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## UNDP UXO/Mine Action Programming: Lao PDR

February 2016

### I. UNDP Approach to ‘Development and Mine Action’

UNDP’s Strategic Plan 2014-17 focuses on helping countries achieve the simultaneous eradication of extreme poverty and reduction of inequalities and exclusion. In many countries that count on UNDP support, however, Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) is a significant hindrance to this vision. To be an effective development partner in settings rife with UXO, UNDP has revamped its ‘Development and Mine Action’ agenda through programmes that tackle the connected issues of poverty, inequality and exclusion, while lowering the risks arising from shocks and stressors. UNDP’s “Development and Mine Action” service line focuses on restoring livelihoods capacities and building resilience by: (1) translating mine action into sustainable development dividends in the form of jobs/livelihoods and (2) strengthening national institutions that accelerate development benefits.

### II. Lao PDR UXO/Mine Action Context

During the Second Indochina War (1964-1975), more than two million tons of explosive ordnance were dropped on Laos, 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 UXO. These kill and injure dozens of people a year, and their presence negatively affects socioeconomic development, preventing access to agricultural land and increasing the costs, through land clearance, of all development projects. Fourteen provinces in Lao PDR are contaminated with UXO. Of those, nine are considered highly-contaminated. In 2010, Lao PDR introduced a localized Millennium Development Goal, MDG9: to reduce the impact of UXO.

### III. Key Activities

- Supporting the National Regulatory Authority for the UXO/Mine Action Sector (NRA) to develop its capacity to coordinate, monitor and regulate the UXO sector;
- Supporting the Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao) to develop its capacity in operations, planning and management;
- Supporting the implementation by the UXO sector of the evidence-based survey and clearance approach;
- Supporting the Government of Lao PDR to meet its obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions;
- Providing technical advice in the development of a Five-Year UXO Sector Plan;
- Advocating, and offering support for, a clear clearance prioritisation methodology and sector transition plan;
- Co-chairing the UXO Sector Working Group along with the US Ambassador and under the Ministerial chair.

### IV. Challenges

UXO Lao and NRA face challenges in managing the huge problem of widespread UXO contamination in Lao PDR. The volume of clearance and risk education work required places a strain on the sector-level information management and policy-making infrastructure. This means that planning in the long-term is difficult, but this is improving with the growing number of identified Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHA) included in the national database. There are gaps in the institutional capacities of both organisations and the sector remains heavily dependent on international funding, with no strategy for transition yet articulated.

### V. Budget

UNDP Mine Action Activities in 2015	Amount Spent 2015	Planned Mine Action Activities for 2016	Budget 2016	Funding Shortfall 2016
Capacity Development of national regulator and national operator.	US\$5.98m	Survey, clearance, risk education and victims’ rehabilitation; institutional capacity development	US\$5.8m	US\$2.41m