

LAO PDR

UXO SECTOR

GENDER

ASSESSMENT



The study: five key research areas

1. Equitable participation in prioritisation process
 - Community involvement in prioritisation of UXO clearance tasks
 - Community understanding of selection criteria for identifying areas to be cleared
 - Community involvement in handover ceremonies
2. Impact of UXO contamination and post clearance impacts
3. MRE messages and approaches
4. Employment in the UXO sector
5. Victim/survivor assistance and burden of care

1 Equitable participation in the prioritisation process of clearance tasks: findings

- Equitable participation is limited **Why?**
- Reflection of perceived gender roles in interacting and relating to 'government' or 'officials' from clearance agencies
- Processes which UXO clearance operators / partners use to consult with the community
- Villagers who reported attending UXO clearance prioritisation meetings:
 - UXO Lao: 42.3% of villagers (50% men, 35.5% women)
 - FSD: 50% of villagers (70% men, 30% women)
 - HIB: 46.3% of villagers (67.3% men, 24.5% women)
 - MAG: 80.2% of villagers (85.1% men, 75% women)
- The head of the household attends such meetings
- 88% respondents (94.5% of total men, 83.5% of total women) identified a male as the head of the household

1 **Equitable participation in the prioritisation process of clearance tasks: findings**

Women who do attend meetings are not always actively participating

- Confidence and ‘fear’ of not being right
- Language
- Women do not leave their immediate village area

Understanding of selection criteria amongst those who attended prioritisation meetings:

- HIB: 44% (15.4% of women)
- FSD: 53.3% (22.2% of women)
- UXO Lao: 57.3% (53.5% women)
- MAG: 91% (93.9% women)

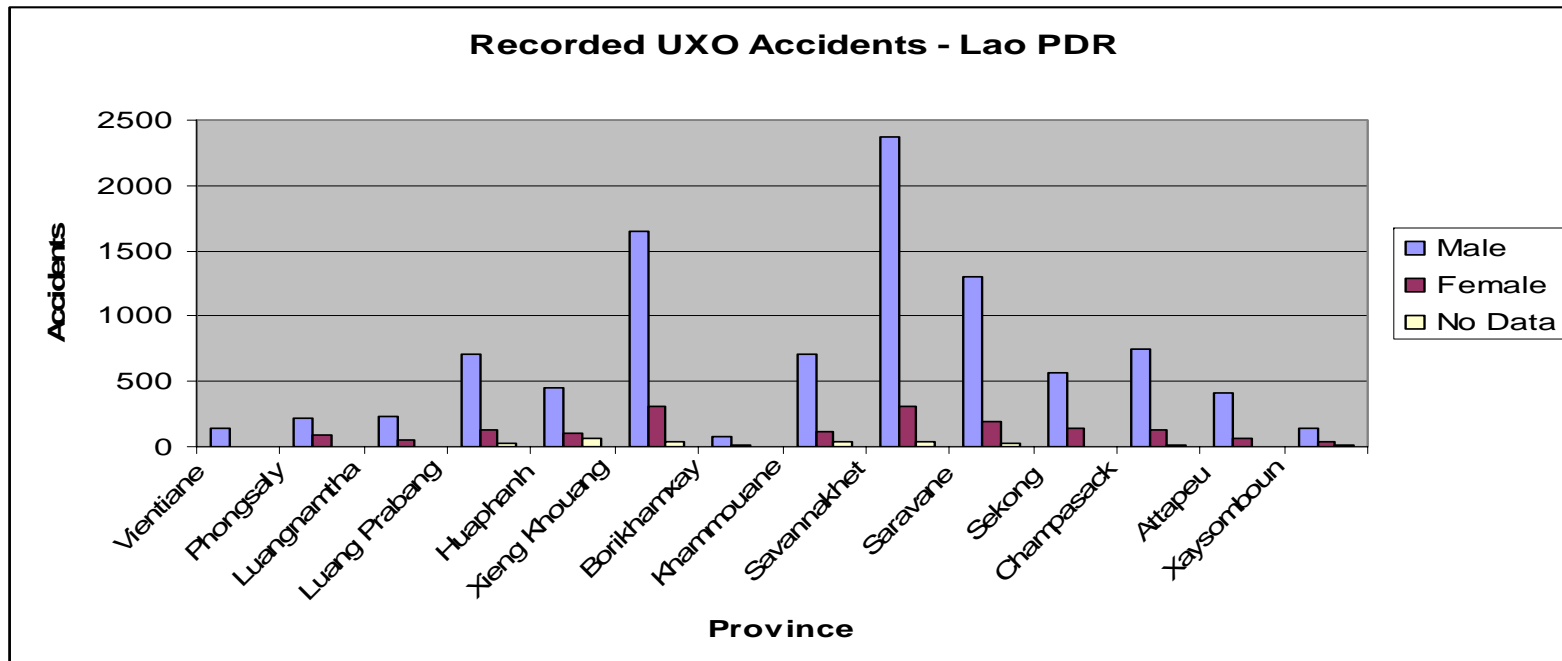
1 **Equitable participation in the prioritisation process of clearance tasks: findings**

Handover ceremonies mainly attended by the male head of the household

- 51.2% reported only men attended
- 15% reported husband and wife attended together
- 3.8% reported only women attended
- 9.5% reported other family members attended
- 20.5 reported no one from family attended
- If inclusion is a priority for operators at district / provincial level:
- HMA operators and development Agencies must include gender in planning
- HMA Operators should hold separate meetings (Include in SOP)
- Ensure participants are informed of purpose of meeting before hand

2 Gendered impact of UXO contamination: background

- Handicap International Survey conducted in 1997
- Total of 11,862 recorded UXO accidents
 - 9,710 (83%) involved men
 - 1,682 (14%) involved women
 - 290 (3%) no data was available



2 Gendered impact of UXO contamination: findings

- The impact of UXO accidents is greater on males
- High risk activities are predominantly carried out by men
 - Tilling and cultivating the land in preparation for the rice planting
 - Males more highly represented in scrap metal collecting and actively dismantling UXOs
- All family members (both men and women) face increased burden of care due to the death or debilitation of a male family member
- UXO clearance takes place to allow a range of development activities; road and bridge construction, water and sanitation, agriculture, building development
- Findings suggest that clearance activities do have a gendered impact, with men and women benefiting differently

2 Gender and post clearance impacts: findings

Road and bridge construction

- Improved access to labour market – men
- Improved access to local markets – women
- Improved access to health facilities – whole community

Well construction

- Women and girls primarily responsible for water collection
 - “we have more time to do other things like finding food, watering vegetables, collecting firewood and going to the farm”.
- Health benefits from wells impact on whole community
 - “people did get sick from drinking the un-boiled river water and had diarrhea”.

3 Gendered perspectives in MRE messages and approaches: findings

- 69.1% of villagers reported that MRE sessions are attended by men, women, boys and girls alike.
- Few people reported attending a MRE activity focused on one sex
- There are implications for women if they are not confident to participate in larger group meetings
- Messages tend to be generic with little consideration for gender perspectives
- Lack of focus on high risk behaviours
- *'They came and discussed with everyone in the village, don't touch, don't remove, don't break open, when make a fire check clearly and if we see UXOs we are to report them'*

4 Clearance personnel, employment opportunities and gender: findings

November 2007, 1362 people (81% men, 19% women) in the HMA sector

- UXO Lao: 13% of staff are women
- FSD: 29% of staff are women
- MAG: 35% of staff are women
- HIB: 36% of staff are women

Three key trends emerged:

1. Most female staff are young and unmarried, most men older and married
2. Markedly higher % of women staff with primary education only (20.7%) compared to men (5.8%)
3. Female staff have worked for a shorter time than their male counterparts

4 Clearance personnel, employment opportunities and gender: findings

Recruitment:

- Few barriers to men or women applying for jobs raised in discussions
 - Interestingly women who have been employed are young and unmarried
- Men and women discussed application with family and received support to apply
- Specifically including “women are encouraged to apply” in advertisements contributed to women applying
- Interview panel make up:
 - 67% staff interviewed by all male interview panel
 - 20% staff reported more men than women on panel
 - Some women reported that having a woman on the interview panel gave them more confidence

4 Clearance personnel, employment opportunities and gender: findings

Team Composition:

- 64% staff preferred to work on mixed sex teams
 - 48% of people who answered didn't have experience in mixed teams
- Staff felt that men and women behaved differently when working in mixed teams
- Women are generally absent from senior management positions, however generally working in the sector for only 0-2 years
- Active strategies for women to advance to senior management positions

5 **Victim/Survivor assistance and gender related issues: findings**

Access to emergency care:

- Doesn't appear to be any gender disparity in access to medical services
- Delays in receiving medical care appear not gender related
- Decision to seek or not seek medical care and longer term care is based on economics not gender

Gender Action Plan points for Early Action

Implementation of the United Nations Gender Guideline for Mine Action

- The NRA should translate the Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes into Lao language
- The NRA through the Technical Working Group meetings should work with the various TWG and discuss how guidelines can be integrated into operations
- The NRA should review the National Standards to ensure where possible the Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes are incorporated into national standards and guidelines
- HMA operators should review their standard operating procedures to ensure the Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes are incorporated into their SOPs

Gender cross cutting HMA:

- **Statistics disaggregated by sex of information collected**
 - Pre-clearance / post clearance data collection
 - Beneficiary data
- **Project planning - gender analysis should be conducted**
 - division of labor, access to and control over resources,
 - the culture, attitudes and stereotypes which affect project implementation
 - constraints facing men and women in participation
- **A gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation system should also be in place**
 - including the establishment of indicators to measure the extent to which gender equality objectives are met

Any Questions?

