



OUTCOME 2 INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY

By 2026, the UN, in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, aims that people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, will benefit from more inclusive, and resilient, transformative, and sustainable socio-economic opportunities to reduce poverty and inequalities.



SUPPORTING EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY IN THE UXO SECTOR TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SDG 18 AND SAFE PATH FORWARD III (SPF III)

Project ID: 00116549 / 00116548



Project Summary

- Duration: 1st April 2022 - 31st December 2026
- Geographic Coverage: Nationwide
- Focus Area: Achieving SDG18 – Lives safe from UXO and implementation of Safe Path Forward III
- Responsible Partner(s): National Regulatory Authority for UXO/Mine Action Sector (NRA) and Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao)
- Website: www.nra.gov.la, www.uxolao.gov.la

BACKGROUND

During the Second Indochina War (1964- 1973), more than two million tons of explosive ordnance were dropped on Lao PDR, making it,

per capita, the most heavily bombed country in the world. Today, much of the country is still contaminated with cluster sub-munitions and other Unexploded Ordnance (UXO). These kill and injure dozens of people yearly, with 20 casualties in 2022 and 47 in 2023. Their presence also negatively affects socio-economic development, by preventing safe access to agricultural land and increasing the costs, of all development projects due to the necessity of expensive and time-consuming clearance of UXO from the land. In September 2016, Lao PDR launched its own national Sustainable Development Goal, SDG 18: Lives Safe from UXO, in the presence of the Prime Minister of Lao PDR and the UN Secretary General during the ASEAN Summit held in Vientiane.

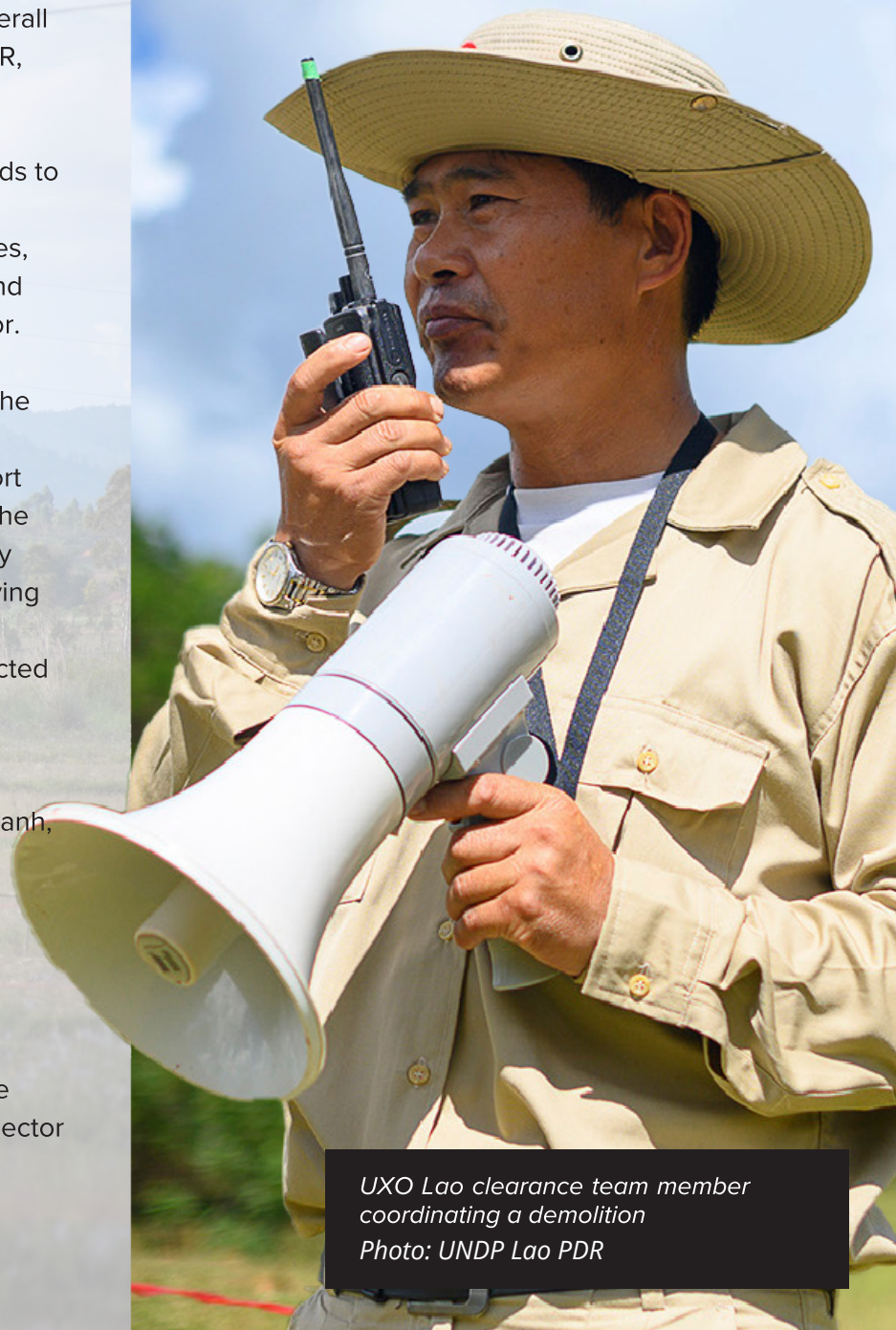


The NRA staff on a field monitoring visit mission at the Unit 58's UXO clearance site with a development partner Photo: UNDP Lao PDR

The National Regulatory Authority for UXO and Mine Action Sector in Lao PDR (NRA) was established in 2005, becoming operational in 2006, by the Government of Lao PDR with the task of coordinating and regulating the overall management of the UXO sector in Lao PDR, including national, commercial and humanitarian operators. The NRA leads the country's policy formulation with regards to the UXO/Mine Action sector, accredits operators, coordinates operational activities, manages information and data on UXO, and manages quality of operations in the sector.

The Government of Lao PDR established the Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao) in 1996, with support from UNDP, UNICEF and other partners. The organisation undertakes surveys to identify UXO contamination; clearance of land; roving tasks to respond to UXO discovery by the public; and risk education activities in affected areas. UXO Lao's national office is located in Vientiane capital and serves provincial offices in the nine most heavily impacted provinces – Attapeu, Champasack, Huaphanh, Khammuane, Luang Prabang, Saravan, Savannakhet, Sekong and Xieng Khuang.

The NRA is supervised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and UXO Lao is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The Minister of MoFA is the Chairperson of the NRA Board and UXO Sector Working Group.



*UXO Lao clearance team member
coordinating a demolition
Photo: UNDP Lao PDR*

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project aims to strengthen development focused land clearance and other UXO activities (Victim Assistance, Explosive Ordnance Risk Reduction/Education and advocacy) in support of achieving SDG 18 and implementing government's Safe Path Forward III 2021-2030 (SPF III), a national ten-year UXO sector strategic plan. The project will focus on the realization of the rights of communities to live and develop their communities free from the threat of injury of UXO. The project will achieve this through support to high priority land release, and support to the NRA to better coordinate, prioritize and monitor UXO and mine activities for a more efficient and effective sector, driving SDG 18, SPF III and compliance with the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM).

*UXO Lao team member uses a metal detector to locate UXOs
Photo: UNDP Lao PDR*



EXPECTED RESULTS

(IMPACTS, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS)

The long-term impact of this project is “By 2026, people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, will benefit from more inclusive, resilient, transformative, and sustainable socio-economic and demographic opportunities to reduce poverty and inequalities”; the key outcomes are twofold:

- 1) More high priority land is released for socio-economic development,
- 2) Community exposure to the UXO threat is reduced and victims’ rights are met;

and the main outputs includes:

- Prioritized survey and clearance enable more land to be released from UXO/mines,
- Reduced risk-taking behaviour by at-risk groups; Improved capacity of the NRA in strategic direction for the sector, supervision (oversight, monitoring, QA), data use and resource-mobilization including discourse on alternative financing modalities,
- A stronger legislative environment supporting CCM compliance and hastening land release and other UXO services for communities.

These expected results support SDG1: No Poverty, SDG 5: Gender Equality, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities, SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals and Lao PDR’s SDG 18: Lives Safe from UXO.

This project has been designed based on the recommendations of the final evaluation of previous UXO project supported by UNDP to the UXO sector in Lao PDR. The project is aligned with the Government of Lao PDR’s 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (9th NSEDP) as well as SPF III. It will contribute to progress towards achieving the national Sustainable Development Goal 18.



PROJECT STRATEGY

- Safe Land Release - Through a combination of technical support and financing key areas for both clearance and the wider sector;
- Behaviour changes amongst at-risk groups - Supporting Explosive Ordnance Risk Reduction (EORR) in the sector will go beyond education materials to support a review of the pillar work in country where the ultimate result needed is behavior change of at-risk groups;
- Realisation of rights of UXO victims, including survivors - UNDP will work with the NRA to strengthen data management of victims to enable duty bearers to support victims of UXO and ensure the NRA provides accessible and reliable data for the provision of services;
- Enabling environment - UNDP will work to support legislation and policy work to strengthen the enabling environment for UXO/Mine action and to support law and policy work to drive impact at a community level;

- Mainstreaming inclusion: (including gender, disability, and ethnic considerations) and the environment into UNDP UXO programming will assist the sector in driving equity, reducing the environmental impact of UXO work and strive to improve productivity in the sector where there remain significant challenges in meeting CCM obligations;

Innovation - Given that national targets

- under the SPF II were not met, UNDP will work to promote innovation across all aspects of the sector with the view to accelerating progress towards SPF III and SDG 18 targets.

Required Funding (2022-2026):

USD 25 million

Resource Contribution :

(as of March 2024)

total USD 19.95 million

- Republic of Korea: USD 10.87 million
- New Zealand: USD 6.28 million
- Ireland: USD 1.05 million
- Luxembourg: USD 1 million
- Canada: USD 0.55 million
- UNDP: USD 0.2 million



*Former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith launch, 'SDG 18: Lives Safe from UXO', Lao PDR's own SDG, at the 2016 ASEAN Summit held in Vientiane
Photo: UN in Lao PDR/Eskinder Debebe*

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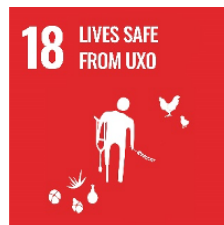
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