

**Terms of Reference (ToR)**  
**for the Final Evaluation of the project**

**“A comprehensive approach to reduce the impact of Unexploded Ordnance on  
Human Safety and Rural Livelihoods in Lao PDR “**

**March 2021-April 2021**

# **1. BACKGROUND**

## **1.1. Context**

Lao PDR is, per capita, the most heavily bombed country in the world as a result of the Indochina War of the 1960s and 1970s<sup>2</sup>. More than 580,000 bombing missions, which translates into one mission every 8 minutes, 24 hours a day, for 9 years, led to over 2 million tons of explosive ordnances (EO) being dropped. Over 270 million cluster munitions (CM) were used, of which an estimated 80 million malfunctioned and remained live and buried after the war came to an end. Today, approximately 25 % of Laos' 10,000 plus villages are contaminated by CM and other EO. 50,754 casualties have been recorded since 1964 while 995 casualties (445 men, 99 women, 369 boys, 82 girls)<sup>3</sup> were recorded since 2008. In the Northern provinces of Houaphan and Phongsaly, the extensive contamination by EO comes from the US bombings and attacks from the Royal Lao Army that occurred mostly along the historical National Roads while trying to contain the troops of Phatet Lao and the Popular Army of Vietnam. Today, EO and CM in particular continue to present humanitarian and socio-economic challenges "causing deaths and injuries and contributing to food insecurity by limiting safe access to potentially rich agricultural land, as well as adding to the cost of development projects when land first needs to be cleared"<sup>4</sup>. In these two remote provinces, most of the accidents happen when farmers are digging soil (21%), or while making fire (27%).

## **1.2. Humanity & Inclusion background**

The Handicap International – Humanity & Inclusion (HI) Federation is an independent international aid organisation working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster. Working alongside persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, our action and testimony are focused on responding to their essential needs, improving their living conditions and promoting respect for their dignity and fundamental rights. HI promotes an inclusive approach by focusing on access to services “for all” whenever possible rather than developing specific actions for people with disabilities.

Confronted with the widespread nature of the devastation caused by landmines and unexploded ordnance, HI chose, in 1992, to extend its field of interventions to include the prevention of accidents caused by landmines and other explosive ordnances (EO) through clearance and demining of affected areas. HI's work on the landmine issue, like its work on the issue of sub-munitions and other EO, is based on the organization's overriding concern to address vulnerability by both preventative and curative means.

## **1.3. Project background**

HI's humanitarian mine action intervention in the Lao PDR dates back to 1996 when the organization spent the first 9 years providing technical and institutional capacity building to the

national operator, UXO Lao. In partnership with UXO Lao, HI conducted a nationwide survey on EO contamination levels and impact in the mid-1990s. This is still used as a reference by the sector. From 2006, HI became operator in Savannakhet Province, and contributed to national efforts to clear EO, assist the victims and provide targeted EO-RE.

In 2012, HI designed a four year mine action programme to reduce the threat and the impact of EO with both preventative and curative actions in four countries: Libya, Lao PDR (in Savannakhet Province), Mozambique and South Sudan funded by the Dutch MOFA 'BUZA'. This project paved the way for the comprehensive approach to mine action (CAMA) concept in Laos but also in other countries.

From 2018, HI redirected its operation to a new province in the north in Houaphan through a new project implemented through a consortium ('*UXO consortium*') and funded by the EU delegation in Lao PDR. The final evaluation concerns this project.

Roving EOD and clearance teams cleared and destroyed more than 32,000 EO including sub-munitions and conducted clearance in an estimated 430 ha until now. HI is benefiting from a positive public acknowledgement for all the achievements in particular among the NMAA and national operator.

HI has implemented a comprehensive integrated response which includes Survey and Clearance, Risk Education and Support to UXO victims based on the principle of non-discrimination in various areas of work (livelihood, medical and rehabilitation referral, Mental health/PSS support, first aid trainings...) partnering **with LDPA, Oxfam and GRET/BNDA organizations**. HI multifaceted expertise brought more results by putting affected communities, and most vulnerable at the centre of the intervention:

- **Community ownership of the risk management** was increased: the community was active in the risk identification process and in the definition of priorities (from passive participation to interactive participation). Risk-management action plans for 35 targets communities were developed.
- Clearance and survey priorities is taking into account **the priorities defined at village level and constantly reviewed**
- **No one is left behind** as all activities are inclusive, criteria's of vulnerability are defined by the communities and a deep analysis (pre-impact and comprehensive needs assessments) of the community structure, gender norms and diversity is provided at the beginning of the project
- **Key risk behaviors** were identified and analyzed at every level of the community (individuals, at-risk groups, community, and village).
- **High-risk groups were particularly active in managing the risk** and show progress/good intention in adopting safer behaviors (80% improvement in knowledge, attitudes and practices).
- **Responsiveness in case of new EO identification** was widely increased in all villages of the district (the community takes initiative in reporting EO directly to the operator; the operator answers the identification by a quick and adapted response) within 48 hours.

As a transversal issue, the project also intended to collect, analyze and share lessons learned the benefits from the CAMA in order to be able to develop practical, evidence-based recommendations for the Lao UXO sector and other HI countries.

## 2. PROJECT AT A GLANCE

<b>Title:</b>	<b>A comprehensive approach to reduce the impact of Unexploded Ordnance on Human Safety and Rural Livelihoods in Lao PDR</b>
<b>Overall objective:</b>	To contribute to poverty reduction, human security and the UN Sustainable Development Goals including SDG18 by removing the impact of UXO and supporting the implementation of the Safe Path Forward II.
<b>Specific objective:</b>	To reduce the humanitarian and socio-economic risk posed by ERW on rural livelihood in Houaphan Province, Lao PDR, through a comprehensive approach of Survey and Clearance, Risk Education, Behavioural Change Interventions and Victim assistance.
<b>Project Area:</b>	Houameuang district of Houaphanh province, Lao PDR
<b>Financial Support:</b>	European Union, (co-funded by French Centre de Crise, Norway MOFA)
<b>Duration:</b>	41 months <sup>1</sup> (1 January 2018 – 31 May 2021)

**Time and projected dates of the evaluation:** February/March 2021, approximately 25 working days in total. The results of the project evaluation will be presented in a final workshop at the end of the action.

## 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

### 3.1. Overall Objective of the mission

With the aim to provide HI and the UXO consortium with an independent and result-oriented Post Evaluation of this multi-year project, the objective of the assignment is:

- To assess progress of the activities carried out following the evaluation criteria and the HI AVR Quality framework (see Section 3.5);
- To assess the impact of the intervention;
- To assess the level of coordination with other stakeholders;

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<sup>1</sup> A No-Cost Extension (NCE) was granted in April 2020 extending the project timeframe for 5 months.

- To further inform the Delegation of the EU, the authorities and HI on the impact of multi-year integrated approach programming in support to the UXO sector in Lao PDR

Assessing the actions implemented and the achievements over the 3 years period will enable to identify the scope/needs for future projects and better inform on approaches and actions in favor of mine clearance, risk prevention and assistance to victims in Lao PDR.

## 3.2. Specific Objectives of the mission

- A **final evaluation of the project** is completed, including:
  - i. an analysis of the level of achievement of the indicators at objectives, results and activities level as defined in the logical framework, as well as according to the set criterias (see Section 3.5).
  - ii. the measure of effectiveness by assessing on how far the intended outputs and results were achieved, in particular in terms of benefit for the local populations and the NRA (national mine action authority - NMAA). The evaluator should identify all recorded impacts, including any unintended ones and compare them to intended impacts. A specific focus should be put on the socio-economic impact of the programme.
  - iii. To evaluate the ownership/appropriation of the target beneficiaries:
    1. Local communities
    2. The NRA
    3. The district authorities
  - iv. To evaluate the added value of this project and chosen approaches (CAMA, community-based activities...) vis-à-vis other operations funded by various donors on Mine Action in the country.
  - v. To identify good practices and lessons learned of the project.
- A **list of recommendations** is formulated to identify areas of the project that do not need to continue, areas to be strengthened and areas to be added to facilitate risk reduction for EO affected communities, improve life conditions for EO victims and other vulnerable persons, promote the socio-economic development and help meet SDG-18 goal, and national mine action strategy.

### 3.3. Requested services

On the basis of an agreed methodology and work plan, the evaluator will closely work with the programme, implementing partners (IP) and local authorities:

- Examining programme and IPs reports, work plans and any other relevant information;
- Meetings with the programme and IPs teams;
- Meetings with the beneficiaries of the activities: Mine Action Authority, communities, EO victims, others as well as other involved local authorities at provincial and district level. Field visits are foreseen.

### 3.4. Required outputs

The following will be required from the evaluator:

- **A methodology and a work planning** to be approved by the UXO Consortium
- **A final evaluation report** that must fulfill the objectives under 3.2. (to be submitted at the latest 3 days prior to the end of the contract).
- **A debriefing** with the UXO Consortium, including a **presentation of the evaluation's key findings**.

### 3.5. Evaluation criteria (HI Quality Referential)

#### 3.5.1. Relevance: Problems and Needs / Context

*The project meets demonstrated priorities and adapts to the intervention setting*

- The extent to which stated objectives correctly addressed the identified problems and social/development needs.
- The extent to which objectives have been updated/changed in order to adapt to changes in the context.
- Is the choice of areas of intervention relevant? Why?
- Is the intervention strategy based on mine action pillars relevant? Which links and mechanisms exist between these pillars? Has this approach enabled to develop synergies between the pillars? Are the project activities consistently within HI's mandate?

#### 3.5.2. Effectiveness: Achievement of Purpose

*The project successfully achieves its objective*

- The extent to which the project's results are attained and the specific objectives achieved, or are expected to be achieved.

- The appropriateness of the Monitoring & Evaluation process and the mobilisation of the resources required for its implementation to assess the project's results.
- Have the necessary skills been developed to carry out the project
- To what extent the actual results match the performance targets set out initially (if not, highlight the possible explaining factors and recommendations to address gaps in the future would a subsequent phase be possible).
- Effectiveness of the Comprehensive Approach to Mine Action (CAMA) with synergies exploited between clearance, risk education and victim assistance (Lao PDR) including the activities implemented by IPs (within VA component).
- Relevance of the structure of the project logical framework regarding the inter-connected activities and mutualized resources (CAMA)
- Whether any shortcomings were due to failure to take into account cross-cutting or overarching issues such as gender, capacity of implementing organizations, etc.
- Has the project sufficiently taken into account and/or avoided the risks of negative effects (environmental, economic, safety...)?

### **3.5.3. Efficiency: Sound management and value for money**

#### ***The project makes optimal use of resources***

- How well the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. Comparison should be made against what was planned.
- Does the project have appropriate and efficient financial and logistics monitoring tools?
- To what extent the programme has utilized its resources (e.g. time, money, human resources, implementing partners and government partners) efficiently?
- Efficiency of the Comprehensive Approach to Mine Action (CAMA) with synergies exploited between clearance, risk education and victim assistance (Lao PDR).
- The extent to which the costs of the project have been justified by the benefits, whether or not expressed in monetary terms.
- The extent to which cooperation mechanisms were understood and actively supported by all stakeholders (inter-institutional structures such as steering and coordination committees; the involvement of the relevant actors in the decision-making concerning the project orientation and implementation, the communication between the project management, the partners and the key stakeholders, etc.).
- The extent to which the partnership modalities facilitated/ constrained the implementation of the activities.
- Have resources been maximized? Did the intervention method adopted achieve the results at a lower cost?
- The extent to which the national administrative framework (MOU process) was properly managed by the UXO consortium and what could have been done better?
- The extent to which activities were conducted with the appropriate level of safety for the communities, the staff (duty of care) and the partners.

#### **3.5.4. Sustainability: Likely Continuation of Achieved Results**

*The project aims to achieve positive effects that will be ongoing once the intervention is over*

- Main achievements and limits of the project in terms of technical, financial and socio-economic sustainability.
- The extent to which the objectives of the project have been achieved as intended, in particular, the planned overall objective.
- The level of ownership of objectives and achievements by the project stakeholders and likelihood for them to maintain the implementation of project activities.
- Institutional capacity – the extent to which the project is embedded in local institutional structures, where relevant.
- How has the project increased the capacity of local actors so that they are more autonomous?
- To what extent HI has contributed to mainstreaming disability into the partners' programs.
- Has the project significantly reduced the vulnerability of all beneficiaries?
- Have behavioural patterns changed at the project beneficiaries' level (CSOs, stakeholders etc.) and beyond (NRA, other govt. actors)? And how far the change has produced improvements?
- Recommendations for the strengthening of the CAMA approach and its impact

#### **3.5.5. Cooperation:**

*Project partners/Authorities are involved to the greatest extent possible*

- Implementing partners and authorities were kept informed regularly and involved in decision-making processes concerning the project's steering and implementation
- Implementing partners and authorities actively contributed towards the project success
- Are partnerships established relevant? What could have improved the quality and efficiency of partnerships?
- What has changed in the practices of each consortium members because of the joint learning? If any?
- The project is coherent with other HI and implementing partners interventions and ensure a comprehensive response to the multiple and changing needs of the targets groups
- The project teams adopts respectful and fair attitude towards everyone and ensures that the actions are socially acceptable to the people targeted in all their diversity
- The project builds trust with the communities and local authorities in a new area of intervention
- The extent of which recommendations expressed by local authorities and communities were taken into account in the project cycle

- The UXO consortium has set all the coordination mechanisms to favor participation of all stakeholders
- Has the project been properly integrated with other interventions in the intervention area? Did the project systematically seek to collaborate with all the actors in the intervention area?
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### 3.6. Deliverables

After the final selection, the evaluator submits:

- A. **An inception report** including detailed evaluation matrix, methodology and time plan to be approved by HI

At the end of his/her mission, the evaluator will provide (without being limited to):

- B. Draft of the evaluation report to HI for feedback
- C. **Presentation of evaluation results and findings** for feedback in a ½ day workshop including all relevant stakeholders and authorities
- D. **Final evaluation report (in English) limited to 30 pages + annexes, including:**
  - An **executive summary** with main findings;
  - Introduction to the context (description of the project and the evaluation, providing methodological explanations to gauge the credibility of the conclusions and to acknowledge limitations or weaknesses, where relevant;
  - Summary of factors contributing to relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and cooperation of the activities carried out answering the questions;
  - Summary of factors limiting relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and cooperation of the activities carried out answering the questions;
  - Overall assessment
  - Identification and recommendations on the CAMA approach, the partnership approach, the logic of intervention, and on possible strategies for enhancing the impact of the project – proposed actions should be as realistic, operational, and pragmatic as possible;
  - Conclusions
  - List of persons met during the evaluation process and salient points of the meetings;
  - Final agenda for the evaluation.
  - Annexes

## **E. Lessons learnt**

- **A learning paper** for dissemination (ie. for example, a 2-page document written in bullet points) on lessons learnt and good practices taken from the project.
- **A presentation for debriefing and use for external workshop at the end of project**

## **3.7. Suggested methods / activities**

In order to develop ownership and ensure the involvement and interest of the stakeholders for sustainable changes and future developments, the evaluation will be conducted in a participatory way, involving HI staff, partners' staff, and any stakeholder directly or indirectly involved in development/implementation of the project.

It is suggested to the evaluator to use a crossed-analysis methodology based on:

- The **Armed Violence Reduction Quality Framework (HI)**
- Review of literature and project documents (proposal, reports, research reports, tools, etc.).
- Interviews with HQ and on the field with a selection of staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the projects.
- Interviews in the field with various stakeholders involved in the projects.
- Focus groups or individual interviews with final beneficiaries.

**A methodology that could measure the benefits of receiving all project proposed services (CAMA approach) versus communities/individuals receiving only one/some of them shall be encouraged.**

## **4. LIST OF DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE**

- Project proposal including logical framework
- AVR Quality framework of HI
- Annual reports and planning documents
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)/partnership agreements (where relevant)
- HI and IP Programme Strategies
- Training modules and tools and reports
- Relevant Activity TOR and reports
- Project Monitoring & Evaluation Policy of HI & Institutional policies
- Publications

# 5. ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTIQUE INFORMATION

## 5.1. Management and Logistics

In headquarters, the Asia Geographic Direction will be responsible for arranging meetings with different stakeholders, after agreeing on the methodology with the evaluator.

During field visits, HI Laos will be responsible for all logistical arrangements, including local travel, accommodation, as well as for arranging meetings and workshops. HI staff members involved in the project will accompany the evaluator in partners' meeting and during field visits.

A vehicle will be made available in country as required. The evaluator will arrange for his/her own laptop and other required equipment. The evaluator will bear the final responsibility for achievement of the evaluation objectives, report submission and necessary presentations.

## 5.2. Confidentiality

All project documents, outputs, reports, information, etc. provided and produced during the assignment will be treated as the property of HI and IPs, and will remain confidential. The above mentioned outputs or any part of it cannot be sold, used or reproduced in any manner by the assigned organization / individual without prior permission from HI.

# 6. PROFILE OF EVALUATOR/S

- An evaluation team with an identified leader with **background and experience in Mine Action context** (Victim Assistance/Livelihood background would be preferable), however, evaluators demonstrating their added value to the required evaluation with generalist backgrounds will also be considered.
- An excellent knowledge of the disability sector or inclusion would be preferable.
- Experience with previous project evaluations for bilateral or multi-lateral donor(s).
- Demonstrated experience in the production of constructive and concise project evaluation reports of high quality for non-technical audiences (examples maybe required).
- Strong skills in Project Cycle Management (PCM) and the Logical Framework Approach (LFA).
- Experience in change process on social issue like Gender inclusiveness
- Experience on Value Chain and Natural Resource Management
- Strong understanding of and interest in Mine Action issues.
- Language: English required. A translator will be provided by the programme.

## 7. LEVEL OF EFFORT (indicative)

Dates	Activities	# of working days
	Preparation / Review of documentation	3
	Initial meetings with HI HQ management team (in person in Lyon, France or via skype)	1
	Travel to Lao PDR	1
	Briefing from programme	1
	Travel to Houaphan	2
	Meeting with local stakeholders, local project team and partners, beneficiaries (including district and Sam Neua) + presentation workshop	6
	Travel to Vientiane	1
	Meeting with national level stakeholders	2
	Report writing and presentation, lessons learnt and recommendations	7
	Debrief and recommendation to UXO Consortium (by skype)	1
<b>TOTAL number of days</b>		<b>25 days</b>

## 8. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Candidates should submit the following information with their application:

- a. Brief cover letter
- b. Curriculum vitae of consultant (or team of consultants)
- c. Capability statement and a list of previous assignments, highlighting those that focus on similar project evaluations. Please include two references and mention earliest availability to start the mission. **NB: please take into consideration the COVID-19 travel restrictions in the proposed plan**
- d. One example of relevant similar work.
- e. A proposal of the detailed methodology in accordance with the terms of reference
- f. A tentative work plan and time schedule précising the deliverables.
- g. A budget breakdown for the consultancy including fees, international travel, insurance etc.

**Completed applications should be sent by email to: [recruitment@laos.hi.org](mailto:recruitment@laos.hi.org)**

Please indicate “*Application for EU-UXO Program - Evaluation*” in the email’s subject.

**Deadline for applications: 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2020.** The selection will be done by UXO Consortium Project Management Team. The selected applicant will be informed by **18<sup>th</sup> of December 2020.**