a priority? How were priorities defined?	Choice of data being collected Monitoring system Criteria for prioritisation Data analysis capacity	Monitoring reports IMSMA Interviews with: • Affected villages • teachers • volunteers • UNICEF KAP survey	Document review Interviews Field visits

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Outputs	<p>What percentage of at-risk population has been reached? What managerial/coordination/implementation capacity has been created?</p> <p>Have materials been appropriate to the needs?</p>	<p>Assessment of at-risk population</p> <p>Identification of capacity development needs. Details of assistance provided.</p> <p>Existence of emergency plan and capacity.</p> <p>Existence of communication strategy</p>	<p>Monitoring system data Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UXO Lao • UNDP • UNICEF • NRA • Consortium • Ministry of Education • Lao Youth Union <p>Assessments of capacity development needs</p>	<p>Progress reports, interviews, field visits.</p>
Efficiency	<p>How is the programme managed? How are priorities set? (Process) How is the UXO risk education programme coordinated? Are the project structures logical? Have resources been used efficiently?</p>	<p>Existence of priority setting criteria</p> <p>Existence of formal coordination mechanism</p> <p>Allocation of resources to MRE</p>	<p>Policy documents National legislation/ decree Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP • UNICEF • NRA 	<p>Interviews, assessment of management systems and procedures.</p> <p>Assessment of financial expenditure</p>

Annex 2. List of key interviewees

AusAID

- Jane Davies, Program Officer, Development Cooperation Section

Consortium

- Martin Dunn, Project Director - LEAPSS
- Arthur Crisfield, Education Coordinator
- Barbara Lewis, Team Leader, Medical Coordinator

Handicap International

- Luc Delneuve, Country Director, Vientiane

Lao Youth Union

- Mr May Lattanabounheuang, Director, Lao Youth Union
- Ms Kaysone Lakenchanh, Project Director, Lao Youth Union
- Mr. Thongsuoy Khantivong, Savannakhet Youth Union

Ministry of Education

- Mr. Khamhoung Sacklokham, General Education Department, Vientiane
- Mr Onchan Souvannalith, Head of Education Department, Luang Prabang
- Mr Phengma Inthilath, Head of Education Department, Savannakhet

National Regulatory Authority

- Joseph Wenkoff, Chief Technical Advisor to the NRA, UNDP

United Nations Children's Fund

- Olivia Yambi, UNICEF Representative, Vientiane
- Amy Delneuve, Assistant Project Officer, Child Protection Section, Vientiane
- Ounheuang Keoamphone, Assistant Project Officer, Child Protection Section, Vientiane
- Amanda Bissex, Section Head, currently based in Bangkok, Thailand

United Nations Development Fund

- Finn Reske-Nielsen, UN Resident Coordinator
- Justin Shone, Trust Fund Manager

UXO Lao

- Bounpheng Sisavath, Chief of Public Information Unit
- Eric Gagnon, Chief Technical Advisor
- Olivier Bauduin, Finance Advisor to UXO Lao, Norwegian People's Aid
- Wanthong Khamdala, Deputy National Programme Director

Annex 3. List of villages visited as part of the evaluation

Luang Prabang province

- Huawna school (Nambak District)
- Namthuaom school (Nambak District)

Savannakhet province

- Phalanxay school (Phalanxay District)
- Nonyang school (Phin district)
- Somthavone village (Phin district)
- Vangkod village (Sepone district)

Annex 4. Focus Group Discussion Guides

Focus Group Discussion Guide for Children

No more than one hour!

STANDARD INTRODUCTION

GENERAL MEDIA HABITS

At the start we will talk about how you get information about various issues in Lao PDR.

Sources of information and news about issues and events in Lao PDR

1. Which problems and issues facing the children of your country are most talked about on the radio, television, newspapers, at home, at school? (unprompted) (prompted) Learning? Health and hygiene? Playing? Unexploded bombs? Other things?
2. In what ways do you learn about what is happening in your country?

MODERATOR: If not mentioned by participants, ask:

- 2a. How much do you learn/hear about in school?
- 2b. What about at home?
- 2c. What about from your friends and other children (peers)?
- 2d. And posters/billboards?
- 2e. Brochures, leaflets/flyers, comic strips, badges etc?

3. Of all of the things that you have mentioned, can you state which is the MOST important or MAIN source of information for you personally about issues and events in your country?

UNEXPLODED BOMBS

Now we will talk in more detail about an issue that was mentioned only briefly already – the dangers of unexploded bombs – UXO.

Messages about UXO

4. What do you know about the dangers posed by mines and unexploded bombs?
5. What have you heard or seen?
6. Where have you heard or seen ...?

MODERATOR: If participants do not mention, ask:

- 6a. Do you recall seeing or hearing anything on radio, TV, in the newspapers, posters, leaflets about the dangers of mines and unexploded bombs?
- 6b. Can you describe for me what you have seen or heard....?

General awareness

Now I would like us to talk about what you have seen or heard about UXO.

7. Are there any UXO in your area?
8. Has anyone been hurt?

Now we will talk about where and how you learned about the dangers of UXO.

9. What did you learn about UXO in school? How?
10. Where have you learnt most about UXO? In school, from your parents, friends/peers, television, brochures, comic strips, somewhere else?

Focus Group Discussion Guide for Teachers

Allow up to two hours for the focus group discussion.

STANDARD INTRODUCTION

GENERAL MEDIA HABITS

At the start we will talk about how you get information about various issues in Lao PDR.

Sources of information and news about issues and events in Lao PDR

1. What are the most important sources of information and news about issues in Lao PDR?

MODERATOR: When radio, television and newspapers are mentioned, it is essential to ask the questions:

- 1a. Which radio stations?
- 1b. Which TV stations?
- 1c. Which newspapers/magazines?

MODERATOR: If not mentioned by participants, ask:

2. Which channel of information do you think is the most effective for informing the adult population of Lao PDR? Why?
3. Which is the least effective? Why?
4. And what is the most effective channel for informing children? Primary school age? Those in secondary school?

Messages

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Now we will talk about what you may think you have had the opportunity to see and hear in the media (that is the channels of information that you mentioned).

5. Can you recall any radio or TV spots, programmes, commercials or advertisements in newspapers about any issues that particularly captured your attention?

6. Other than radio, TV, newspapers, can you recall any specific items: posters, leaflets, brochures, comics, etc...?

Unexploded ordnance

Now we will talk in more detail about an issue that was mentioned only briefly already – the dangers of UXO.

Messages about UXO

7. What did you know about UXO before the project started?

8. What had you heard or seen?

9. Where had you heard or seen it?

MODERATOR: If participants do not mention, ask:

10. Do you recall seeing or hearing anything on radio, TV, in the newspapers, posters, leaflets about the dangers of UXO?

General risk education

And now we will talk about the activities of various organisations and people in relation to the dangers posed by mines and unexploded ordnance.

11. Are you aware of any clearance programmes for UXO in your village?

12. Have you personally contacted UXO Lao and requested clearance?

And finally I would like to ask for your professional pedagogical opinion about the educational value and effects of the risk education and public information campaigns on the population of Lao PDR – children and adults.

13. In the future, what do you think would be the best way to teach risk education to children/youth in Lao PDR?

14. How do you think that the UXO risk education programme in schools in Lao PDR should be improved?

15. What kind of training/re-training do teachers need in Lao PDR in order to continue to teach UXO risk education?

16. How can parents be involved in a UXO risk education programme?

Annex 5. Interviews of key informants (especially at provincial and district level)

NB This is a reminder of questions to ask. You need to formulate and order the questions in a way that you consider appropriate. You do not necessarily have to ask all these questions – decide which are the most appropriate in the situation.

Sources of information

1. Where do most people in the villages in your district/province get their information from?
2. Can most adults in your village read? (*If yes – remember to find out which languages are most common*)
3. Do most people have the chance to watch TV or listen to radio? (*note – do not ask if they own radios or a TV – but whether they can regularly see or hear one – possibly at a friend or family member’s house, for example*)

Try to find out how often people listen and what they like to listen to, also WHICH language they listen in and WHICH stations.

4. Which methods do you think are the best ways of informing children about important information? (*If school is mentioned ask what about those children who do not go to school, do most children attend school or only a few, is there a difference between boys and girls, etc.?*)

Scale of UXO threat

5. What are the biggest threats to people’s well-being in this district/province?
6. Have there been victims from UXO in this district/province over the last three years? How did the accidents occur?
7. Are there UXO on the surface in this district/province?
8. Are people digging for scrap metal in this district/province?
9. Are attempts made to stop it? Are they successful? If not, why not?

UXO knowledge

10. Do adults and children all know what UXO are?
11. How did they learn about UXO?

Impact of the project

12. What difference (if any) has the project made to people’s lives in this district/province?

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13. How could the project have been made more effective?
14. What lessons were learned during the implementation?
15. If the project continues in the future, how should it be developed?

Annex 6. GICHD framework for a needs and capacities assessment for mine risk education

Contents

Introduction

1. The context for UXO risk education
2. The explosive threat to the civilian population
3. The at-risk groups who should benefit from UXO risk education
4. Existing capacities to provide UXO risk education
5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Endnotes

Bibliography

Glossary of acronyms

Appendixes

Introduction

This framework has been developed to assist in the conduct of a needs and capacities assessment for UXO risk education in [insert context].

BACKGROUND

This section should summarise the reasons for conducting a national needs assessment for UXO risk education (e.g. basis for new programme strategy; refocused programmatic interventions).

METHODOLOGY FOR THE NEEDS AND CAPACITIES ASSESSMENT

This section should explain in a few paragraphs how the organisation(s) prepared the needs assessment.

THE CONTENT OF THE NEEDS AND CAPACITIES ASSESSMENT

This section should explain for the benefit of the reader how the assessment is laid out. There are five sections to the needs and capacities assessment:

- The context for UXO risk education
- The explosive threat to the civilian population
- The at-risk groups who should benefit from UXO risk education
- Existing capacities to provide UXO risk education
- Conclusions and recommendations.

Appendixes will contain other relevant documentation.

1. The context for UXO risk education in [insert context]

THE GEOGRAPHY OF [INSERT CONTEXT]

This section should describe the geography of the country, e.g. size, mountainous areas, climate.

THE GEOPOLITICAL LANDSCAPE

This sub-section should describe the regional actors and their influence on the country.

BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

This sub-section should include a short explanation of the reasons for the current situation in the country, including a description of the main actors.

RELIGIONS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

What religious groups exist in [insert context]?

How well do they co-exist?

TRADITIONS AND CULTURE

Are there cultural traditions that affect the conduct of a UXO risk education programme?

Can any be used as helping factors?

LANGUAGES

How many languages are used in [insert context]?

For those groups whose native language is not the national language, how well do they understand it and how much do they use it in their day-to-day life?

LITERACY

To what extent do people read and write?

How does this differ among ethnic group and across social class and between rural and urban populations?

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

What are the main communication channels in the country?

Who uses which channels? At what time of the day?

Are there particular radio or TV programmes that are popular that could be exploited for risk education purposes?

SOCIAL SITUATION

How are household/community tasks divided between men, women, boys and girls?

Who takes decisions in the household?

Who looks after boys? Girls?

ECONOMIC SITUATION

How do people earn their living (broken down by social class and ethnic group and rural/urban population)?

Do people need to collect UXO (to sell as scrap metal or for any other reason)?

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

What infrastructure is usable (broken down by region)?

What transport facilities exist? How much do they cost? How reliable are they?

MEDICAL SERVICES AND HEALTH SYSTEM

What is the state of the health system? How well are health centres able to cope with UXO injuries (broken down sub-regionally)?

LAWS AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

Has [insert country] joined the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention?

Has [insert country] made any moves to adhere to Protocol V on explosive remnants of war annexed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

Do any laws prohibit civilians touching UXO?

What are they supposed to do if they find UXO?

DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

Which development organisations are operating in [insert context]?

What sectoral areas are their priorities?

Where, geographically, are they operating?

2. The explosive threat to the civilian population

Where is the UXO threat known or suspected?

Which areas are not affected? Do they contain displaced people who will likely return to affected areas?

Does the threat vary from region to region or is it broadly the same throughout the country?

What is the level of access (security and logistics and infrastructure) to the affected areas?
[This should be broken down by sub-region.]

IMPACT OF THE THREAT

How, in summary, does this affect the civilian population (human, social, economic, environmental impact)?

Who, in summary, is most affected (this issue will be addressed further in section 3)?

Are there any risks to the civilian population reporting UXO they find?

3. The at-risk groups who should benefit from UXO risk education

GENERAL TARGET AUDIENCE

This section should first summarise who is at risk from UXO (based on victim data and village profiles), what their risk-taking behaviour is and why. Do explosions typically lead to multiple or individual casualties?

It should include the place and type of casualties, what happened to them, did they receive adequate treatment, how long did it take, what are they doing now, etc.

SPECIFIC TARGET AUDIENCES

The section should then be broken down by affected group (specific target audiences). In each case, it should detail the typical risk-taking behaviour.

It should include the place and type of casualties, what happened to them, did they receive adequate treatment, how long did it take, what are they doing know, etc. Did explosions lead to multiple or individual casualties?

4. Existing capacities to provide UXO risk education

EXISTING UXO ACTION STRUCTURE AND CAPACITY

What is the UXO action structure for [insert context]?

Who is implementing UXO action in [insert context]?

EXISTING RISK EDUCATION ACTORS

Who is providing risk education to those at risk from UXO?

Who else could do so? (e.g. organisations involved in HIV/AIDS awareness)

EXISTING PUBLIC HEALTH ACTORS

Who is providing assistance to UXO victims?

Who else could do so?

What are the main gaps?

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

Who is providing development assistance to UXO-affected communities?

Could their efforts be better harnessed to deal with the impact of UXO contamination? Who else could do so?

LOCAL RESOURCES

What media, education or public health expertise is there in-country?

Could some of the key organisations or bodies be involved in MRE?

What capacities to provide MRE already exist in affected communities?

FUNDING

What annual level of funding is available to UXO action?

Which donors could be approached to provide more? Could some give in-kind assistance (i.e. through technical assistance)?

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This section should provide the analytical basis for the future strategic plan based on sections 1-4.

Annex 7. Village profile framework

NAME OF VILLAGE:

IMSMA ID NUMBER:

A. DEMOGRAPHICS

- How many people live in the village?
- How many families live in the village?
- How many people are girls or women?
- How many are children?
- Do the people all live in the centre of the village or are they spread out?

B. LIVELIHOODS

What are the main livelihoods in the village?

- Farmers?
 - Both male and female?
 - What ages?
- Shepherds?
 - Both male and female?
 - What ages?
- Traders?
 - Both male and female?
 - What ages?
- Seasonal workers?
 - Both male and female?
 - What ages?
- Scrap metal dealers/foundry workers?
 - Both male and female?
 - What ages?
- Other? *Please specify.*

Do people earn enough money to eat?

Are people well-fed or is there a problem of food security?

Is there a scrap metal yard or foundry

C. EXPLOSIVE THREAT AND AT RISK GROUPS

- Are there areas containing unexploded bombs, bombies or shells (UXO) in or near the village?
 - If so, where are they?
 - Do people go there?
 - Who?
 - Why?
 - How often?
- Have any animals been killed or injured by UXO in the last 12 months in or near the village?

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- If so, where?
- How many?

D. VICTIMS

- Any human victims from UXO in the last 12 months?
- How many?
- What ages?
- Sex?
- Where were they injured?
- Why had they gone there?
- Did they know it was dangerous?
- If they know it was dangerous, why did they go there?
- What happened to them after the explosion?
- Are there people needing medical attention?
 - If so, what medical attention do they need?
- Are there people needing an artificial limb?
 - If so, why do they not have one?

E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Are water points blocked by UXO?
 - If so, where?
 - How are people collecting water?
- Is the school blocked by UXO?
- Is the forest/access to firewood blocked by UXO?
- Are fruit trees or orchards blocked by UXO?
- Is the temple blocked by UXO?
- Is the river blocked by UXO?
- Is the road blocked by UXO?
 - If so, how are people travelling to other villages?

F. CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH THE THREAT

- How is the community managing the risk from UXO?
 - Clearance by villagers themselves of UXO
 - Scrap metal collection
 - Informing people not to touch UXO
 - Marking certain areas as being dangerous
 - Other actions? *Please specify*
- Has rehabilitation or development work taken place in the village?
 - What was done?
 - When?
 - By whom?
- Has demining (survey or clearance) taken place?
 - When?
 - By whom?
- Has risk education been provided in the village?
 - When?
 - By whom?
 - Was it helpful?
 - If not, why not?

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- What institutions are present in the village?
 - Schools
 - Health posts
 - Community associations
 - temples
 - Other? *Please specify*

*Annex 8. GICHD proposal to conduct an evaluation of
UNICEF supported UXO awareness projects in Lao PDR*

**AN EVALUATION OF THE MINE RISK
EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN
LAO PDR**

Project Proposal

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

Geneva, February 2005

INTRODUCTION

For several years, UNICEF has been supporting mine risk education (MRE) in Laos. In particular, it has undertaken capacity building and provided funding and technical assistance

UNICEF Laos is now seeking an evaluation of the MRE programme in Laos. The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), which has specific expertise both in mine action evaluations and in MRE, is proposing to conduct the evaluation on its behalf. Previously, on behalf of UNICEF, the GICHD has conducted training for Laos mine action personnel in mine risk education.

The Role of the GICHD

The overall objective of the Centre is the promotion of international cooperation in mine action. More explicitly, the aims of the Centre are:

- To strengthen the role of the United Nations in mine action;
- To support and enhance the expertise of all bodies and organisations working in mine action; and
- To contribute to the formulation of coherent and comprehensive mine action strategies.

In order to achieve these objectives, the GICHD serves the wider mine action community via the following core activities:

- The preparation of studies, assessments of needs and evaluations of mine action;
- Technical assistance to mine action programmes and capacity building of local personnel engaged directly or indirectly in mine action;
- The development, implementation and maintenance of an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA); and
- Support for the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, including hosting the treaty's Implementation Support Unit.

The GICHD employs experts in the various disciplines of mine action and enjoys strong credibility in this regard. Among others, it has separate sections devoted to the socio-economic aspects of mine action and to mine action evaluation. The Socio-Economic Section is headed by a professional with more than 12 years experience in mine action, supported by an international consultant with more than a decade of mine action experience. The Evaluation Section is headed by a development economist with 20 years experience in evaluations of humanitarian and development programming, including five years' experience in mine action. A separate section is engaged in drafting the International Mine Action Standards on behalf of the United Nations Mine Action Service.

Consequently, the GICHD believes it is ideally positioned to engage in the evaluation of MRE in Laos. In addition, since the GICHD is independently funded and, by virtue of its unique position, does not require any contribution towards its own operating costs, it can thus be considered highly cost-effective.

EVALUATION GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of the evaluation is to provide an independent and impartial assessment of the status of the MRE programme in Laos, especially its effectiveness in responding to the needs of affected communities. Using a standard results-based approach to evaluation adapted for mine action, the evaluation will seek to assess the rationale, impacts, outcomes, outputs, efficiency and safety of the programme.

In accordance with the International Mine Action Standards as well as the current draft of the Laos National Standards for Mine Risk Education, the evaluation will cover issues of stakeholder involvement; coordination; integration with other mine action, humanitarian and development activities; community participation and empowerment; information management and exchange; appropriate targeting; communication and education methodologies and tools; and training needs. The evaluation should also look at allied issues of programme structure, and contingency planning for MRE in the event of a resumption of hostilities.

In addition, as side component, the Evaluation will examine the issue of scrap metal training in Laos and its overall influence on the mine and UXO impact.

The evaluation will present recommendations to UNICEF and other key programme stakeholders for future programme design, funding, implementation and coordination.

INTENDED BENEFICIARIES OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will provide guidance and focus primarily to programme planners and managers, giving them the basis, and support, for more effective planning of MRE activities and coordination structures. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the GICHD hopes to provide an evaluation that adds to the existing body of knowledge in Laos. Further, it is hoped that through the evaluation process, local capacity will be enhanced, thereby leading to improved programming.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the needs assessment should of course be the affected communities themselves who will benefit from the improved delivery of mine risk education services.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The evaluation team will consist of two international consultants hired by the GICHD. If possible, a Local assisting Consultant should be hired by to work side-by-side with the international evaluation team so that capacity is built for future programme and project evaluations and so that a national perspective is maintained. The team will be supported by the respective heads of the Socio-Economic and Evaluation Sections.

The evaluation will be broken into a four phased approach with specific milestones for each phase. As follows;

Phase One: March-April 2005

- Conclusion of agreement between GICHD and UNICEF to conduct programme evaluation on behalf of UNICEF Lao;

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- Initiation of recruitment process for a Local Assisting Consultant;
- Initiation of the research into the scrap metal issue in Laos (TORs and methodology to be developed);
- Literature review and elaboration of results-based evaluation matrix for MRE in Laos. The evaluation will begin with a review of existing literature on the mine and UXO situation in Laos and the mine action programme, including MRE. This will include an initial examination of mine risk education initiatives, both past and present. The literature review will be fed into the results-based evaluation matrix used by the GICHD for its mine action evaluations. This matrix not only identifies the major questions to be answered by the evaluation, it also forms the basis for the development of interview and focus group discussion (FGD) protocols.

Deliverables Phase One:

- Literature review/background documentation.
- Evaluation Matrix.
- Interview questionnaires.
- Focus Group Discussion Guide.

Phase Two: May 2005

- Ongoing research into the issue of trade in scrap metal;
- First mission by international consultant and GICHD Staff to Vientiane. Briefings for the evaluation team. In addition, the first week will seek to hold planning meetings and interviews with key programme stakeholders in the capital and to agree with them on the timing and location of the field visits to be conducted. Finalisation of FGD and interview tools. Training (if necessary) of Local Assisting Consultant;
- Initial interviews and Focus Group Discussions;
- Departure of International Consultant and GICHD Staff;
- A series of field visits and implementation of the FGDs and in-depth interviews will follow. Ongoing survey and data collection by the Local Assisting Consultant. Field trips to exchange views with communities and community representatives in affected regions of Laos, regional governmental authorities, as well as project managers and other project staff.

Deliverables Phase Two:

- Initial draft of scrap metal trade research paper.
- Initial FGD report.
- Initial interview reports.

Phase Three: June 2005

- Conclusion of research paper on the issue of trade in scrap metal. Presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations;
- Second mission by international consultant to Laos. Compilation of collected data, initial analysis and development of preliminary findings and recommendations as agreed on with key programme stakeholders both in the capital and in affected regions;
- Workshop to review initial evaluation conclusions, findings and recommendations. It is proposed that the initial results of the evaluation be presented to a workshop of key programme stakeholders and discussed as a draft to elicit feedback and to build

consensus around an assessment of needs and necessary responses. Recommendations can only be developed in close consultation with local partners and adequate time during the mission should be allotted for this. Following the workshop, the draft evaluation report should be revised, finalised and submitted to UNICEF for its approval.

Deliverables Phase Three:

- Final draft of scrap metal trade research paper.
- Preliminary draft evaluation.
- Workshop to present initial findings and recommendations.

Phase Four: July 2005

- Submission of draft evaluation report;
- Revision and completion of evaluation report following the receipt of comments and feedback.

Deliverables Phase Four:

- Submission of Final evaluation report.

Assessment Team

The GICHD proposes to contribute the following expertise:

- Eric M. Filippino, GICHD Socio-Economic Unit Coordinator and Project Manager and,
- Ted Paterson, GICHD Evaluation Unit Coordinator, and
- Stuart Maslen – internationally-recruited consultant specialist (evaluation component only)
- TBC – internationally-recruited research specialist (scrap metal research component only)
- Local Assisting Consultant (to be recruited on site to assist in the research/survey/evaluation field work)

EVALUATION OUTPUTS

The initial outputs of the evaluation will be a detailed report with programmatic recommendations as well a workshop to review initial findings. The GICHD also proposes to present these initial findings in the form of a planning workshop for programme stakeholders at the conclusion of the mission.

Annex 9. Executive Summary of Study of Scrap Metal Trading in Lao PDR

This study was commissioned by UNICEF – the United Nations Children’s Fund – in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) in response to an increase in 2004 in the number of reported unexploded ordnance (UXO) casualties and an increase in children as a proportion of these casualties. It was suspected that these changes may be linked to an expansion of the scrap metal trade – an expansion attributed in turn to the availability of cheap metal detectors, a growth in the market for scrap metal and improved road transport facilitating trade.

This report sets out a basic analysis of the components of the scrap metal trade, the relationship between the scrap metal trade and UXO accidents, and the different forms of response that currently work to mitigate such accidents. It also examines the humanitarian, economic, administrative and legal context that must necessarily frame any response to this issue. The study identifies certain key areas around which decisions will need to be made in any determination of the way forward.

Key recommendations for the development of a strategy relate to the following areas:

- **Understanding the reality of the problem**

There is insufficient data on the frequency of scrap-related casualties and on the economic value of the scrap metal trade to rural communities.

- **Definitions of ordnance**

There is a need to agree a common definition of what forms of scrap metal/ ordnance are, or should be, subject to controls.

- **Banning detectors**

There are a range of issues associated with the growth of metal detector use among the rural population and different options could balance safety and local economic demands in different ways.

- **Commercial obligations**

Controls over businesses present an opportunity for greater regulation of the scrap metal trade and control over the risks it generates.

- **The structures of ordnance disposal**

The availability and responsiveness of ordnance disposal capacity has a bearing on how people choose to interact with ordnance contamination.

- **Safety messages and community level solutions**

Within the framework of an agreed strategy, more relevant safety messages could be developed for risk education purposes. However, it should be recognised that ‘message based’ approaches are likely to have little impact. Greater emphasis should be placed on supporting communities to manage these risks for themselves.

- **Alternative incomes**

Provision of alternative incomes could reduce reliance on scrap metal collection. However, the scrap metal trade is economically very strong, making it difficult for alternatives to compete.

- **The role of UNICEF**

There is a valuable role for UNICEF in promoting the development of strategic responses to this issue in Lao PDR and in the region.

Although this paper was commissioned by UNICEF, a response to these issues must necessarily involve the coordinated efforts of a number of key institutions. The development of a coherent strategy is probably more important than rushing to undertake some form of response. While a multi-sectoral approach would be most effective, the different programmes being pursued need to be coherent and mutually supportive.