



# 2025 FACTSHEET Lao PDR



## CONTEXT

Lao PDR holds the unfortunate distinction of being the most heavily bombed country per capita in history. Between 1964 to 1973, over **two million tonnes of ordnance were dropped during 580,000 bombing missions** – equivalent to one planeload of bombs every eight minutes, 24 hours a day, for nine years.

While a reliable estimate of cluster munition and other explosive ordnance (EO) contamination in Lao PDR is not available yet, the level of contamination is classed as 'massive'. Cluster munition contamination is among the highest in the world when measured against the population, posing significant risks to livelihoods, socio-economic development, and quality of life in affected communities.

According to the current national mine action strategy, "Safe Path Forward III" (2021–2030), there have been at least 50,000 confirmed casualties caused by explosive ordnance since the 1964 to 1973 Indochina war ended. Of these, 30,000 were fatal.

Lao PDR is a state party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), being not only one of the convention's first signatories but also an early champion of it. Under CCM's Article 4, which requires clearance of all areas known to be contaminated by cluster munitions, the country has a completion deadline set to 2030.

According to the Mine Action Review, as of the end of 2023, nearly 1,996km<sup>2</sup> of confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) in Laos had been identified through ongoing Cluster Munition Remnants Survey (CMRS). This represents an increase from the nearly 1,745km<sup>2</sup> reported at the end of 2022. In 2023, submunition clearance totalled 56.67km<sup>2</sup>, with 58,382 submunitions destroyed.

## PROGRAMME

The programme in Lao PDR is **one of the biggest in the NPA's Mine Action and Disarmament portfolio**, with a budget of approximately USD \$13.8 million for 2025 and employing over 1,000 national staff as of February 2025.

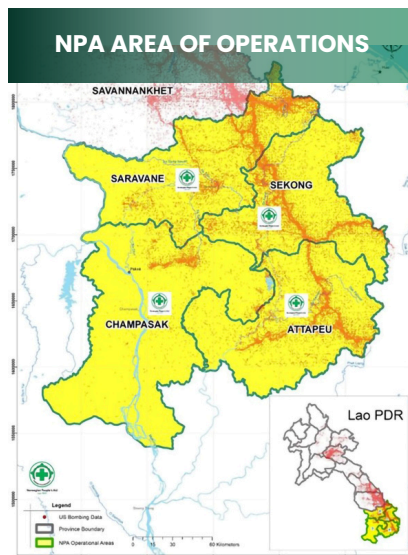
NPA has been operating in Lao PDR since 1997. For the first 10 years, NPA supported the national clearance operator, UXO Lao, with technical assistance and quality assurance, before starting its own operations in Saravane province in 2009.

Notably, in August 2023, NPA commenced its first explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) activities, collaborating closely with local communities, particularly but not only, focusing on children, to raise awareness about the EO contamination in Lao PDR. This involves educating people about the various types of EO, the associated risks, and safe behaviour when encountering EO, and the process of reporting any discovery of such.

By the end of 2023, NPA had successfully doubled its operational capacity, supported by increased funding from the Government of the United States and continued contributions from the Government of Norway.

Currently, NPA is one of the largest mine action operators in Lao PDR, deploying eight survey teams, 41 clearance teams, and four EORE teams across Champasak, Sekong, Attapeu, and Saravane provinces.

Additionally, NPA continues to work with the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) on an Information Management (IM) capacity development project. The initiative aims to enhance the NRA's IM capacity at all levels by training staff, developing key documents, improving the IM system, and addressing the quality of historical UXO data in Lao PDR.





# OVERALL RESULTS

from 09 September 2009 - 31 December 2024

Since the start of the programme until 31 December 2024, NPA's Lao PDR programme has:

- Surveyed more than 644 km<sup>2</sup> and identified more than 4,598 contaminated tasks covering a total size of over 319 km<sup>2</sup>.
- Cleared over 53 km<sup>2</sup> of contaminated land in 872 tasks.
- Destroyed more than 162,500 items of UXO through survey and clearance of confirmed hazardous area.
- Secured safe access to land, directly benefitting nearly 170,780 persons and indirectly benefitting 337,646 persons, further enabling development efforts.

## 2024 RESULTS



**Cleared over 11 km<sup>2</sup>** of previously UXO and CMR-contaminated areas on 102 tasks



**849 EORE sessions**

were conducted in 62 target villages



Found and safely **destroyed over 13,121 items** of explosive ordnance (EO)



**Surveyed nearly 9.9 km<sup>2</sup>** and identified 63 CHAs covering more than 3.4 km<sup>2</sup>



Secured safe access to land directly benefitting over **19,671 persons**

**2025 FUNDING**

## DONORS AND FUNDING

**USD \$13,800,000**

NPA wishes to express thanks for the continued generous support of its donors, the Governments of United States and Norway, for strengthening our work in protecting civilians from explosive weapons in Lao PDR and fulfilling Lao PDR's obligations under Article 4 of the Convention of Cluster Munitions.

### MORE INFORMATION

- NPA Lao PDR Webpage: [www.npaid.org/mine-action-and-disarmament/where-we-work/lao-pdr](http://www.npaid.org/mine-action-and-disarmament/where-we-work/lao-pdr)
- NPA Lao PDR on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NPALaos](https://www.facebook.com/NPALaos)
- Lao PDR Profile in the Mine Action Review: [www.mineactionreview.org/country/lao-peoples-democratic-republic](http://www.mineactionreview.org/country/lao-peoples-democratic-republic)



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