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# Technical Assistance to UXO Clearance Operations in Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR

Nigel Orr

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**EXTERNAL EVALUATION**

**HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL BELGIUM**  
**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO UXO**  
**CLEARANCE OPERATIONS IN SAVANNAKHET**  
**PROVINCE, LAO PDR**

*Phase Four - Transfer of knowledge, skills and capacities to UXO LAO Savannakhet in respect of the application of comprehensive national procedures across all aspects of the programme leading to the complete withdrawal of HIB technical assistance.*

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**23 April 2004**

## **DISCLAIMER**

**This evaluation report has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Community. The views expressed herein are those of the author and can no way therefore be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Commission, Handicap International or UXO LAO.**

## CONTENTS

Contents.....	iii
Abbreviations .....	v
Executive Summary .....	vi

### SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Historical Background to the Problem.....	1
Background to UXO LAO .....	1
Operational Achievements .....	2
History of the Savannakhet Project.....	2

### SECTION TWO: THE EVALUATION

Evaluation Objectives.....	3
Evaluation Matrix.....	3
Evaluation Programme.....	3
Evaluation Team .....	3

### SECTION THREE: ADDRESSING THE NEEDS FOR UXO ACTION IN SAVANNAKHET

Needs of UXO Affected Communities.....	3
Government of Lao PDR's Priorities .....	5
Needs of Development Agencies .....	6
Meeting the Needs for UXO Clearance in Savannakhet .....	7

### SECTION FOUR: CURRENT SITUATION IN SAVANNAKHET

Introduction .....	9
Work Planning.....	9
Liaison and Coordination.....	10
Equipment Support to Operations .....	11
Personnel Support to Operations .....	12
Quality Management .....	14
Areas where HIB could Assist UXO LAO Savannakhet .....	16

### SECTION FIVE: HIB's PROJECT RESULTS

Introduction .....	17
Affect of UXO LAO Staff Reductions on Project Objectives.....	17
Achievement of the Project Objectives .....	17
Activities Still to be Completed by HIB.....	25

Relevance and Effectiveness of HIB’s Support.....	26
Future Support Requirements in Relation to the Project Objectives .....	29

**SECTION SIX: TECHNICAL SKILLS AND MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES OF UXO LAO SAVANNAKHET**

Introduction .....	31
Field Staff .....	31
Management Staff .....	33
Additional Training Requirements for UXO LAO Savannakhet Staff .....	35
Additional Technical Assistance Required .....	36

**SECTION SEVEN: CONTRIBUTION OF THE HIB PROJECT TO THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE**

Introduction .....	37
Achievement of the Overall Objective in Savannakhet .....	37
HIB Project’s Contribution to the Overall Objective.....	38
Improving the Contribution to Overall Objective.....	38
Sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet.....	39
UXO LAO National HQ Support.....	39
Support Required from UXO LAO Savannakhet Staff.....	41

**SECTION EIGHT: WITHDRAWAL OF HIB TECHNICAL SUPPORT FROM UXO LAO SAVANNAKHET**

Introduction .....	41
Activities to Complete the Project’s Objectives .....	41
Administration Requirements to be Completed.....	42
Additional Training or Technical Support Activities .....	42
Recommended Future Action.....	44

**Annexes:**

- A. Terms of Reference for the External Evaluation.
- B. Evaluation Matrix.
- C. Evaluation Programme.
- D. People Interviewed.
- E. CV’s of the Evaluation Team.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BTC	Belgian Technical Cooperation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSS	Chief of Support Services
DC	District Coordinator
DPC	Deputy Provincial Coordinator
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EU	European Union
FFE	Free From Explosives
GPS	Global Positioning System
HI France/ANS	Handicap International France/Action Nord Sud
HIB	Handicap International Belgium
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
Log TA	Logistics Technical Advisor
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MCTPC	Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MOI	Methods of Instruction
MSF	Medecins Sans Frontiers
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
PC	Provincial Coordinator
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
QM	Quality Management
SC	Section Commander
SEODT	Senior Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
STA	Senior Technical Advisor
STL	Survey Team Leader
SUFORD	Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development
TA	Technical Advisor
TL	Team Leader
TOE	Table of Equipment
TOT	Training of Trainers
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WFP	World Food Programme

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Addressing the Needs for UXO Action in Savannakhet

1. The most UXO affected districts in Savannakhet are Sepone, Nong and Vilabuly. Phine and Atsaphanthong are lesser affected districts. The districts of Sepone, Nong, Vilabuly and Phine are identified in the Government's National Poverty Eradication Programme (NPEP) as amongst the 47 poorest in the country and priorities for investment in the period 2003 – 2005.

2. The needs of the communities vary depending on their location. The communities close to the main access routes have few needs in relation to UXO action as they have access to most services already and many have already received UXO clearance support. The communities in the inaccessible areas need safe land to grow food, but in many cases access is required to permit UXO clearance and other development activities to take place. For these areas UXO clearance in support of access is most important with clearance for agriculture required once access is achieved. UXO clearance to reduce accidents are not a priority as the communities are accustomed to living with UXO.

3. The Government's priority is to eliminate poverty with a focus on the poorest (and most UXO affected) districts in Savannakhet. A district level approach is used to identify development priorities and surveys for this have been carried out in Sepone and Nong districts. Surveys will also be carried out in Vilabuly and Phine. The results of the surveys become the district's priorities for development. Assuming other development work is contributing to the district priorities<sup>1</sup>, an accurate estimation of the land to be cleared in each of the districts could be made.<sup>2</sup>

4. The agencies carrying out development work in the UXO affected districts of Savannakhet are; the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction (MCTPC), which carries out roading projects; Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC), which is carrying out roading and rural development projects; Handicap International (HI) France/Action Nord Sud (ANS), which is carrying out health and rural development projects; the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which is supporting rural development projects; the World Food Programme (WFP), which is carrying out rural development food for work programmes; and Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development (SUFORD), which is carrying out sustainable forestry and rural development.

5. UXO clearance support is required by BTC and HI France/ANS. The MCTPC is going to ask UXO LAO for support for the future and CIDA and SUFORD may need UXO clearance support in the future. WFP is arranging its own UXO clearance support.

6. UXO LAO is expected to meet many of the needs for UXO clearance in Savannakhet for the future. The Lao Army is not available for clearance in support of development activities and the Provincial Government does not have the funds to pay for clearance. Handicap International Belgium (HIB) is planning future UXO clearance operations in Nong district, separate to UXO LAO.

7. UXO LAO has four teams operating in four districts in Savannakhet, with one district being worked in, Palanxai, not being a priority district. 25% of the clearance personnel carry out roving clearance of random surface UXO's, 75% carry out sub surface clearance of

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<sup>1</sup> This may not be the case and other development agencies may have to be approached to determine their UXO clearance requirements.

<sup>2</sup> The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) already knew the amount of priority land to be cleared for agriculture in Sepone and Nong districts (approximately 130 ha).

specific areas of land. Only area clearance supports development. UXO LAO would improve its effectiveness by concentrating its resources on area clearance. They could also concentrate more than one team in a district if clearance priorities were already identified as has been done in Sepone and Nong. An emergency response (roving) capability would still be required, but this could be done at a provincial level.

8. UXO LAO's clearance statistics show that UXO LAO Savannakhet could clear 180 ha (+) a year if it concentrated on area clearance. This takes into account the rainy season and access problems. UXO LAO could make a major impact on the area clearance requirements of Savannakhet if it maintains its current output levels.

9. UXO LAO Savannakhet should consider reviewing their current work plan if it is not meeting the development priorities. This could be done concurrently with ongoing clearance work and HIB could assist with this.

### **Current Situation in Savannakhet**

10. UXO LAO teams are working in, or have plans to work in, two districts that are not the Government's priority districts for investment. Also, some of the work that is currently being done is on land that has already been used for agriculture. Better task selection and prioritisation is needed. UXO LAO should have systems that permit tasks to be cancelled after a reasonable amount of work over the entire task area fails to find UXO.<sup>3</sup>

11. UXO LAO Savannakhet's work is only carried out in areas that can be reached from the District HQ. This is because the basic necessities to live and work away from the base (food, water, fuel, shelter, communication, transport, medical support and electricity) cannot **all** be provided for. Some are, but some are not. UXO LAO has to ensure that its teams are equipped, or that procedures are in place, so that these necessities can be provided for. This is important to ensure that the districts' clearance priorities can be supported.

12. Coordination for work planning in Savannakhet is not carried out well and the Provincial Coordinator (PC) needs to take a leading role in this. With the district level approach to the identification of development priorities, the focus for work planning should be at district level with close coordination between District Coordinators (DC's) and District Authorities. The DC's need transport (at least a motorbike) to permit this and other work related coordination to occur. They also need the support of the PC to establish effective liaison with the District Authorities. Another person is also needed to staff the District HQ.

13. Equipment support has the biggest affect on the efficiency and safety of UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations. Vehicles are a major concern because without vehicles operations have to stop. Many of the problems with equipment support are long term and well known. The equipment support problems in Savannakhet are caused by; Tables of Equipment (TOE's) not being filled, delays in repairs of equipment when they break down, delays in replacement of equipment, inadequate care and maintenance and insufficient support service staff in key appointments on the Provincial HQ.

14. The UXO LAO National HQ know about the equipment support problems and action to be taken during 2004 to solve them include; a review of all the TOE's, a complete stock check and then the procurement or redistribution of equipment to bring all holdings up to scale; a review of all equipment support to make it more responsive to the needs of the operations; improvements to vehicle maintenance procedures and plans for the replacement of the older vehicles; and a review of staff requirements and the filling of any vacancies.

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<sup>3</sup> UXO LAO survey procedures do not permit surveyors to carry out subsurface checks of sites so the absence of UXO on land identified for clearance cannot be determined during survey tasks.



15. Staff deficiencies in UXO LAO Savannakhet are having an affect on operations. There are two support service staff vacancies on the Provincial HQ, a second Senior EOD Technician (SEODT) is required and another staff member is needed on the District HQ.<sup>4</sup> As part of the review of staff requirements, vacancies identified will eventually be filled. A SEODT who is currently on attachment to the Training Centre will return to Savannakhet.

16. There are problems with staff selection within UXO LAO Savannakhet. Some staff are selected for appointments based on factors other than qualifications, experience and performance and this affects the quality and efficiency of operations and the morale and motivation of other staff. To counter this HIB introduced staff selection systems, which show the staff who do work hard and are performing well. These systems are supposedly supported by the PC, but despite this, some staff selection is not being carried out objectively. One solution may be to have checks on staff selection and promotion imposed by the UXO LAO National HQ.

17. For UXO LAO Savannakhet maintenance of technical standards can be achieved by ensuring that; personnel selection is based on qualifications, experience and performance; continuation training is carried out for all operational personnel; monitoring assessments are carried out on operational tasks; Quality Control (QC) checks on clearance tasks are carried out; external Quality Assurance (QA) checks on District HQ's and operations are carried out; and a good understanding of the need for quality in all aspects of the operations at all levels is achieved.

18. Further training on Quality Management (QM) would assist in the maintenance of technical standards of UXO LAO Savannakhet. Training should be based on a localised QM manual produced by HIB, which consolidates all QM systems into one book. The training should cover; the importance of QM to maintaining standards; QM responsibilities; informal QM checking; the affects of equipment support on quality and user level equipment responsibilities; personnel selection; continuation training; performance monitoring; clearance site QC inspections; and District HQ and operational team external QA inspections. On completion of this training QM should then become a major focus for HIB staff for the remainder of their project time.

19. OJT training is needed in work planning for the PC, Deputy Provincial Coordinator (DPC), SEODT and the DC's, but this will depend on the Provincial HQ staff agreeing to this training. Other on the job training (OJT) may be needed for any new Provincial HQ staff or the second SEODT when he returns.

### **Achievement of the Project Objectives**

20. The overall objective of the phase four project was to transfer knowledge, skills and capacities to all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. In July 2002, two months before the project was to start, UXO LAO implemented temporary staff reductions due to funding difficulties. As a result, four district clearance teams were reduced to one. The affect of the staff reductions on the project objective was that many staff were not available for all the activities planned and project plans had to be adapted to the changing situation.

21. Training has been carried out for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff in technical, support and management subjects relevant to UXO clearance operations. Training mediums used included workshops, formal training and OJT. Training of trainers (TOT) has been carried out for the majority of the UXO LAO Savannakhet staff with a responsibility for training.

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<sup>4</sup> UXO LAO Savannakhet clearance teams only ever carry out two tasks at once but have four Medics in each team. This is inefficient and one medic could support the DC.

22. Reference materials have been produced for training and technical support, which includes training packages for all the subjects covered in the training, development of a UXO reference manual, development of training reference material and development of equipment user guides. A technical library has been established, which includes digital photographs and publications covering UXO clearance related subjects. Free from explosive (FFE) UXO training aids have been prepared to assist with training.

23. Two medical training courses were conducted for HIB staff in order that they could ensure their own medical support in an emergency, provide assistance to victims of non demining accidents and conduct medical training for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff.

24. Assessment forms have been developed for the monitoring of operational activities and UXO LAO Savannakhet staff have been trained in the use of these forms.

25. Databases for training, personnel, operations and logistics have been developed although the operations database has not been used since July 2002.

26. Three study trips were made by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff to other locations, which provided opportunities for the staff to interact with peers, to view different activities, to discuss issues and to share ideas.

27. The establishment of training areas for equipment training and testing was not completed because it was more efficient and cost effective to establish training areas near worksites on an 'as required' basis rather than maintain permanent training areas.

28. Activities to be completed by HIB to achieve their project objectives include; formal training in accordance with the 2004 training plan; further TOT so that all staff with a training responsibility are covered; OJT for the DPC and the SEODT in the management and use of training packages, the management of reference materials, the use of the training database and the management of training records; OJT for the DPC, SEODT, DC's, Team Leaders (TL's), Survey Team Leaders (STL's) and Section Commanders (SC's) in the use of monitoring assessment forms relevant to their job; the refinement of the training packages and the completion of marking guides; a review of the monitoring assessment forms and refinement of those to be retained; and the re-establishment of the operations database and training of the DPC, SEODT and the Operations Assistant in its use.

29. It is unlikely that UXO LAO Savannakhet staff will be capable of carrying out monitoring assessments properly because Lao people do not like to, or are unwilling to, openly criticise others negatively, which the assessments do if they are carried out properly.

30. All outstanding activities are achievable by the current HIB staff in the remaining project time. This has been planned already and should continue until the end of the current project time unless additional support to the current objectives, is required from HIB.

31. It is critical that UXO LAO Savannakhet staff are available for training for HIB's objectives to be completed. There are no inputs required from other stakeholders to ensure that the project objectives are achieved.

32. All of the HIB project's objectives were relevant in some way to the operations of UXO LAO Savannakhet. The effectiveness of the training was demonstrated by the performance of the staff on the job, which was overall satisfactory. The training and technical support materials developed are being used by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff in their work. Training areas are required but permanent training areas are not. Monitoring assessments, if used properly are effective, but in the Lao environment this is unlikely to be the case. The databases are all effective tools for managing UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations, but only

if the staff are available to manage them and the activities (and information) needed to maintain them, continue.

33. UXO LAO Savannakhet will need future support with training packages, reference materials and equipment user guides in Lao script if UXO LAO introduces new equipment or procedures into the programme. The UXO LAO National HQ would provide this support.

34. The UXO LAO SEODT will need future technical support if he encounters UXO he cannot identify or UXO that he cannot deal with. The UXO LAO National HQ will look at options to ensure that technical support is available. This technical support could also be used to produce further FFE training aids.

### **Technical Skills and Management Capabilities of UXO LAO Savannakhet**

35. For the field staff there were no problems with technical skills and worksite management was satisfactory. With the problems identified, effective monitoring with proper corrective action would rectify them. Further training is needed on QM for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff.

36. The management capabilities of the current management staff are satisfactory except for the DPC who needs more assistance from HIB to get his skills up to standard. For all management staff, completion of the training planned by HIB and the additional training recommended in this evaluation will ensure that the staff have the capabilities to effectively manage UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations.

37. The additional training needed by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff includes; computer training for the DPC, SEODT, Operations Assistant and the Personnel/ Administration/ Finance Assistant; TOT for Medics; management training specific to UXO LAO procedures<sup>5</sup> for the PC, DPC, SEODT, Operations Assistant and the Personnel/ Administration/ Finance Assistant; OJT in work planning for the PC, DPC, SEODT and DC's; formal and OJT training on QM for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff; and OJT and formal training for any new staff appointed to the Provincial HQ, including the second SEODT when he returns.

38. The UXO LAO Savannakhet Medics need medical refresher training. The UXO LAO National HQ have indicated that refresher medical training for all UXO LAO Medics will occur during the remainder of 2004.

39. A bomb fuze manual will be needed by UXO LAO Savannakhet when technical support ceases to be available. HIB are capable of producing this manual. Further discussion between HIB and the UXO LAO National HQ is needed to determine the requirements for this manual. HIB input will also be needed for aspects of the management review being undertaken by UXO LAO National HQ this year.

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<sup>5</sup> Procedures to cover finance, personnel and administration would be produced by the UXO LAO National HQ this year as part of the management review.

## **Contribution of the HIB Project to the Overall Objective in Savannakhet<sup>6</sup>**

40. Accident statistics are not accurate enough to show that deaths and injuries are reducing. The general opinion of people interviewed during the evaluation was that UXO accidents are rising because of the scrap metal trade. UXO is being cleared by UXO LAO in Savannakhet and each UXO cleared reduces the chance of an accident occurring. Land is being cleared by UXO LAO for agriculture and development in Savannakhet.

41. More UXO and more land would be cleared in Savannakhet if all the inefficiencies with UXO LAO's operations were removed. The biggest contribution to this can be made by the UXO LAO National HQ successfully carrying out the management initiatives they indicated were going to occur this year as part of a management review.

42. The HIB project has made a significant contribution to the development of technical skills and management capabilities of UXO LAO Savannakhet. The HIB project is contributing to achieving the overall objective of UXO LAO.

43. The overall sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet is dependant on factors beyond the control of HIB. The HIB project aims to ensure that current UXO LAO Savannakhet staff are technically skilled and managerially capable or UXO LAO Savannakhet is technically and managerially sustainable. Provided the additional training or technical support activities identified in this evaluation are completed, then HIB will have done as much as possible to ensure the technical and managerial sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet. The support of the UXO LAO National HQ and UXO LAO Savannakhet will be needed to ensure that these activities are able to be completed.

44. Much of the sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet is dependant on the UXO LAO National HQ improving equipment and personnel support. The UXO LAO Savannakhet PC can assist in improving efficiency and sustainability by; ensuring that staff selection is based on qualifications, experience and performance; giving management support to staff carrying out monitoring assessments; taking a leading role in coordination of work planning at a provincial level; assisting the DC's with the coordination and liaison required for work planning at a district level; ensuring that only clearance tasks that are district priorities are included in work plans; and ensuring the attendance of all staff at training. UXO LAO Savannakhet staff themselves can assist by attending all planned training (formal and OJT).

### **Withdrawal of HIB Support**

45. The completion of the current project objectives should be the highest priority for HIB and HIB should plan on continuing with this. Administrative requirements that need to be completed include; handing over of equipment and materials to UXO LAO; recovering HIB owned equipment and if required, returning it to Vientiane; handing back the HIB rented houses; taking any leave owed; carrying out any final administration; and completing any final reports. Some of these requirements may be carried out concurrently with the project objectives, but some of the project time will be needed.

46. All of the additional training or technical support requirements that were identified as being needed for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff, less the management training, should be able to be completed by HIB, but time would be very tight. Three Technical Advisors (TA's) will be required for a further four months if all are to be carried out.

47. HIB should consider which of the additional training and support activities they want to support and prepare a plan, with timings and staff requirements, for these activities to be

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<sup>6</sup> The overall objective is, to reduce deaths and injuries from UXO and to open up land for agriculture and other development.

carried out. Current project objectives should be included in the plan. HIB should then submit a proposal to the UXO LAO National HQ stating that they require an extension to their project time to carry out additional activities and request the UXO LAO National HQ's support for the extension. HIB should specify a time limit for a reply as there are other administrative activities that have to occur, whether an extension goes ahead or not.

48. If the UXO LAO National HQ does not want any of the planned activities to occur then HIB should continue with the current project objectives and plan on ending their support in August. If the UXO LAO National HQ does want some of the activities to occur then there will need to be a period of negotiation as details are worked out until a final agreement is reached. HIB will then have to prepare a plan to ensure that the current project objectives and any new objectives are met. HIB should continue with their current objectives while this process is going on.

## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

### “Historical Background to the Problem

1. The Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) has the distinction of being, per capita, the most heavily bombed nation in the world. As a result of the broader conflict in Indochina during the 1960s and 70s, Laos was the scene of extensive ground battles and intense aerial bombardment.

2. From 1964 until 1973, more than half a million bombing missions were carried out over the country, and as a result over two million tonnes of explosive ordnance delivered. It has been estimated that up to 30% of all ordnance dropped failed to detonate on impact, leaving a lethal legacy that continues to kill, maim and impoverish over 30 years later. This explosive ordnance included vast quantities of cluster bombs, that released anti-personnel 'sub-munition' bomblets (called 'bombies' by the Lao people). Such unexploded bomblets become, in effect, *de facto* anti-personnel landmines. US bombing records indicate that over 80 million bomblets were dropped over the country. In addition to the 'bombies', there are also vast quantities of unexploded heavy bombs, rockets, grenades, artillery munitions, mortars, and anti-personnel landmines and improvised explosive devices.

3. Such large-scale contamination has resulted in over 11,000 casualties since 1975, and vast amounts of land rendered unusable. A country-wide survey, conducted in 1996, on the socio-economic impact of unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Laos found that 25% of the total number of villages were affected. In rural communities, high levels of poverty - and risk - are clearly linked to high levels of UXO contamination. Villagers living in such impoverished conditions often find that they are confronted with 'enforced risk taking': they either continue to live in acute poverty, and in many cases chronic malnutrition, or risk injury and death by working UXO contaminated land.

4. 87,213 square kilometres of land (out of a country wide total of 236,800 square kilometres) are considered as being at risk from UXO (12,427 sq. km. high risk, 74,786 sq. km. moderate risk: sources of information being US bombing records and UXO LAO 'level one' survey data).

### Background to UXO LAO

5. National responsibility for the co-ordination of humanitarian mine action, particularly in this context, the elimination of UXO in the Lao PDR, rests with its Government. In 1995 UNDP, UNICEF and other stakeholders, supported the Government in establishing the Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO LAO). At the same time, an international trust fund for humanitarian mine action was established, under the auspices of UNDP Laos.

6. UXO LAO now operates in the nine most heavily contaminated provinces in the country. In each of these provinces UXO LAO has established provincial offices, and field operations, and is assisted by a variety of international implementing partners<sup>7</sup> who provide field-based technical advisers (TA).

7. Provincial operations reflect the generic principles of humanitarian mine action. In Laos, clearance operations are split into two components: mobile 'roving' teams that seek to destroy ordnance reported by villagers lying on the surface, as well as area clearance teams that detect and destroy buried items that often inhibit developmental and infrastructure projects. Survey activities provide a crucial operational element, through the provision of detailed maps that help to prioritise work, and monitor provincial progress, against a baseline

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<sup>7</sup> Humanitarian mine action agencies such as Norwegian People's Aid, Handicap International, Gerbera and the Mines Advisory Group.

survey conducted in 1997. Training and capacity building are also integral to the programme, including both formal (provided at the National Training Centre) and on-the-job training, provided by Lao trainers, and the international TA. UXO Lao also implements 'community awareness' activities that seek to raise a new awareness among rural communities of the continued dangers of UXO, and to educate villagers on ways to minimise the risks caused by UXO, through behavioural change.

### **Operational Achievements**

8. Since 1996, UXO LAO has cleared 4,209 hectares of prioritised land for community development and agriculture, benefiting an estimated 1.4 million people. Total clearance operations (area clearance and roving teams) have destroyed 515,392 items of unexploded ordnance, including 227,036 anti-personnel bomblets, and 2,138 big bombs. Community awareness teams have visited 4,355 villages with an estimated number of 1.1 million beneficiaries.<sup>8</sup>

### **History of the Savannakhet Project**

9. In April 1997, Handicap International Belgium (HIB) entered into an agreement with UXO LAO to provide technical assistance to the UXO LAO provincial organisation in Savannakhet province, Lao PDR. HIB proposed to provide service in Savannakhet as it was identified as the most UXO affected province in the country. This agreement led to a phased approach as follows:

- a. Phase one. April 1997 to August 1998. Direct technical assistance to UXO LAO field operations in Sepone District, Savannakhet.
- b. Phase two. September 1998 to February 2001. Expansion of activities and assistance in the improvement of the technical and managerial skills of UXO LAO staff in Savannakhet.
- c. Phase three. March 2001 to February 2002. Support to continuance of UXO LAO activities in Savannakhet; improve technical skills in survey and explosive ordnance disposal to national standards; development of a professional capacity in leadership, planning and management; and to assist UXO LAO in achieving its mission.
- d. In September 2001 an external evaluation was carried out on phase three of the project and based on the recommendations of the evaluation a 24 month fourth phase was planned aimed at the transfer of knowledge, skills and capabilities and the progressive withdrawal of HIB technical assistance.
- e. Emergency phase. March 2002 to August 2002. Maintenance of HIB technical assistance to UXO clearance operations. Due to delays in funding for the fourth phase a six month emergency phase was instigated aimed at maintaining operational continuity until phase four could be initiated.
- f. Phase four. September 2002 to August 2004. Transfer of knowledge, skills and capacities to UXO LAO Savannakhet in respect of the application of comprehensive national procedures across all aspects of the programme leading to the complete withdrawal of HIB technical assistance.

10. This external evaluation is being carried out on the fourth phase of the project. Depending on the requirements of UXO LAO there is a possibility that a four month 'no cost'

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<sup>8</sup> UXO LAO briefing paper, November 2003. Courtesy of UXO LAO National HQ.

extension could be provided by HIB, which would take the fourth phase through to December 2004.

## **SECTION TWO: THE EVALUATION**

### **Evaluation Objectives**

11. There are four objectives for the external evaluation. These are; to determine what has been achieved in terms of the project objectives; to determine UXO LAO's needs beyond the end of the project, and if there are any, in ways that they could be addressed; to capitalize on the experience of HIB, in particular to methodologies and tools that have been used, and the level of success; and to ensure that UXO LAO and HIB are properly prepared for the withdrawal.

12. A copy of the terms of reference for the evaluation is included at Annex A to this report.

### **Evaluation Matrix**

13. Prior to the evaluation taking place an evaluation matrix was prepared by the evaluation team and this matrix was used to guide the team through the evaluation. A copy of the evaluation matrix is included at Annex B.

### **Evaluation Programme**

14. The evaluation was conducted over the period 29 March to 23 April 2004. An evaluation programme is attached at Annex C.

15. A list of the people interviewed during the evaluation is included at Annex D.

### **Evaluation Team**

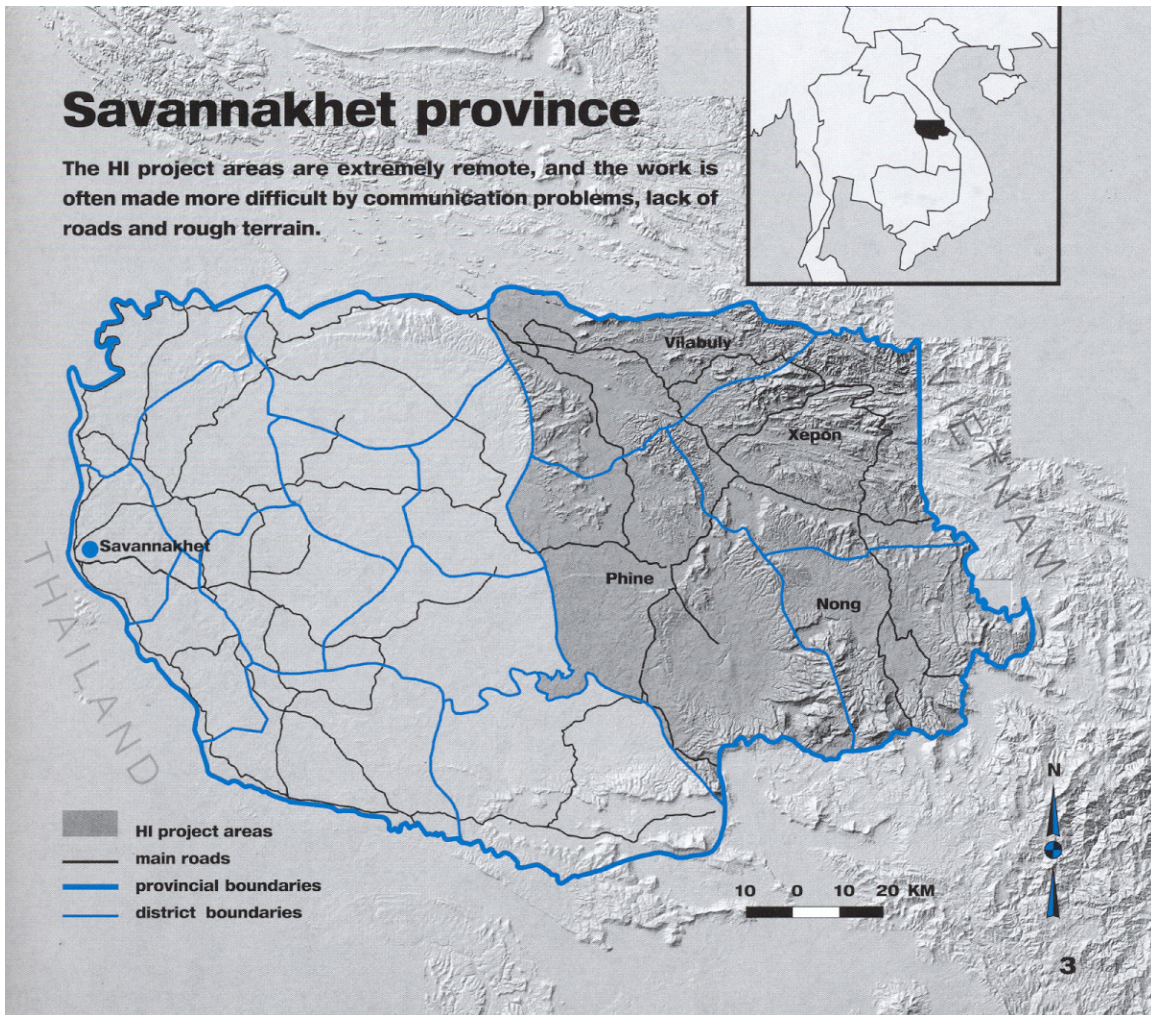
16. The evaluation team consisted of Mr Nigel Orr and Mr Bounphamith Somvichith. Copies of the curriculum vitae of the evaluation team are included at Annex E. The evaluation team was accompanied by the HIB Senior Technical Advisor (STA) Mr Tony West and the UXO LAO Senior EOD Technician (SEODT) Mr Noupheet Chanthalangsy, during the field visits carried out over the first four days of the evaluation.

## **SECTION THREE: ADDRESSING THE NEEDS FOR UXO ACTION IN SAVANNAKHET**

### **Needs of UXO Affected Communities**

17. UXO contamination in Savannakhet. The 1997 National Study on the Socio-Economic Impact of Unexploded Ordnance identified that Savannakhet was the most contaminated province in Lao PDR and Savannakhet had the highest total number of UXO victims since the war ended in 1973. The most affected districts were Sepone, Nong and Vilabuly. Lesser affected districts were Phine and Atsaphanthong. Since the survey was completed, Atsaphanthong district has been divided into two with a new district of Palanxai being formed to the east.





18. Affect of UXO on communities. The direct affects of UXO on the communities are lack of land for agriculture and accidents, but this does not affect all communities. The affects are location specific. The indirect affect on the communities is that UXO contamination hinders development activities which prevent communities getting access to health care, education, markets and other social services. This is also location specific:

- a. Land for agriculture. There are people in the remote areas of the most UXO affected districts that do not have enough food because they do not have enough land free from UXO to be able to completely sustain themselves. There are other factors involved as well such as low yield shifting cultivation, but UXO contamination is a significant factor.
- b. Accidents. Accidents are still a concern but the people are accustomed to living with UXO and understand the dangers. Unfortunately, because of other factors (economic and subsistence) the people are forced to take risks.
- c. Land for development. Any development activities in the most seriously affected districts that involve digging or earthmoving are affected by UXO. This indirectly affects the people.

19. Needs of the communities. The needs vary depending on the location of the community. The communities close to the main access routes have relatively few needs in

relation to UXO action as they have access to most services, including UXO clearance, and many have received support already. It is those communities in the inaccessible areas that have the most pressing need, which is safe land to grow food. However, in many cases access is required to permit UXO clearance (and other development activities) to take place. So, for the remote inaccessible areas, UXO clearance in support of access routes is most important with land clearance for agriculture being carried out once access is achieved. UXO clearance or awareness activities to reduce accidents, while important, were not considered such a high priority as the communities are accustomed to living with UXO.

20. The communities' priorities. Because of access problems and time constraints it was not possible to discuss priorities with the more remote villagers themselves during the evaluation, however from discussions with UXO LAO staff working in the districts, development organisations and government departments it was learned that the priority for the most needy communities was safe land to grow food. However as indicated previously, in order for these needs to be addressed in many cases access is required.

### **Government of Lao PDR's Priorities**

21. The national priorities for development are focused on achieving the overarching objective of Lao PDR exiting the group of least developed countries by 2020. One of the main objectives in achieving this is poverty eradication.<sup>9</sup> Poverty is defined as "the lack of ability to fulfil basic human needs such as not having enough food, lacking adequate clothing, not having permanent housing, and lacking access to health, education and transportation services".<sup>10</sup> Development activities that contribute to the achievement of poverty eradication are amongst the priorities of the Government.

22. The priority focus on poverty reduction is at district level. "Districts are the most relevant and reliable level for data collection and poverty monitoring. Further, districts are the level where coordination, consultation and participation can be achieved".<sup>11</sup> The Government has identified 72 districts in Lao PDR as poor and from these 47 have been selected as the poorest and priorities for investment in the period 2003 - 2005. Four districts in Savannakhet are amongst the 47 poorest and all are contaminated with UXO. They are the seriously affected districts of Sepone, Nong and Vilabuly and the lesser affected district of Phine.

23. The provincial priorities follow on from the national priorities with the emphasis on poverty reduction and eradication. In order to achieve this the Provincial Government's aim is to provide all people with safe land to grow food and other crops (cash crops), access to health care, access to education, access to markets and access to other basic necessities such as clean water. The Provincial Government knows that it cannot provide these services to all locations therefore its plans are to:

- a. Resettle people from the remote highland regions where there is no suitable agricultural land, to collective areas where there is suitable agricultural land and then provide the other services to these areas. This resettlement also eliminates the shifting cultivation practices.
- b. In areas where there is suitable agricultural land, ensure the land is free from UXO, where necessary provide suitable access roads and ensure the people have access to the other services.

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<sup>9</sup> National poverty eradication programme (NPEP).

<sup>10</sup> Prime Minister's instruction No 010/PM 25 June 2001.

<sup>11</sup> National poverty eradication programme (NPEP).

24. According to the Provincial Government the district focus for poverty eradication is followed to identify the priority areas for development. Surveys have been carried out in two of the most affected districts (Sepone and Nong) to identify where roads are needed, areas to be used for agriculture, where irrigation systems are required and locations for hospitals, schools and markets. It is intended that similar surveys will be carried out in Vilabuly and Phine. The results of these surveys become the district's priorities for development with work being carried out as and when resources are available.

25. Affects of UXO on development. The Provincial Government advised that all development activities in the most affected districts are influenced in some way by UXO and the presence of UXO is a major constraint to achieving the Government's aims. Additionally, they acknowledge that there is not enough UXO clearance resources available to clear the land needed. There are over 120 ha of land needed for agriculture alone in the districts of Nong and Sepone according to the district surveys done already. This land requires UXO clearance.

26. In some cases the people themselves are clearing UXO in support of development projects. This occurs with two roads being constructed by the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post, and Construction (MCTPC) in the north east of Sepone district. The people carry out this work to collect the UXO metal to sell as scrap. There is more on the scrap metal trade covered in section eight of this report. The MCTPC stated that there had not been any accidents on their projects.

### **Needs of Development Agencies**

27. There are a number of agencies carrying out development work in the most UXO affected districts of Savannakhet. These include:

- a. MCTPC. The MCTPC stated that they carry out various roading projects throughout Savannakhet that are funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). They are also carrying out two roading projects in the north east of Savannakhet to open up land in areas alongside the Vietnamese border. These two roads are funded by the district concerned (Sepone) with construction only occurring when funding is available. (See paragraph 26 above).
- b. There is no UXO clearance carried out in advance of any of the road construction work carried out by the MCTPC but UXO clearance is done when UXO are located during the work. For the projects funded by the ADB, the MCTPC uses the Lao Army to clear any UXO that affect their work. The MCTPC have a budget for this. For the two roading projects in Sepone the local people take care of any UXO located during construction (see paragraph 26 above).
- c. Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC). BTC is carrying out roading and other rural development projects in Sepone, Nong and Thapangthong districts. UXO clearance in support of BTC activities is included in the BTC project with this work required to be carried out by UXO LAO. Some UXO clearance has already been carried out for roads to be constructed in Sepone, however another 20 km of roads planned for Nong district has had to be postponed as UXO clearance could not be carried out this year. BTC will continue to need UXO clearance support for their projects until their work is finished. This is currently scheduled for 2007.
- d. HI France/Action Nord Sud (ANS). HI France/ANS are carrying out health and other rural development projects in Sepone, Nong, Vilabuly and Phine districts. UXO contamination does affect some aspects of their work and they have received support from UXO LAO in the past. Their current projects are scheduled for completion in mid

2005 and they anticipate that their work will continue after this. HI France/ANS will need UXO clearance support in the future.

- e. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). CIDA is supporting rural development projects in Phine district involving, health, education, agriculture and road construction. The projects are being implemented by Lao officials who have indicated to the Canadian Advisor to the projects that where necessary, the UXO problem has been taken care of. UXO LAO has done some clearance of agricultural land in the villages where the projects are being implemented. The CIDA support is scheduled to continue until 2007 with the same activities being carried out. It is likely that UXO clearance support will be needed for future activities.
- f. World Food Programme (WFP). WFP is carrying out food for work programmes in seven districts of Savannakhet, which include the UXO affected districts of Sepone, Nong, Vilabuly and Atsaphanthong. The work programmes they support are based at village level and cover the complete range of rural development activities. UXO affects many of the WFP work programmes and they have received support from UXO LAO in the past, although UXO LAO has been unable to support all of the WFP work programmes that needed support. This has caused delays with the WFP's work. UXO clearance support is required by the WFP for the future and they have indicated that they are looking at getting future support from a separate dedicated clearance organisation.

28. There are other agencies carrying out development work in Savannakhet that do not require UXO clearance assistance. This is either because the activities that they are carrying out do not require any UXO clearance, or because the locations they are working in are not affected (or affected enough) by UXO. These agencies include:

- a. Consortium. Consortium is carrying out victim assistance and awareness activities in the districts of Sepone, Nong and Vilabuly. They also work in the north of Lao PDR.
- b. Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF). MSF is working on health projects in Savannakhet township.
- c. Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development (SUFORD). SUFORD is carrying out sustainable forestry and rural development in the districts of Atsaphone and Atsaphanthong. They indicated that UXO contamination did not currently affect their project. It may in the future.

29. Lao Army. The Lao Army is carrying out UXO clearance in support of border construction work although the exact details of this work were not obtained during the evaluation. The Lao Army also does some work in support of the MCTPC. According to the Savannakhet Deputy Governor the Lao Army is not available to carry out clearance in support of development activities.

### **Meeting the Needs for UXO Clearance in Savannakhet**

30. Currently, there are two organisations that are known to be working on implementing UXO clearance activities in Savannakhet outside of UXO LAO. As indicated in paragraph 27f above, WFP are looking at obtaining their own dedicated UXO clearance support and HIB are also looking into a further UXO clearance, awareness and victim assistance programme focussed on the districts of Sepone, Nong and Vilabuly. HIB's plans are to conduct UXO clearance in Nong, with awareness and victim assistance in all three districts. Notwithstanding this, from discussions with Savannakhet Provincial Government representatives and Non Government Organisations (NGO's) it was indicated that UXO LAO

is expected to meet many of the needs for UXO clearance in Savannakhet for the future. The MCTPC indicated that they would continue to use the Lao Army for essential UXO clearance for their ADB funded roading projects, but would also approach UXO LAO to support some of their work. The Provincial Government does not have the financial resources to pay for commercial clearance in support of development activities.

31. UXO LAO has four teams operating in Savannakhet province. One in each of the districts of Sepone, Nong, Vilabuly and Palanxai.<sup>12</sup> Each of the teams carry out two types of clearance; roving clearance to remove random surface UXO's, and sub surface area clearance to clear specific areas of land. In each of UXO LAO's four clearance teams, 25% of the staff carry out roving clearance while 75% carry out area clearance. It is only the area clearance that actually supports development activities.

32. It would be possible for UXO LAO to improve its effectiveness in support of development activities by concentrating all its resources on area clearance. This concentration does not only have to be within the current districts being worked in. UXO LAO should be able to concentrate more than one clearance team in a district, particularly if the district has already identified its clearance requirements as has been done in Sepone and Nong. (See paragraph 24 above). In doing this there would be some efficiencies in equipment and personnel, particularly if the resources were concentrated in one location. However, in concentrating its resources in support of area clearance, consideration must be given to maintaining an emergency response capability to deal with UXO's that pose an immediate danger to people.<sup>13</sup>

33. UXO LAO's clearance statistics for the three month period January to March 2004 show that 44.5 ha of land was cleared by the 75% of its clearance staff carrying out area clearance. If UXO LAO concentrated all of its clearance resources on area clearance this figure could potentially reach 60 ha for a three month period. Even taking into account the rainy season and access problems (loss of three months productivity), potentially UXO LAO clearance teams in Savannakhet could clear 180 ha (+) in a year.

34. As indicated in paragraph 24 above, surveys are being carried out in the four poorest (and UXO affected) districts of Savannakhet to identify priority areas for development. Two districts (Sepone and Nong) have already been surveyed with Vilabuly and Phine yet to be done. From these surveys a reasonably accurate estimation of the amount of land to be cleared could be made. In fact, the Provincial Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) already knew the amount of priority land to be cleared for agriculture in Sepone and Nong. (Approximately 60 ha in one district and 70 ha in another). Assuming that other development work is contributing to the district priorities, an accurate indication of the total amount of land to be cleared by UXO LAO in each of the districts could be made.<sup>14</sup> Provided that this land is accessible and could be ready for clearance i.e. vegetation is cleared or burned, this clearance work could then form the basis for UXO LAO Savannakhet's work plan.

35. It can be seen that UXO LAO has the potential to make a significant impact on the UXO area clearance requirements of the poorest districts of Savannakhet Province provided its clearance resources maintains their current output levels. For this to occur though, there needs to be close liaison and good coordination between UXO LAO and the other agencies

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<sup>12</sup> Palanxai is not one of the districts selected as poorest and a priority for investment in the period 2003 – 2005. The work in Palanxai is not in accordance with the Government's priorities.

<sup>13</sup> This does not necessarily need to be at district level. UXO LAO has good communication systems and the roads in Savannakhet Province are relatively good. A provincial emergency response capability could be maintained, with this team continuing roving tasks until they are needed for an emergency.

<sup>14</sup> This may not be the case and other development agencies may have to be approached to determine their UXO clearance requirements.

involved, Provincial and District Authorities, NGO's etc. According to the personnel interviewed during the evaluation, this is one area where there is potential for improvement at the moment. UXO LAO should take a lead in this.

36. Finally, UXO LAO should not be concerned about revising its current Savannakhet work plan if it is not addressing the real development priorities in the province, as is the case with some of the current work plan.<sup>15</sup> A new work plan in accordance with district priorities could be prepared concurrently with ongoing clearance work. During the remainder of HIB's time with UXO LAO Savannakhet the HIB staff could assist UXO LAO Savannakhet staff with this.

## **SECTION FOUR: CURRENT SITUATION IN SAVANNAKHET**

### **Introduction**

37. The section discusses the current situation with UXO LAO Savannakhet in terms of work planning, liaison and coordination, equipment support to operations, personnel support to operations and Quality Management (QM). It also identifies which areas HIB may be able to assist UXO LAO Savannakhet to improve its operations in regard to the operational or support activities covered.

### **Work Planning**

38. Some of UXO LAO Savannakhet's work is not fully supporting the districts' or communities' priorities. As indicated in section three of this report UXO LAO teams are currently working in Palanxai district and have plans to work in Atsaphanthong district in 2004.<sup>16</sup> These are not the Government's priority districts. Also, two of the three area clearance sites visited during the evaluation (one in Vilabuly and one in Palanxai) were clearing land already being used for agriculture. One area clearance site visited (in Vilabuly) had just been completed. This job was the clearance of 14,000 m<sup>2</sup> of rice field, the majority of which had already been used for crops twice. This task took 14 deminers 5 days to complete and no UXO were found. During the evaluation it was learned that there are other areas in the same district where the people will not attempt to grow crops for fear of UXO.

39. If land is already being used then it cannot be such a high priority as land that is unable to be used. This point was discussed with the Provincial Coordinator (PC), SEODT and the Team Leader (TL) concerned. They agreed that better task selection and prioritisation is needed. UXO LAO clearance resources should focus on clearing land in accordance with the district development priorities as indicated in section three. If necessary, current work plans should be revised so this occurs.

40. Furthermore, it is believed that UXO LAO should have systems in place to permit tasks to be cancelled after a reasonable amount of work over the entire task area fails to find any evidence of UXO. This would prevent work continuing on sites without a UXO problem.<sup>17</sup>

41. Effect of support on work planning. In observing the work being carried out by UXO LAO teams it was clear that work was only being carried out in areas that could be reached

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<sup>15</sup> The Savannakhet 2004 work plan has 53 ha of land planned for clearance in Palanxai and Atsaphanthong. Some of this work may be wet season work, but not all of it is.

<sup>16</sup> It is noted that according to UXO LAO operations SOP's, section one paragraph 60, the UXO LAO National HQ endorses provincial work plans and they are approved by the UXO LAO National Steering Committee.

<sup>17</sup> UXO LAO survey procedures do not permit surveyors to carry out subsurface checks of sites so the absence of UXO on land identified for clearance cannot be determined during survey tasks.

from the district's operational base, the District HQ. Work in the more remote areas, where UXO LAO teams would have to live away from base was not being carried out.

42. In order for UXO LAO Savannakhet's teams to be able to work away from their base they need to have access to certain basic necessities such as food, water, fuel, shelter, communication, transport, medical support (for emergencies and common diseases like diarrhoea and malaria) and electricity (for battery charging). All of these are important.

43. Some of these necessities are already provided, or able to be provided by UXO LAO, but not all and this is affecting the ability of teams to work away from their bases, and potentially their ability to support district clearance priorities. UXO LAO needs to ensure that its teams have the equipment, or that procedures are in place, so that all the fundamental support requirements of the clearance teams can be met when they have to work away from their base locations. This is important to ensure that support to the districts' clearance priorities can be provided. Equipment and personnel support to operations are discussed further in this section of the report.

### **Liaison and Coordination**

44. During the evaluation it was learned that there is a weakness in liaison and coordination in Savannakhet both with work planning and operational coordination.

45. Work planning. The coordination for work planning in Savannakhet is not being carried out well with many key agencies not being involved, the MCTPC being one for example. The Savannakhet Deputy Governor indicated that for this situation to improve UXO LAO Savannakhet needs to take a leading role in the coordination for work planning. This is something that the PC should be more actively involved in at the provincial level.

46. Given that the Government of Lao PDR has adopted a district level approach to poverty eradication and the identification of development priorities, UXO LAO should focus its work planning at a district level with close coordination occurring between District Coordinators (DC's) and District Authorities.

47. In order for this to be able to occur the DC's need to be given transport (at least a motorbike) to permit them to get out to visit the District Authorities and the clearance sites, and an additional staff member to maintain a presence at the District HQ when they do go out.

48. Currently, the DC's are perceived as being too young or too junior to carry out effective liaison with the District Authorities. The District Authorities prefer to deal with the PC. This is not particularly efficient and an area that the Savannakhet PC should seek to resolve with the Provincial and District Authorities.

49. Operational coordination. The DC's are also responsible for coordination with local communities in respect to UXO clearance operations. This occurs for such activities as bush cutting or burning, which must be carried out a certain time ahead of survey or clearance operations. In one case a survey was unable to be done for a clearance task because of a break down in operational coordination. Once again, the provision of a vehicle and an additional staff member to the DC's will permit these tasks to occur.

### **Equipment Support to Operations**

50. During the evaluation it was learned that equipment support has the biggest affect on the efficiency of UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations. Currently, UXO LAO Savannakhet is

behind with its 2004 work plan mostly because of inadequate equipment support. Some examples of the affects this has on operations are:

- a. In one district there were no radio battery chargers and the teams had to minimise radio use (a potential safety issue) and they lost a day's work a week while radios were transported to another district for charging. This has since been resolved.
- b. In one district the teams were unable to work for an extended period due to no batteries being available for mine detectors.
- c. A survey team was unable to work at the time of the evaluation because of one motorbike broken down and awaiting repair.

51. There are also situations where equipment support does not affect efficiency but does affect operational safety. Examples of these were noted during the evaluation.

52. Vehicles. Vehicles are a major concern because without vehicles, operations have to stop. In discussions with the UXO LAO Mechanic it was learned that in the past some vehicles have been used even though they have known faults. This has occurred because replacement vehicles are not available and there are delays in getting parts. During the evaluation one vehicle in Vilabuly had a minor faults with brakes and steering but was still being used. The Mechanic also stated that routine servicing (oil and filter changes etc) is often delayed for supply reasons. This causes vehicles to wear out faster. However, it was observed during the evaluation that some parts, such as tyres and oil were available in the UXO LAO Savannakhet store,

53. There were four vehicles parked up in the province either waiting repair or disposal. One, a Sadko truck in Phine, which has done less then 4,000 km, has faults which have not yet been repaired. The field personnel do not want to use this vehicle because it is so unreliable. Three vehicles have been parked up outside the District HQ in Sepone since UXO LAO's temporary staff reductions in July 2002. One has done 14,000 km, a second 24,000 km and a third 41,000 km. Their condition is deteriorating.

54. Except for the one survey motorbike broken down, and the provision of a motorbike for the DC's, UXO LAO Savannakhet have the minimum number of vehicles (four per clearance team) at present to support their operations. However, their condition is deteriorating and if the maintenance situation does not improve a shortage of vehicles will eventually affect the efficiency of operations.

55. The equipment support problems in Savannakhet are caused by:

- a. Tables of equipment (TOE's) not being filled. These TOE's have some inherent surpluses to cater for short term deficiencies due to loss, damage or maintenance requirements.
- b. Delays in repairs of equipment when they break down. Mine detectors and radios are repaired in Vientiane. It can take up to two months for mine detectors to be sent to Vientiane, repaired and then returned to Savannakhet. For equipment that is repaired locally, quotes have to be obtained for the work or parts, a submission for funding made to UXO LAO National HQ and when the funding is approved the parts are obtained or the work is done.
- c. Delays in replacement of equipment that is lost, or damaged beyond economical repair.



- d. Inadequate care and maintenance. This covers the routine maintenance of the equipment by the users (cleaning, battery charging and carrying out user level repairs); scheduled maintenance such as oil and filter changes (mainly for vehicles and equipment with engines); accounting for equipment; security of equipment; proper storage of equipment; and proper transport of equipment. Sometimes care and maintenance is affected by other factors such as inadequate facilities for storage and security of equipment, insufficient vehicles for the proper transport of equipment or inadequate procedures that direct responsibilities and accountability for equipment.
  - e. Insufficient support service staff in key appointments on the Provincial HQ.
56. UXO LAO National HQ response. The UXO LAO National HQ indicated that they knew of the problems with equipment support and were working to resolve them. Initiatives they are working on as part of a management review include:
- a. A review of the TOE's for each of UXO LAO's 11 locations. This was to be carried out and then followed by a stock check.<sup>18</sup> Equipment would then be redistributed or procured to bring all equipment holdings up to scale.
  - b. A review of the whole area of equipment support to make it more responsive to the needs of the operations in the field.
  - c. Improvements to the way vehicle maintenance is carried out. They also have plans for the replacement of the older vehicles.
  - d. A review of staff requirements for all locations and then the filling of any vacancies.
57. The UXO LAO National HQ indicated that all of these activities would be carried out before the end of 2004.

### **Personnel Support to Operations**

58. Personnel support to operations in UXO LAO Savannakhet is lacking in two areas; there are key staff deficiencies in the province; and the staff selection process is not always based on job requirements in relation to qualifications and experience, and past performance is not always considered.
59. Staff deficiencies. The staff deficiencies identified during the evaluation concern two support service staff vacancies on the Provincial HQ, the requirement for a second SEODT and the requirement for another staff member to assist the DC's on the District HQ.
- a. Support service staff vacancies. There are two vacancies in the support services establishment according to the Provincial HQ organisation chart in the operations Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's). The affect of these vacancies are that other staff have to work harder and certain tasks do not get done properly, or done at all. The filling of only one of these vacancies with a competent person would go a long way to improve the equipment support at a provincial level.
  - b. The PC is aware of the importance of having these Provincial HQ vacancies filled, as is the UXO LAO National HQ. The situation at the moment is that the MLSW has ordered UXO LAO to carry out a review of its staffing requirements before any further staff are appointed. This review is underway and from discussions with the UXO LAO

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<sup>18</sup> In the case of UXO LAO Savannakhet, having to carry out a stock check would place a strain on the already limited support service staff.

National HQ it was indicated that the structure of the Provincial HQ shown in the operations SOP's will remain relatively unchanged.<sup>19</sup>

- c. Second SEODT. The SEODT has four clearance teams in four districts to support in one of the largest provinces of Lao PDR. He also has to provide operational advice to the Provincial HQ staff and has training and QM responsibilities. Potentially, the SEODT has to continue the work of two of the HIB TA's. Many of the systems developed by HIB require the support of the SEODT to be maintained. This is too much for one person considering the range of responsibilities the SEODT has. If only one SEODT is appointed then some of the systems introduced will be lost and some of the responsibilities will not be carried out. A second qualified SEODT is needed in Savannakhet.<sup>20</sup>
- d. According to the UXO LAO National HQ a second qualified SEODT from Savannakhet, who is currently on temporary attachment to the National Training Centre will return to the province. When this occurs it is suggested that he also be employed as a SEODT with the responsibilities divided. A suggested division of general responsibilities is that one SEODT be responsible for support to the Provincial HQ operations and QM with the other responsible for training and technical support to the clearance operations. Separate job description should be written for each of the SEODT so that there is no overlap with their duties. The return and appointment of the second SEODT should occur well before the end of the HIB project time so that the second SEODT can be given any necessary on the job training (OJT) in his responsibilities.
- e. District HQ staff. As indicated previously the DC's have responsibilities for liaison and coordination and also have responsibilities for QM. (QM is discussed later in the report.) DC's also have a responsibility to fill in for TL's during routine absences. In Sepone roving clearance tasks had stopped because the TL was away on an eight week TL course, which seriously affected the work plan. All clearance staff were redeployed working under the remaining TL. DC's currently have difficulty in carrying out these tasks because they do not have enough staff on their HQ.
- f. District HQ's are staffed by the DC's themselves and a guard. When the DC's have to go away on routine absences the guard remains in the HQ monitoring the radio safety link and maintaining a presence. This is not a satisfactory arrangement. The District HQ's need another person to staff the HQ when the DC is away and to carry out routine tasks like filing of operational reports, maintaining records, operating the radio and battery charging.<sup>21</sup>

60. Staff selection. There are some problems with the selection of staff for key appointments and promotion within UXO LAO Savannakhet. In some cases staff selection is based on factors other than qualifications, experience and performance and lesser qualified staff are appointed. This then affects the quality and efficiency of operations and it also affects the morale and motivation of the staff that are capable and do work hard, but see less deserving people being appointed or promoted. During the evaluation the SEODT commented on the importance of staff selection on merit as he sees the affects that poor staff selection has on the field operations.

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<sup>19</sup> Any change to the Provincial HQ structure may have involved changes to the responsibilities of current staff, which may have affected the transfer of skills and capabilities being carried out by HIB as part of their project.

<sup>20</sup> If the management review is carried out against actual work requirements then it should identify that Savannakhet needs two SEODT on its Provincial HQ establishment.

<sup>21</sup> UXO LAO Savannakhet clearance teams only ever carry out two tasks at once but have four Medics in each team. This is inefficient and one medic could support the DC.

61. In order to ensure that current UXO LAO Savannakhet staff are appointed or promoted on merit, HIB introduced staff selection and performance monitoring systems based on the training database and the monitoring assessment forms. These systems show the staff who do work hard and are performing well. The use of these systems are supposedly supported by the PC, however despite this, in some cases staff selection is still being based on other factors and more capable and deserving staff are overlooked. This is a delicate matter and external pressures on staff selection often take precedence over objectivised staff selection.

62. One way that may assist in solving this problem is to have checks and controls on current staff selection and promotion imposed by the UXO LAO National HQ, with appointments and promotions approved at that level. This is something that should be considered by the UXO LAO National HQ.

## **QM**

63. QM is important to the maintenance of standards within an organisation and all aspects of an organisation should be subject to QM. UXO LAO currently has some QM procedures, which are covered in the operations SOP's. These involve quality control (QC) inspections on completed area clearance work and quality assurance (QA) checks on District and Provincial HQ's. In addition, HIB have implemented some QM systems as part of their project. These include the staff selection and performance monitoring systems and continuation training. The use of all QM systems and procedures is important to the maintenance of the technical standards of UXO LAO Savannakhet.

64. During the evaluation QM was discussed with many of the personnel interviewed and there is a good understanding amongst them of the requirements of QM and the importance of it to the maintenance of standards with UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations. In all cases staff indicated they would welcome more inspections by National and Provincial HQ staff.

65. UXO LAO QM procedures. According to operations SOP's, District HQ's should be QA checked once a year, survey team should be visited at least once every six months and clearance teams at least once every three months. There are also QC checks to be carried on clearance work by the TL's and Section Commanders (SC's) as it is completed.

66. Currently, the QC checks on the clearance work is being carried out in accordance with the requirements of operations SOP's. This is done on a regular basis and there are no problems with it. Also, a QA inspection by the Deputy Provincial Coordinator (DPC) and one HIB staff member was carried out on the District HQ's and field operations in accordance with operations SOP's, three weeks prior to the evaluation visit.<sup>22</sup> According to the field staff this was the first QA inspection in over a year and the survey teams were not visited. This indicates that not enough QA inspections are carried out and not all teams are covered.

67. Staff selection. As indicated in paragraphs 60 and 61 above, in some cases staff selection is based on factors other than qualifications, experience and performance and lesser qualified staff are appointed.

68. Performance monitoring. Assessment forms have been developed for the monitoring of operational activities with these assessments being carried out on the work of DC's, TL's, Survey Team Leaders (STL's), SC's, Medics, Surveyors and Deminers. The range of assessments cover all the important aspects of UXO clearance operations.

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<sup>22</sup> At the time of the evaluation the QA inspection report had not been completed by the DPC even though HIB staff had been encouraging this and allocating time to assist him.

69. National staff are carrying out assessments, but not all and there is still a lot of reliance on the HIB staff and the SEODT to do these assessments. In some cases when National staff carry out these assessments, deficiencies are overlooked and follow up action to correct the deficiencies that are identified, is not always carried out. This is a cultural matter. Lao people do not like to openly criticise others negatively, which the assessments do if they are carried out properly. The effectiveness of the monitoring assessments as a QM tool depend on the ability and willingness of the Lao staff to use them properly.

70. Continuation training. There is an apparent lack of understanding of the importance of continuation training to maintain standards. This is borne out by the reluctance of some staff to attend training (as indicated by the training database), the apparent lack of any enforcement measures to ensure personnel do attend training and with some staff, the perception that people know their jobs and training is a waste of time.

71. Maintenance of technical standards. For UXO LAO Savannakhet maintenance of technical standards can be achieved by ensuring the following occurs:

- a. Personnel selection is based on qualifications, experience and performance. This has already been discussed in paragraphs 60 to 61 above.
- b. Continuation training is carried out for all operational personnel. This is something that HIB has implemented and is currently being carried out. This should be continued after HIB leave.
- c. Monitoring assessments are carried out on operational tasks. This is something that HIB has implemented and they are currently being carried out. These should also be continued after HIB leave.
- d. QC checks on clearance tasks in accordance with operations SOP's are carried out. This is occurring.
- e. External QA checks on District HQ's and operations in accordance with operations SOP's are carried out. These have occurred, but not regularly enough and they do not cover all the teams.
- f. A good understanding of the need for quality in all aspects of the operations at all levels is achieved. This should be done by further QM training.

72. Further training. HIB staff have produced a training plan for 2004, which covers training against the current project objectives. For the remainder of the HIB project period UXO LAO Savannakhet staff should carry out this training themselves with minimum support from HIB staff.

73. For the period after the HIB project a further plan for continuation training should be made. This should cover general UXO clearance related subjects similar to what HIB have been covering. The PC and SEODT indicated that this would be done.

74. Further training should be carried out by HIB during the remainder of the project period on the importance of the external QA checks, continuation training and the monitoring assessments to the maintenance of technical standards. Further training should also be carried out on the use of the monitoring assessments. This should be carried out as part of QM training. See paragraphs 77 and 78 below.

75. UXO LAO National HQ QM. The UXO LAO National HQ has established a QM section and the development of UXO LAO's QM capability, including QM procedures, is

ongoing. Training on National QM procedures for provincial staff should be carried out when these procedures are complete.

### **Areas where HIB could Assist UXO LAO Savannakhet**

76. With some of the operational or support activities covered in this section of the report, HIB may be able to assist UXO LAO with training or other support to improve operations in Savannakhet. The areas where assistance could be provided are:

- a. Work planning. In the past HIB have offered assistance to the Savannakhet Provincial HQ staff with work planning, but this assistance has not always been accepted. HIB could still assist the PC, DPC, SEODT and the DC's with OJT and support in relation to coordination, liaison and work planning, particularly in relation to ensuring work planning meets the Government's priorities. This could involve a review of the 2004 work plan or the production of the 2005 work plan.
- b. Personnel support. HIB could assist with training (OJT and formal) for any new staff appointed to the Provincial HQ, particularly in relation to systems HIB have developed and subjects already covered in formal training. HIB could also provide OJT training for the second SEODT when he returns to Savannakhet. This training could only occur if these personnel are appointed or return to Savannakhet before the end of the HIB project period.

77. QM. It is considered that there is a lot of additional work that HIB could do in regard to QM. As indicated previously in this section of the report, HIB have implemented some QM systems as part of their project. What is suggested is that HIB consolidate all of their systems into one localised QM manual. This manual would also refer to the QM covered in operations SOP's. The focus of this manual would on the maintenance of standards for the field operations and suggested inclusions would be:

- a. An overview of the importance of QM to maintaining technical standards.
- b. QM responsibilities to cover all aspects of the operations at all levels.
- c. Informal QM checking at all levels.<sup>23</sup>
- d. The affects of equipment support on quality and user level equipment responsibilities.
- e. Personnel selection based on qualifications, experience and performance.
- f. Continuation training requirements.
- g. Performance monitoring, using the HIB developed monitoring assessment forms with emphasis on National staff carrying out these assessments properly.
- h. Clearance site QC inspections (from operations SOPs).
- i. District HQ and operational team external QA inspections (from operations SOPs).

78. Once this QM manual has been developed then formal training should be conducted based on it for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. On completion of the training QM should then become a major focus for HIB staff for the remainder of their project time. Emphasis

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<sup>23</sup> Emphasis here should be placed on the role of the DC's in carrying out QM checks on their own teams as DC's are the most senior operations person in the districts.

should be placed on getting the UXO LAO staff with responsibilities for carrying out QM activities actually carrying them out properly. This includes identifying all the faults and carrying out appropriate corrective action with minimum or no HIB staff support. HIB staff should have a non intrusive monitoring role, but at the same time ensuring that QM is carried out correctly.

## **SECTION FIVE: HIB's PROJECT RESULTS**

### **Introduction**

79. The project objectives discussed in this section of the report were extracted from the grant application (financing proposal) for the project, hereinafter called the project document. This project is phase four of HIB's support to UXO LAO operations in Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR.

### **Affect of UXO LAO Staff Reductions on Project Objectives**

80. At the time that HIB's phase four project was going through the development and approval process UXO LAO Savannakhet had four district clearance teams operating in the four most affected districts of Savannakhet. The objective of the project was to transfer knowledge, skills and capacities to the personnel in these teams and to their management and support service staff at a district and provincial level.

81. In July 2002, two months before this project was due to start, UXO LAO implemented temporary staff reductions due to funding difficulties. As a result, the four district clearance teams operating in Savannakhet Province were reduced to one. The selection of staff to remain with UXO LAO was carried out so that the more experienced staff were kept, but some in lower positions, for example TL's, were kept on as Deminers. This was carried out to ensure that key staff would still be available for the subsequent expansion.

82. The subsequent expansion was not planned in advance but occurred as the funding situation improved. Expansion of teams occurred over an 18 month period with a second team re-engaged in June 2003, a third in November 2003 and the fourth in January 2004.

83. The affect of the staff reductions on the phase four project objectives was that many UXO LAO staff were not available for the training and capacity building activities planned to be carried out during the project period (the project period was 1 Sep 02 to 31 Aug 04). Project plans had to be adapted to the changing situation.

### **Achievement of the Project Objectives**

84. Conduct of 12 provincial training workshops. Separate provincial training workshops were planned to cover technical staff and support service staff. To date only one 'provincial' workshop has been conducted, this being on QM. Due to the staff reductions, key staff vacancies and problems associated with organising and implementing workshops at a provincial level this workshop training was adjusted as follows:

- a. Technical workshops were held at district level and covered subjects such as teaching techniques, task planning and management, development of operational and support planning data, work planning, UXO recognition, bomb fuze recognition, level two and three survey, operations SOP's, global positioning systems (GPS's) and storage of UXO. Support service subjects included operation and maintenance of vehicles, generators and non demining equipment; inventory management; and personnel performance management.

b. Much of the support service staff training was carried out on a 'one to one' basis by a HIB Logistics (Log) TA with the staff that were available. The Log TA was in Savannakhet from September 2002 to August 2003:

- (1) A Chief of Support Services (CSS) was employed from before the start of this phase of the project until May 2003. The CSS was available for training by the Log TA for eight months then left. The appointment has remained vacant since.
- (2) A Logistics/Procurement Assistant was employed from April 2003 to December 2003. The Logistics/Procurement Assistant was available for training by the Log TA for five months. He left after the Log TA. The appointment has remained vacant since.
- (3) The Personnel/Administration/Finance Assistant was appointed into this position in June 2003. She was available for training from the Log TA for three months before the Log TA left. She is still in this position.
- (4) A storeman was available for the complete period the Log TA was there and this person is still there.

85. One of the problems in conducting these workshops was the non-attendance of staff. There were many staff, including senior staff, who did not attend the workshops or left early. This occurred with the QM workshop as well, which is one of the reasons that further QM training is considered necessary. The reasons for non-attendance/early departure were not pursued during the evaluation.

86. HIB had plans to conduct one more workshop during the remaining project time. This was to be a medical workshop to be held in June/July 2004. The purpose of this workshop was to bring all the Savannakhet Medic's skills up to a high standard prior to the departure of HIB staff. The workshop was also to cover training of trainers (TOT) so that the Medics would have the basic skills to carry out refresher medical training amongst themselves and medical training for other operational staff with responsibilities in an emergency situation. (TL's, STL's, SC's, Deminers, Surveyors and Drivers).

87. UXO LAO National HQ indicated that they do not want provinces carrying out their own medical training with varying objectives and standards. There are plans for all Medics to attend refresher training at the National Training Centre during the remainder of 2004. HIB should review their plans for this workshop in light of UXO LAO's requirements.

88. Notwithstanding this, there is still a need for UXO LAO Savannakhet Medics to have TOT skills to enable them to carry out medical training themselves, even if the planning and management of this training is carried out at a provincial or national level. This is covered more under TOT in paragraph 96 below. This is important to the maintenance of technical standards within UXO LAO Savannakhet.

89. Conduct 32 formal training sessions. This training was planned to be carried out on survey, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) operations, management and support service subjects. Details of this training are as follows:

- a. Technical staff. Training has been and is still being carried out on a fortnightly basis for all technical staff, which includes the SEODT, Operations Assistant, DC's, TL's, STL's, SC's, Surveyors, Medics and Drivers. This training covers the following:

- (1) SOP's. 16 modules have been produced covering the whole of the operations SOP's.
  - (2) UXO recognition. There are 16 training modules that cover UXO recognition for the complete range of UXO found in Savannakhet. 6 of the modules cover training by UXO family, i.e. submunitions, artillery etc, and 10 of the modules cover training where the UXO are mixed.
  - (3) Mine detector use. This is carried out for the Minelab F1A4 mine detector.
  - (4) Medical. Specific medical training has been carried out for the Medics and first aid training has been or is to be carried out for all operational staff.
- b. All technical personnel receive the same training but it is adapted to suit the requirements of the appointments the individuals are filling. For example, Deminers do not have to complete all of the operations SOP modules as they are not all relevant to their job. For those training modules that Deminers do complete the training standards required are lower than for example, a TL or SC.
  - c. Support service staff. Formal training was not conducted for support service staff. Instead, the staff that were there were given on the job (OJT) training by the Log TA, while he was there. Currently, the Personnel/Administration/Finance Assistant is receiving fortnightly training on operations SOP's.
  - d. The support service training that was provided could have been improved if UXO LAO had comprehensive management procedures in place. Only Logistics Procedures existed but Personnel, Administration and Finance Procedures did not. Instead, UXO LAO National HQ issues various directives on personnel, administration and finance matters. The UXO LAO National HQ stated that procedures to cover finance, personnel and administration would be produced this year as part of a management review that is underway.
  - e. PC and DPC. The PC and DPC have participated in some of the formal training carried out for the technical staff and are still being given formal training on operations SOP's and first aid with the DPC receiving additional training on training management and TOT.

90. HIB staff have produced a training plan for 2004 covering all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. At the time of the evaluation not all of the training modules (SOP's and UXO recognition) had been covered in formal training, however they will be by the end of August 2004.

91. The computerised training records (training database) developed by HIB indicate a lot of gaps where people have missed training, many of these being key personnel at all levels in the organisation. The records indicate that it is the same people that miss training each time. One of the reasons given for the absences was that there is a perception amongst some people that they know their jobs and training is a waste of time.

92. The repeated non attendance at training indicates a lack of commitment and motivation from some UXO LAO Savannakhet staff and a lack of understanding of the importance of continuation training to maintaining standards. It also indicates the absence of any enforcement measures to ensure personnel do attend training.

93. Further QM training as suggested in section four of this report should improve the understanding of the importance of continuation training to maintaining standards. As to the



repeated non attendance of personal at planned training activities for no apparent reason, this is a matter that the PC needs to address with his staff for future training activities.

94. TOT. This objective involved training in methods of instruction (MOI) skills for all UXO LAO Savannakhet operational staff with a responsibility for training, which covered all appointments from the DPC down to SC. These people would also be given the opportunity to conduct training during the project period. A formal training assessment form was developed to permit assessment of training being delivered to take place. The TOT staff would then have the capability to train other personnel in UXO clearance related subjects.

95. Due to promotions and absences not all the identified personnel have been given TOT yet or had the opportunity to carry out lessons and be assessed and critiqued on them, although most have. HIB staff indicate that this will be done before the end of the project. The tools to assist UXO LAO Savannakhet staff to conduct training that are referred to in the project document include training packages, training aids and reference materials. These are covered later in this section of the report

96. In addition to carrying out TOT for the operational staff indicated above, it is also necessary for the UXO LAO Savannakhet Medics be given TOT to enable them to carry out medical training themselves, even if the planning and management of this training is carried out at a provincial or national level. This training can be to maintain their own medical skills or to carry out medical training for other operational staff with responsibilities in an emergency situation. The rationale for this is that medical refresher training has not been carried out as often as it should to maintain the necessary medical skill levels. Also, despite the commitment from the UXO LAO National HQ to carry out medical refresher training for all medical staff in 2004, consideration should be given to maintaining medical technical standards beyond this. Having training skills amongst the Medics at a provincial level permits this to occur.

97. HIB staff are capable of conducting the TOT for Medics, however the support of UXO LAO National HQ will be needed.

98. Development of training packages for formal training activities. Training packages have been produced for all of the subjects covered in the workshops and formal training. This includes task planning; operational and support planning; work planning; QM; UXO recognition (including bomb fuzes); level two and three survey; SOP's; storage of UXO; use of GPS's; medical support to operations, operation and maintenance of vehicles, generators and non demining equipment; inventory management; and personnel performance management. Training packages include objectives, training programmes, instructor guides, tests, marking guides, practical training assessment forms and administration instructions (not for all training activities). In addition, HIB staff developed a deminer's refresher course package for the technical staff that were re-engaged after the temporary staff reductions. The aim of this course was to bring the knowledge and skills of these staff back up to a level where they could be safely employed on UXO clearance operations again.

99. Training packages are still being refined and some marking guides have still to be completed. This will be done before the end of the HIB project.

100. The UXO LAO staff responsible for the management of the training packages are the SEODT and the DPC. These staff have been given some training on the management and use of the training packages, but need more OJT to be able to manage them effectively without HIB assistance. The availability of the UXO LAO Savannakhet staff is critical to this being achieved. The continued OJT of the SEODT and the DPC in the management and use of the training packages is something that HIB staff intend to continue working on for the remainder of their project.

101. Production of reference materials in English and Lao. This objective covers the production of a UXO reference manual, reference materials for lessons and field equipment user guides.

102. A very good UXO reference manual has been produced by the HIB staff and is being used by UXO LAO staff throughout the country. They have also produced training reference materials for the subjects that were covered in workshops and formal training. Other reference material produced includes equipment user guides for all field equipment (detectors, GPS, battery chargers, radios etc); maintenance procedures for generators, grass cutters, motorbikes and vehicles; and a first aid manual. Where applicable, copies of equipment user guides in Lao script have been laminated and fixed to equipment carrying cases or to the equipment itself. At present all reference material is up to date.

103. HIB staff have indicated that they will continue to assist with the translation of user guides/operating manuals for any new equipment that is introduced into UXO LAO Savannakhet (provided user manuals are issued with the equipment). However, for the future, the production of user guides or operating manuals in the Lao script for new equipment should be arranged by UXO LAO National HQ. UXO LAO Savannakhet will not have translators to carry out this work themselves.

104. HIB staff are currently going through the process of training the DPC and SEODT in the management of reference materials.

105. Maintenance of a technical library. Throughout their time supporting UXO LAO Savannakhet, HIB have accumulated a large amount of technical reference material, which includes:

- a. Digital photographs of UXO and fuzes all in varying conditions and other photographs of UXO clearance related subjects such as charge placement, render safe procedures and UXO disposal low order techniques. These are loaded into a computer database.
- b. Documents such as equipment brochures; render safe procedures; training publications from other programmes; UXO recognition publications; military publications on munitions, demolitions and EOD; and reports, studies and evaluations. This material has all been categorised into subject groups and placed in a filing cabinet. Most of the content of the technical library is in English. Very little has been translated into Lao and there was never the intent that the materials be translated. The relevant information (except for bomb fuze information)<sup>24</sup> for UXO LAO operations has been extracted and included in other reference material developed by HIB.

106. The responsibility for the management of the technical library is that of the SEODT. There are no established systems or procedures for the management of the technical library apart from the rule that documentary reference materials are not to be taken out of the Provincial HQ. If information is needed in the field, copies are to be made with the original document remaining in the HQ. The SEODT understands and supports this.

107. The SEODT has been trained in the use of the picture database and has no problems with using this. With the documentary reference materials, while he cannot read much of the information, the SEODT does understand what is included in the various books and can use

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<sup>24</sup> A bomb fuze manual in Lao script has been requested by the SEODT and two DC's. The production of a bomb fuze manual will greatly enhance the technical capability of UXO LAO senior technical staff, however if future technical assistance is always going to be available to UXO LAO Savannakhet, then a bomb fuze manual is not essential.

some of the pictorial information to assist him with his job. The SEODT has no concerns regarding the content or management of the technical library.

108. Production of two sets of Free from Explosives (FFE) UXO training aids. FFE UXO training aid sets have been produced that cover over 120 separate items of UXO. These FFE UXO are all numbered and kept in specially prepared boxes as part of the 16 UXO recognition tests. The complete range of UXO found in Savannakhet (less big bombs and CBU's) are included. The training aid sets include inventory lists and the UXO recognition training package, which includes an instructor guide, checklists, question sheets and answer sheet. The SEODT is responsible for managing the training aid sets and has been given training on this task.

109. The SEODT understands the requirements for the management of the training aids and is capable of carrying out this task without HIB support. Notwithstanding this, the task of managing the training aids is a big responsibility and the SEODT already has more work than he can handle with his other responsibilities, particularly in a province as big as Savannakhet with four clearance teams.<sup>25</sup>

110. Conduct OJT for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. The project document indicated that OJT was to be carried out for the same subjects that were covered by formal training. This did not occur as it was not necessary. OJT for technical staff was carried out on an 'as required' basis when a need was identified. This may have been to rectify a fault in the work, as a result of assessments carried out or when a need was identified by HIB or UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. OJT was also carried out when a TL or a SC was not confident in aspects of a task. HIB staff normally carried out the OJT but simpler OJT was conducted by the SEODT.

111. OJT training for support service staff was carried out in place of formal training due to key support service staff not being available due to vacancies. OJT for the PC and DPC was carried out during coordination meetings or as a result of needs identified during normal work activities. OJT for the Operations Assistant who was only appointed in January 2004, included planning and management training, QM and work plan follow up.

112. OJT was only provided when a need was identified therefore all staff may not have received OJT. There are some areas where OJT is still required for some staff to meet the requirements of the project objective. Details of these are covered in paragraph 129 below.

113. Conduct two study trips for four technical and management staff to other provinces of Lao PDR. This objective was to be carried out under the direction of UXO LAO National HQ. Study trips in accordance with the intent of the project document were not carried out although some trips were made by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff to other locations. Details are:

- a. The Chief of Support Services and the Logistics/Procurement Assistant visited UXO LAO National HQ to discuss logistics and coordination issues and to get a better understanding of UXO LAO procedures. Both of these personnel have subsequently left UXO LAO and the positions are still vacant.
- b. The SEODT and a STL visited UXO LAO National HQ as part of the handover of the reference manual produced by HIB. While this was not specifically a study activity,

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<sup>25</sup> UXO LAO Savannakhet has a second qualified SEODT person posted to the province and this person has carried out some of the duties of the SEODT in the past. This person is instructor qualified and has been posted temporarily to the National Training Centre. The return of this person to UXO LAO Savannakhet to assume some of the duties of the SEODT is important to ensure that the full range of SEODT responsibilities are fulfilled.

there was an opportunity for the visitors to liaise with National HQ and Training Centre staff.

- c. The SEODT visited Saravane Province as part of the SEODT assessments that were carried out there early in 2004.

114. All of the trips made provided opportunities for staff to interact with peers at other locations, to view different activities, to discuss issues and to share ideas.

115. UXO LAO Savannakhet supported by HIB, did plan other study trips to other provinces but were unable to obtain approval from the UXO LAO National HQ for these trips to go ahead. According to the UXO LAO National HQ they support study trips provided there are valid reasons for the trips occurring, for example, enhancing the knowledge and skills of the participants or improving UXO LAO operations. Other UXO LAO provincial staff have carried out study trips to neighbouring provinces.

116. HIB will take no further action in regard to study trips during what remains of their project time.

117. Conduct two medical training courses for HIB staff. Two medical training sessions were conducted for all HIB staff, including HIB Lao staff but not UXO LAO staff, in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand in December 2002 and December 2003. The training was carried out to ensure that HIB staff had trained personnel available to provide medical support to their own staff in case of an accident, to permit HIB staff to support victims of accidents and to give HIB staff the skills necessary to carry out medical refresher training.

118. Medical training for UXO LAO staff was not included as a project objective because UXO LAO were supposedly already carrying out their own medical training and did not want provinces carrying medical training with varying objectives and standards. Notwithstanding this, HIB has carried out one medical training session during the project period to date. This was for all the UXO LAO Savannakhet staff that were available at the time. Because of the staff reductions not all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff received this training. The justification for this training for the Medics was that some of the Savannakhet Medics had not received medical refresher training from UXO LAO for a long time. This was confirmed during the evaluation.

119. HIB staff had planned further medical training for June/July 2004, but as indicated previously in this section of the report the UXO LAO National HQ do not want this.

120. During the period of this project HIB staff provided victim assistance support to three non demining UXO accidents and one motor vehicle accident (not UXO LAO personnel). This support was provided on an opportune basis. HIB staff did not actively seek accident victims. Officially, victim assistance is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and UXO LAO has no mandate to carry out this task. However, UXO LAO National HQ agreed that they have a moral obligation to assist victims of non demining UXO accidents and would investigate this matter further with a view to establishing a policy for such support.

121. Establishment of training areas at Provincial and District HQ for equipment training and testing. Training areas were established at District HQ but they are no longer in place. As the project evolved it was realised that it was more efficient and cost effective to establish training areas near worksites on an 'as required' basis rather than maintain permanent training areas. The development of the training areas was discontinued.

122. Development of assessment systems and tools to assist in the monitoring of operational activities. Assessment forms have been developed for the monitoring of

operational activities. These include; general clearance task assessment, area clearance task assessment, UXO detection, UXO disposal, medical readiness (2 parts), level two survey for both roving and area clearance, DC assessment and formal training assessment.

123. UXO LAO Savannakhet staff have been trained in the use of the monitoring assessment forms that are relevant to their job. For TL and STL this only covers the UXO detection assessment form. For the DPC, SEODT and DC the other task management assessment forms are relevant except for the DC assessment, which can only be carried out by the DPC or the SEODT. Currently only the SEODT is carrying out task management assessments as the DPC is not yet qualified for this task. This is an area that the HIB staff intend to focus on, but the cooperation of the DPC is needed for this to occur.

124. The monitoring assessment forms are easy to use, quick to complete and if used properly, effective. They can also be used without too much disruption to operations. Unfortunately, in many cases when used by UXO LAO staff, faults are not identified, and for those that are, they are not corrected by appropriate follow up action. This matter has already been discussed in section four to this report.

125. Because of the nature of this problem it is unlikely that it can be solved, however if a major emphasis is placed on QM during the remainder of the HIB project time (as indicated in section four of this report), with the conduct of monitoring assessments being part of this, some improvements may be made. The emphasis with the monitoring assessments should be on UXO LAO Savannakhet staff completing them properly without HIB support, i.e. identifying all the faults and then carrying out the appropriate corrective action.

126. There are no further monitoring assessment forms that are considered necessary. There is a need for a review of the requirement for monitoring assessment forms and some refinement to the current forms is needed. Obviously, spaces on the forms for the comments of the HIB staff will not be required for the future and should be removed. HIB staff intend to carry out a review and refinement of the monitoring assessment forms during the remainder of their project time.

127. Development of databases for training, personnel, operations and logistics. Databases for training, personnel, operations and logistics have been developed. Details are:

- a. Training database. The training database is established, it is up to date and the DPC and SEODT are being trained in its use. The DPC is responsible for the management of training, which includes the training records and training database. There are some delays in the carrying out of these tasks with many training records not being filed. The DPC was not observed using the training database during the evaluation.
- b. Operations database. An operations database was established by HIB for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff to maintain records of tasks completed and clearance statistics. The database covered all the villages surveyed in Savannakhet during the 1997 National Study. Since the staff reductions in June 2002 this database has not been used. Currently, the village files are kept manually and important information on clearance is not readily available or easily obtained. When queried about roving clearance progress in Sepone UXO LAO Savannakhet staff had no idea how many villages still had to be visited. The re-establishment of this database is supported by the PC, DPC and the Operations Assistant. This, and the training of the DPC, SEODT and the Operations Assistant in its use should be one of the tasks of HIB in the remaining time of their project.
- c. Personnel database. A personnel database is established with details of job grades and salaries shown on it. This database is used by the Personnel/Administration/

Finance Assistant to maintain salary details. It is up to date and the Personnel/ Administration/ Finance Assistant is competent in its use.

- d. Logistics database. A logistics database is established showing all equipment held by UXO LAO Savannakhet with database fields including equipment type, serial numbers, location and serviceability. The database also shows equipment deficiencies against established TOE's. This database is also used by the Personnel/ Administration/ Finance Assistant<sup>26</sup>. She has a working understanding of its use, but unfortunately is either too busy or not informed about equipment movements. It is considered that without the necessary staff this database will become out of date.

128. The DPC and SEODT need more training on the training database and the DPC, SEODT and the Operations Assistant will need training in the operations database once it is re-established. HIB staff have either planned this training or have indicated they can carry it out. Training for any new UXO LAO staff on any of the databases may be able to be carried out by HIB staff during the remainder of their project time, but this will be dependant on available time and other priorities.

### **Activities Still to be Completed by HIB**

129. Details of the activities still to be completed by HIB to achieve their project objectives are:

- a. Formal training. Formal training on the training modules developed by HIB has not been completed yet. This must continue in accordance with the 2004 training plan until it is completed.
- b. TOT. TOT has not yet been carried out for all UXO LAO Savannakhet operational staff from DPC down to SC level and not all of these staff have been given the opportunity to conduct training. This must continue for the remainder of the project time.<sup>27</sup>
- c. Training packages. Training packages still need to be refined and some marking guides have still to be completed.
- d. OJT. The areas where OJT is still required are:
- (1) The DPC and the SEODT need OJT in the management and use of training packages.
  - (2) The DPC and the SEODT need OJT in the management of reference materials.
  - (3) The DPC, SEODT, DC's, TL's, STL's and SC's all need further OJT in the use of operational task monitoring assessment forms relevant to their job. For the DPC, SEODT and DC all the task management assessment forms are relevant except for the DC assessment, which can only be carried out by the DPC or the SEODT. For the TL and STL only the UXO detection monitoring assessment form is relevant.

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<sup>26</sup> This person currently covers essential duties for the two vacant service support appointments on the Provincial HQ. One other service support staff member, the storeman, carries out the local procurement responsibilities in addition to his own.

<sup>27</sup> UXO LAO Savannakhet staff who have received TOT should be given the opportunity to carry out the formal training that is still outstanding for subjects that are within their capability.

- (4) The DPC and SEODT need more OJT on the use of the training database and the management of training records.
  - (5) OJT may need to be carried out for any new UXO LAO staff appointed during the remainder of the HIB project time. OJT will also be required for the second SEODT when he returns to Savannakhet. This training should only be carried out if available time permits this.
- e. Monitoring assessment forms. A review of the monitoring assessment forms is needed to determine which ones are actually required. Once this is done some refinement of those to be retained needs to be carried out. Spaces on the assessment forms for the comments of HIB staff should be removed.
  - f. Operations database. The re-establishment of the operations database and the training of the DPC, SEODT and the Operations Assistant in its use are still required.
130. Attendance of staff at training. The attendance of UXO LAO Savannakhet staff at training activities is essential if the phase four objectives i.e. the transfer of knowledge, skills and capacities to UXO LAO Savannakhet is to be completed. In the past this has not always occurred. This is a matter that the PC needs to address with his staff for future training activities.

### **Relevance and Effectiveness of HIB's Support**

131. Workshops. The subjects covered were all valid for UXO LAO Savannakhet operations. The use of workshops is a good way of getting staff participation, which provides an element of ownership of the results and enhances the learning experiences and the retention of the subjects taught. Workshops have been used extensively by the UXO LAO National HQ and it is a training medium that seems to work well in the Lao environment.

132. It is unfortunate that the practicalities of organising provincial level workshops in a province as large as Savannakhet made this a difficult objective to achieve. Also, the staff reductions of July 2002 and staff vacancies meant that not all staff were able to be exposed to the training as intended. Nevertheless, HIB adapted to the changing situation and developed appropriate alternatives so that the workshop objective was achieved.

133. Some of the subjects covered in the workshops were also covered in formal training. Formal training was followed up by OJT on an 'as required' basis when further training needs were identified. Workshop training was not. One area identified during the evaluation where OJT may have enhanced the effectiveness of the workshop training was with work planning. As indicated in sections three and four of this report, current work plans are not fully meeting the needs of the district development priorities. It is possible that follow up OJT and support may have prevented this occurring, although it has been indicated that the Provincial HQ staff did not want any support with work planning.

134. Formal training. Formal training covered technical training, support service training and management training:

- a. Technical training. All of the formal technical training conducted expanded on the training conducted at the National Training Centre so was relevant to the work of UXO LAO Savannakhet. Training on operations SOP's was particularly important as these SOP's provide the parameters for the conduct of clearance operations. SOP's also cover UXO LAO organisation structures; job responsibilities; operational QM requirements, both QC and QA; and reporting requirements.

- b. The effectiveness of the training is demonstrated by the performance of staff on the job. This was witnessed during the evaluation and considered very good in some cases but overall satisfactory. (More on this is covered in section six of this report.)
  - c. Support service and management training. The support service and management training was mainly carried out on the job to meet an actual need, therefore was highly relevant. Had UXO LAO had complete comprehensive management procedures at the time this training was being carried out this training could have been even more relevant. While the training was effective for the staff that received it, the subsequent loss of staff have reduced the effectiveness of this training.
135. TOT. All UXO LAO operational staff from DPC down to SC have a responsibility for training their subordinates in operational tasks. The skills needed for this are basic instructor level MOI skills. Design and development of training skills are not required. HIB staff are conducting MOI training for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. This training is relevant to the needs of UXO LAO Savannakhet.
136. The effectiveness of the TOT is evidenced by the staff carrying out effective training themselves. This has been done by some UXO LAO Savannakhet personnel with training assessment being carried out by HIB staff. This is not complete yet with more UXO LAO Savannakhet staff having to receive TOT and being given the opportunity to conduct lessons. This will be continued during the remainder of the HIB project time.
137. Training packages. The training packages have been developed for all of the subjects covered in workshops and formal training so they are certainly relevant. The effectiveness of the training packages is determined by the UXO LAO Savannakhet staff using the packages for their own training. This has occurred for some staff but is not yet complete.
138. Reference materials. This covers the production of a UXO reference manual, reference materials for lessons and field equipment user guides:
- a. The UXO reference manual provides detailed technical information in Lao script, and pictures and photographs for almost all of the UXO found in Savannakhet Province so is highly relevant to the work of UXO LAO Savannakhet. The UXO reference manual is reasonably small for the amount of information included in it and is waterproof for field use. The UXO reference manual has been distributed throughout the UXO LAO programme and was observed being used by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff during the evaluation.
  - b. Like the training packages, reference materials have been produced for the subjects covered in workshops and formal training so they are certainly relevant. Their effectiveness is being demonstrated by their continual use on training, including training by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff.
  - c. Equipment user guides cover the equipment in use by the staff in the field so are certainly relevant. Their effectiveness is demonstrated by their use in the field. They will continue to be effective for the future as new staff are introduced into the programme.
139. Technical library. The technical library is an accumulation of digital photographs of UXO and fuzes and technical publications on UXO clearance and EOD related matters:
- a. The photographs are all of UXO's and fuzes found in Savannakhet, and other UXO clearance related subjects, so are highly relevant. The photographs have been



loaded into a computer database, which the SEODT has been trained to use. This is an effective way of identifying UXO and fuzes.

- b. With the technical publications, the subjects are relevant to UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations, however the important information needed to support UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations has already been extracted and incorporated into other publications prepared by HIB.<sup>28</sup> The technical publication part of the library's usefulness to UXO LAO Savannakhet is limited because of language problems.

140. FFE training aids. The FFE training aids cover the complete range of UXO found in Savannakhet (less big bombs and CBU's) so are relevant. UXO recognition training is best carried out on the actual UXO themselves as they are found during operations. The practicalities of doing this for all operational staff prohibit this occurring so the next best thing for UXO recognition training is inert examples of the real items themselves. This is what HIB staff have produced with these training aids. The use of FFE UXO is an effective way of carrying out UXO recognition training.

141. OJT. OJT is based on actual needs identified so is relevant. It normally involves one on one training or small group training in an actual work environment so OJT is highly effective.

142. Study trips. The relevance and effectiveness of study trips depend on many factors including where the trip is to, what is done, who is met, what is discussed, what is observed etc. In the case of UXO LAO Savannakhet and HIB, study trips in accordance with the intent of the project document were unable to be carried out. The reasons for this are not clear although the UXO LAO National HQ indicated that UXO LAO Savannakhet did not properly justify the trips they requested to make. The utility of future study trips as a learning medium should be considered on a 'case by case' basis taking into account what can be achieved from the trip in terms of enhancing the knowledge and skills of the participants or improving operations.

143. Medical training. The rationale for this training (for HIB staff only) has already been covered in this section of this report. The effectiveness of it is determined by the use of the skills obtained, on the job. As indicated previously, HIB staff used the skills to provide assistance to victims of non demining and motor vehicle accidents and also to conduct medical training for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff.

144. Establishment of training areas. Having training areas for initial and continuation training is relevant, however they do not need to be permanent training areas, they can be established on an 'as required' basis. This objective was not effective in the context of UXO LAO Savannakhet so the development of the training areas was discontinued.

145. Assessment forms. The monitoring assessment forms cover key aspects of UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations so are relevant. They have also been proven to be effective if used properly with all faults identified and corrective action carried out. However, they are currently not proving effective when the assessments are solely being carried out by Lao staff. There is still work that is needed to be done on the use of monitoring assessment forms as part of a general improvement in the QM capability of UXO LAO Savannakhet. This has already been covered in section four of this report.

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<sup>28</sup> There is one exception to this and that is bomb fuze information. A bomb fuze manual in Lao script has been requested by the SEODT and two DC's. The production of a bomb fuze manual will greatly enhance the technical capability of UXO LAO senior technical staff, however if future technical assistance is always going to be available to UXO LAO Savannakhet, then a bomb fuze manual is not essential.

146. Databases. The databases have all been produced to assist UXO LAO Savannakhet staff with the management of their operations. Because they cover key aspects of the operations such as training, operations, personnel and logistics they are all relevant:

- a. Training database. The training database provides records of training conducted and results achieved and is an important component of the staff selection and performance monitoring system. The training database has been proven effective in identifying those personnel who are working well in UXO LAO Savannakhet and it will continue to be effective provided it is maintained and used as intended by the UXO LAO Savannakhet staff.
- b. Operations database. The use of the operations database was discontinued after the staff reductions in 2002 and it has not been used since. The reasons for this were that there were not the staff available to manage the database and there was little understanding of the utility of the database. Now that UXO LAO Savannakhet has staff on the HQ with operational experience (SEODT and Operations Assistant) there is a good understanding of the need for operational information to be readily available and the experienced staff understand how effective the operations database can be in providing this information. Once re-established the operations database will continue to be effective provided it is maintained.
- c. Personnel database. The personnel database has details of job grades and salaries. This database continues to be used, which indicates that it is both relevant and effective.
- d. Logistics database. UXO LAO Savannakhet has a lot of equipment dispersed over a large area. To be managed effectively the quantities of equipment held, serial numbers, locations and serviceability status need to be known. Also equipment deficiencies against established TOE's also need to be known. The logistics database provides this information. It is both relevant and effective, however its future effectiveness will depend on the provision of the staff to maintain it.<sup>29</sup>

### **Future Support Requirements in Relation to the Project Objectives**

147. The requirements for any future support in regard to the project objectives were discussed with HIB and UXO LAO staff. The following areas were covered:

- a. Training. There are no concerns with the conduct of continuation training in familiar subjects by the UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. The training packages, reference materials and training aids have all been developed to ensure that the UXO LAO Savannakhet staff have the resources they need to be able to carry out this training without external assistance. UXO LAO Savannakhet also has no concerns with the planning and management of future training having two personnel in the province that have had instructor training, one of them having been employed as an instructor at the National Training Centre in the past.<sup>30</sup>
- b. UXO LAO Savannakhet however, does have concerns about the introduction of new equipment or new procedures and any requirements to develop and conduct training on unfamiliar subjects or equipment. What they would require is initial training on any new equipment or procedures to be carried out at a national level, which includes the

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<sup>29</sup> This database may prove useful for the upcoming stock checks by UXO LAO.

<sup>30</sup> This is the second qualified SEODT who is posted to Savannakhet. This person has been temporarily posted to the National Training Centre, but the UXO LAO National HQ have assured that he will be returned to Savannakhet once his instructor duties are complete.

- production of training packages, reference materials and equipment user guides in the Lao script. UXO LAO Savannakhet could then carry out further training for their own staff themselves.
- c. This point was covered with the UXO LAO National HQ and it was indicated that training and the provision of reference materials and equipment user guides for new equipment or procedures would be carried out at a national level as has been done in the past.
  - d. Technical support. The SEODT stated that he had concerns about situations relating to UXO that he cannot deal with by himself. Such situations may include difficulties in identifying a UXO or a problem dealing with a UXO in a certain location. Technical support will be required either in the form of advice or practical assistance. The UXO LAO National HQ understands this situation and will look at options for the future to ensure that technical advice or assistance is available to UXO LAO Savannakhet.
  - e. Training aids. UXO LAO Savannakhet has no immediate concerns about the future production/management of training aids, although if training aid FFE UXO get lost there is no one in the province with the technical capability to make replacement training aids. Some items can be made FFE quite easily but with others the procedures are more complex. Provided the technical support as indicated in paragraph 147d above is available, then this support should be able to satisfy any future requirements for training aids.
  - f. Databases. The future maintenance and usefulness of the databases depend on a number of factors:
    - (1) Having the staff available to manage them.
    - (2) Having the staff, equipment and the management support for the activities that contribute information to the databases. For example:
      - (a) The training database relies on the continuation of training for operational staff. If this is discontinued for any reason then the training database becomes redundant.
      - (b) The operations database relies on the provision of operational reports from the field. If these reports are not provided then the operations database becomes redundant.
      - (c) The maintenance of the logistics database relies on the database manager being informed of all equipment movements and changes of equipment status.
  - g. The Savannakhet PC indicated that he understands the importance and utility of the databases established and will support their continued use after HIB staff leave. The other factors that will affect the future use of the databases i.e. having the staff to manage them and the staff and equipment to carry out the activities that provide information for the databases are all covered in other parts of this report.

## SECTION SIX: TECHNICAL SKILLS AND MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES OF UXO LAO SAVANNAKHET

### Introduction

148. This section examines the current technical skills and management capabilities of UXO LAO Savannakhet staff to determine where the staff are in relation to being able to efficiently provide UXO clearance support to Savannakhet Province without the support of HIB. The technical skills part of this section covers the technical skills necessary to carry out and supervise UXO clearance operations in the field. The management capabilities part covers the operational and general management capabilities at a district and provincial level.

### Field Staff<sup>31</sup>

149. Field staff's requirements. During the evaluation a number of clearance sites were visited and discussions were held with TL's, STL's, SC's, Medics and Drivers. During these discussions many questions were asked but the main ones were; what problems the personnel had in carrying out their tasks, what training they had received from HIB, what knowledge or skills did they still need to be able to do their jobs more effectively and what support do they want from HIB for the remainder of HIB's project time. The importance of QM to the maintenance of technical standards of UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations was also discussed.

150. From these discussions it was learned that the biggest concern of the field staff was with equipment support and the effect this had on their work. This has already been covered in this report. A secondary concern was attendance at UXO LAO's formal training. Two surveyors had not yet attended a survey course and some SC wanted to attend a TL course. The attendance at these courses was required only to get the qualification, the personnel already had the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their jobs effectively. There were no other concerns raised by the field staff and the only additional support they wanted from HIB was assistance to sort out the equipment support from UXO LAO. All personnel seemed to understand very well the importance of QM and indicated that more training on this subject was necessary.

151. Operator skills. During these visits personnel were observed carrying out UXO clearance, demolitions and survey tasks and were observed using radio equipment, detection equipment, survey equipment and demolition equipment. The equipment was being operated properly and staff appeared competent in its use.

152. Survey teams work ahead of the clearance teams identifying areas for clearance and UXO for disposal. They provide plans and reports for the clearance teams to follow. The plans produced are very good and particularly in the case of roving clearance tasks, save a lot of time. There was only one site visited that did not have a survey plan and this was because of problems with coordination and liaison with the villagers, a function the DC could not carry out due to vehicle and staff shortages.

153. Equipment. Some of the equipment being used by personnel was inspected for maintenance and serviceability and there were a number of problems identified. These included:

- a. Handheld radio aerials were damaged. This is caused by people carrying bundles of radios by the aerial.

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<sup>31</sup> The technical staff covered in this part include the TL, STL, SC, Surveyors, Deminers, Medics and Drivers.

- b. Important equipment was being transported loose in buckets. This included demolition ohmmeters and exploders.
- c. Detectors were not always being transported in their protective carrying cases, some were only transported in their canvas carrying bags.
- d. Equipment was just placed in the back of vehicles and was free to bounce around.

154. All of these equipment problems could be rectified by having procedures that direct responsibilities for equipment and effective monitoring of equipment maintenance by supervisory staff.

155. Emergency support. Discussions were held with Medics and Drivers on the sites to determine if they understood their responsibilities in respect to emergency support to operations and were confident they could provide the support if required. There were no problems identified, although one Driver did not know the location of the hospital to go to in an emergency. It is a worksite management responsibility to brief the staff on emergency procedures. Emergency vehicles and medical equipment were also inspected and while the medical kits are still lacking pain killers and antibiotics (a long term situation) no other problems were identified.

156. Worksite management. From the worksites visited it was observed that task management was being carried out well and operational procedures were generally followed, although not in all cases. There was one site, which had a number of basic faults. Later, it was advised that previous assessments on the TL in charge of this site had also identified deficiencies with worksite management but these had not been rectified. This is an example of the lack of appropriate corrective action for monitoring assessments that was mentioned previously in section four of this report. Because of this the problems persisted.

157. Two demolition tasks were observed being carried out and these were well managed and safe although on one task a final continuity check on the firing cable, a requirement of operational procedures, was not carried out.

158. Conclusion. There were no problems with the technical skills at the operator level and generally, worksite management was carried out satisfactorily and clearance work was progressing. Of the faults that were identified, effective monitoring (including checks on equipment) with proper corrective action would rectify them.

159. As indicated in section four of this report, further training for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff should be carried out on QM so that all staff have a good understanding of the elements of QM and the importance of it to the maintenance of technical standards of UXO LAO Savannakhet.

### **Management Staff<sup>32</sup>**

160. PC. "The PC conducts liaison with external agencies at a provincial and district level, oversees the planning for operations and provides overall management of UXO LAO's activities in the province through the functional sections of the Provincial HQ. These are the Operations and Support Services Sections."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The management staff covered in this part include the PC, DPC, SEODT, DC's, Operations Assistant and the Personnel/Admin/Finance Assistant.

<sup>33</sup> UXO LAO Operations SOP's, August 2000, section one, paragraph 24.

161. The PC has a good understanding of UXO clearance operations but generally leaves the management of operations to his principal staff, the DPC and SEODT supported by the Operations Assistant. He is currently receiving training from HIB staff on operations SOP's and indicated that this training was helpful for him to understand the operations better.

162. During the evaluation the PC indicated that the only further training he needed was management training specific to UXO LAO systems and procedures. This is covered in more detail later in this section of the report. It is considered that the PC may also benefit from OJT in coordination and liaison in relation to work planning, however whether this is acceptable to the PC is something that HIB may have to discuss with him.

163. DPC. During discussions with the DPC it was revealed that the DPC has done a Deminer's Course, a UXO LAO DPC's course and a general management course at a school in Vientiane. He has not done a Team Leader's Course, a Senior EOD Technician's Course and has limited practical operational experience. The responsibilities of the DPC are included in operations SOP's. The important ones are work planning; QM, both QA and QC; reporting; and management of training for provincial staff. The lack of formal training and operational experience affect the ability of the DPC to properly carry out his responsibilities, therefore the training conducted by HIB is very important for him. Unfortunately, the DPC is one of the staff that is often absent from the training activities conducted by HIB.

164. To ensure that the DPC is at a level where he can assume all of his responsibilities it is necessary for the DPC to be fully involved in all of the outstanding training activities still to be conducted by HIB during their project time. This includes the formal training; TOT; and OJT in the use and management of training packages, use and management of reference material, use of the monitoring assessment forms and use and management of the training database.

165. In addition to the planned training activities, the DPC also needs experience in work planning and more training and experience in QM. Work planning and QM training has already been carried out by HIB, but more emphasis on these aspects of management is considered necessary.

166. Two areas where the DPC indicated himself that he needed further training on was with management specific to UXO LAO systems and procedures and computer training. These are covered in more detail later in this section of the report.

167. During the evaluation it was observed that there were obvious delays in tasks being carried out by the DPC with training records not being updated and filed and the results of the QM inspection carried out three weeks before the evaluation not being reported yet. In addition, it was observed that the DPC does not come into the office shared by him with the HIB staff, while the HIB staff are there.

168. The DPC is not yet at a level where he can carry out all his responsibilities efficiently. The presence of the DPC working alongside HIB staff is essential if the training required and the transfer of management skills necessary are to be achieved. If these skills are not transferred and the responsibilities for the tasks assumed during the remainder of the HIB project time, then this will leave an area of weakness in the Provincial HQ operational management capability.

169. SEODT. The SEODT has extensive experience as a Team Leader, has qualified on a Senior EOD Technician's Course and has been employed as a SEODT for 18 months. He is currently at a high technical level and his performance is improving all the time. For the remainder of the HIB project period the HIB staff will continue to work with the SEODT carrying out the OJT previously indicated in section three and developing his capacity to

manage the systems, procedures and tools provided by HIB during their project. This is an ongoing requirement that will be completed by the end of the HIB project, provided the SEODT continues to be available for these activities. In addition, the technical skills of the SEODT will continue to improve with the assistance of HIB staff as long as they remain in Savannakhet.

170. The SEODT stated that he carried out most of the work in relation to compiling UXO LAO Savannakhet's annual work plans. He indicated that the work planning for 2003 was quite weak but had improved for 2004. He indicated that he still had some concerns with work planning and would like HIB's assistance this year to do the work planning for 2005. As already indicated in this report, work planning in Savannakhet is not done well and possibly some HIB assistance is still needed.

171. The SEODT also stated that he needed further training in management specific to UXO LAO operations and computer training. These are covered in more detail later in this section.

172. During the evaluation the SEODT and two DC's advised that a bomb fuze reference manual was essential for them to carry out their work effectively. This is not an objective of the HIB project but is something that they are able to complete if sufficient time is available. This is covered in detail later in this section of the report.

173. DC's. The DC's are all experienced TL's with a good understanding of UXO LAO operations. However, there still are some areas where training for DC's is to be carried out as part of the HIB project objectives. These are covered in section five of this report and are planned to be completed during the remainder of the project time.

174. Other areas identified where the DC's need additional training are with work planning and QM:

- a. Work planning. With the Government's district level approach to poverty eradication and the identification of development priorities at a district level, the role of the DC's become more important in ensuring that UXO LAO Savannakhet's clearance operations support district priorities. Close liaison and coordination between DC's and District Authorities is essential for this to occur. As indicated previously, UXO LAO should take a leading role in coordination and liaison and the DC's should be at the forefront of these efforts. HIB could assist the DC's with OJT in relation to coordination, liaison and work planning. This should be in conjunction with the PC, DPC and SEODT and could involve a review of the 2004 work plan or the production of the 2005 work plan. The support of the Provincial HQ staff would be required for this to occur.
- b. QM. It has already been indicated in this report that QM is an area where more training is needed. The DC's need to play a more active role in QM carrying out formal and informal checks on the clearance sites and personnel and also carrying out the monitoring assessments on operational tasks. The role of the DC's in carrying out QM tasks should be emphasised during any further QM training.

175. Operations Assistant. The Operations Assistant is a qualified and experienced Team Leader who already has a good understanding of his job. The only assistance that the Operations Assistant needs from HIB in regard to technical skills is training in the use of the operations database, once it is re-established. This also includes further computer training. This is already planned to be carried out as part of the HIB project objectives. The Operations Assistant also indicated that he would benefit from management training. This is covered later in this section of the report.

176. Personnel/Administration/Finance Assistant. The only areas that the Personnel/Administration/Finance Assistant indicated that she needed further training in was with computers and management. These are covered later in this section of the report.

177. Conclusion. The management capabilities of the current management staff are generally satisfactory except for the DPC who has a lot of work to do to get his skills up to standard. HIB will assist with this but the commitment and cooperation of the DPC is essential for this to occur. For the remainder of the staff the continual training planned by HIB, and the additional training recommended as part of this evaluation will ensure that their capabilities reach a level where they can effectively manage UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations.

### **Additional Training Requirements for UXO LAO Savannakhet Staff**

178. As a result of the evaluation the following additional training requirements were identified as being needed by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. These are in addition to the training activities still to be carried out by HIB to complete their project objectives:

- a. Computer training. The DPC, SEODT, Operations Assistant and the Personnel/Administration/Finance Assistant all stated that they needed more computer training. These are the people that are currently, or will use the databases that have been established for UXO LAO Savannakhet. All of these personnel have basic computer skills, but feel themselves they need to improve these skills to be able to use computers more effectively, and to better manage the databases. HIB staff have indicated that they can assist with this training during the remainder of their project time. Some of this training could be carried out concurrently with the current planned OJT activities or if necessary, formal computer training could be outsourced.
- b. Computer training may also be required by any new Provincial HQ staff that are appointed. If these staff are appointed after the HIB project finishes then any computer training required would have to be carried out by another agency.
- c. TOT for Medics. This has already been discussed in detail in section four of this report. The TOT for Medics was not one of the original project objectives, but HIB staff are capable of conducting TOT for Medics. It is unlikely that this training can be carried out in the remaining project time with the other objectives that HIB have still to complete.
- d. Management training. The PC, DPC, SEODT, Operations Assistant and the Personnel/Administration/ Finance Assistant all indicated that they needed management training specific to UXO LAO systems and procedures in order to be able to do their jobs more effectively. The PC and DPC stated that they had received management training at a school in Vientiane but that this training was too general.
- e. Any further management training should be on UXO LAO's own procedures. As indicated previously in this report the UXO LAO National HQ stated that procedures to cover finance, personnel and administration would be produced this year as part of a management review that is underway. These procedures should form the basis for any future management training. HIB staff may be able to assist with the conduct of this training, however it would be better carried out by UXO LAO staff.
- f. Work planning. Training in work planning has already been carried out by HIB in a workshop. During this evaluation it was identified that current work planning is not meeting the development priorities in the province and further training in work planning may assist with this. The additional training considered necessary should be



- actual OJT preparing a work plan against the district development priorities. This training should involve the PC, DPC, SEODT and DC's and should cover the liaison and coordination requirements and the actual preparation of a work plan. This could involve a review of the 2004 work plan and the production of the 2005 work plan.
- g. QM. Further formal and OJT training on QM is required for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. The details of this have already been covered in section four to this report. Training on National QM procedures for provincial staff should be carried out by UXO LAO QM staff when these procedures are complete.
  - h. Personnel support. HIB could assist with training (OJT and formal) for any new staff appointed to the Provincial HQ, particularly in relation to systems HIB have developed and subjects already covered in formal training. HIB could also provide OJT training for the second SEODT when he returns to Savannakhet. This training could only occur if these personnel are appointed or return to Savannakhet before the end of the HIB project period.

### **Additional Technical Assistance Required**

179. Bomb fuze reference manual. As indicated already in this report a bomb fuze reference manual has been requested by the SEODT and two DC's. The production of this manual will greatly enhance the technical skill of UXO LAO Savannakhet senior technical staff, however if future technical support is going to be available to UXO LAO Savannakhet, then a bomb fuze manual is not needed until this support ceases.

180. The UXO LAO National HQ has already indicated that they understand the need for continued technical support either in the form of advice or practical assistance, and will look at options for the future. They also indicated that other Implementing Partner's (IP's), specifically the Belgians in Champassak were working on a bomb fuze manual or something similar. There was some uncertainty about this, however the UXO LAO National HQ stated they would investigate the matter.

181. The production of a bomb fuze reference manual is not one of the HIB project objectives, however the HIB staff have the capability to produce a manual if it is considered a need of UXO LAO.

182. HIB support to the UXO LAO management review. During the discussion with the UXO LAO National HQ it was stated that HIB 'diagnoses' would be needed for aspects of the management review being undertaken by UXO LAO National HQ this year. Specifically, the UXO LAO National HQ indicated that HIB's comment would be required on UXO LAO Savannakhet's TOE's when they are produced.

183. Other possible areas of the management review where HIB should be asked to contribute include provincial staffing requirements and job descriptions; and the development of procedures to cover management aspects of UXO LAO i.e. QM, administration, personnel and finance. HIB staff could also contribute to the review of UXO LAO's operations SOP's.

## **SECTION SEVEN: CONTRIBUTION OF THE HIB PROJECT TO THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE**

### **Introduction**

184. According to the HIB project document, the overall objective of the project is, “to reduce deaths and injuries from UXO and to open up land for agriculture and other development.”<sup>34</sup>

### **Achievement of the Overall Objective in Savannakhet**

185. Reduce death and injuries from UXO. Information on UXO accidents that occur in Savannakhet are recorded by:

- a. Victim assistance organisations (Consortium) but only for the victims of accidents that they hear about or assist, and only in the districts that they work in (Sepone, Nong and Vilabuly).
- b. Provincial or district hospitals for those casualties that go to hospital. Some injuries are severe and the victims do not get to a hospital. Others are minor and victims do not seek treatment.
- c. UXO LAO, but only for accidents that are heard about in the districts that UXO LAO works in (currently Nong, Sepone, Vilabuly and Palanxai). Gathering of accident data by UXO LAO is passive i.e. accident data is not actively sought and information obtained does not cover all accidents that occur. During this evaluation it was learned there were more known accidents that had occurred in 2004 than UXO LAO had reported. There are other accidents that never get reported.

186. Accident statistics are not accurate enough to indicate a reduction in deaths and injuries from accidents, however from discussions held during this evaluation it was learned that the general opinion is that UXO accidents are rising. The reason for this is that people (including young children) are actively seeking UXO for scrap metal and the interaction between people and UXO is increasing. The extent of the scrap metal trade was witnessed during the evaluation in all the districts visited. The gathering of scrap metal is considered easier and more lucrative than other work. The Provincial Government is aware of the problem but also understand the reasons why it is occurring and has no immediate solutions.

187. UXO is being cleared by UXO LAO in Savannakhet and statistically, each UXO cleared must reduce the possibility of an accident occurring, but because of the scrap metal trade deaths and injuries from UXO are believed to be increasing.

188. Open up land for agriculture and development. Land is being cleared by UXO LAO for agriculture and development in Savannakhet.

### **HIB Project’s Contribution to the Overall Objective**

189. There have been situations where the direct intervention by HIB staff have either prevented accidents occurring or reduced the likelihood of an accident. Examples of these were discussed during the evaluation.

190. Current capabilities of UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. This should be in relation to technical skills and management capabilities. The conclusions from section six were:

- a. Field staff. There were no problems with the technical skills at the operator level and generally, worksite management was carried out satisfactorily and clearance work was progressing. Of the faults that were identified, effective monitoring (including checks on equipment) with proper corrective action would rectify them. As indicated in

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<sup>34</sup> Grant Application Form (Project Document) for Phase Four of HIB Technical Assistance to UXO Clearance Operations in Savannakhet.

section four, further training for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff should be carried out on QM so that all staff have a good understanding of the elements of QM and the importance of it to the maintenance of technical standards of UXO LAO Savannakhet.

- b. Management staff. The management capabilities of the current management staff are generally satisfactory except for the DPC who requires a lot of work to get his skills up to standard. HIB will assist with this but the commitment and cooperation of the DPC is essential for this to occur. For the remainder of the staff the continual training planned by HIB, and the additional training recommended as part of this evaluation will ensure that their capabilities reach a level where they can satisfactorily manage UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations.

191. During the evaluation discussions were held with many of UXO LAO's technical and managerial staff. During these discussions many commented on the development of the capabilities of UXO LAO Savannakhet as a result of the work of HIB. The comments particularly referred to this fourth phase of the project, which focused on the transferring of knowledge, skill and capacities to the UXO LAO staff.

192. HIB's contribution to the technical skills and management capabilities of UXO LAO Savannakhet are not able to be quantified but it is assessed as being significant.

193. HIB project's contribution to the overall objective. A major component of the phase four project has been aimed at developing the technical skills and management capabilities of UXO LAO Savannakhet in order to achieve the overall objective. It is the UXO LAO Savannakhet staff that are actually carrying out the work on the ground to achieve the overall objective. If their technical skills and management capabilities to do this have been improved significantly then the conclusion is that the HIB project has contributed to achieving the overall objective.

### **Improving the Contribution to the Overall Objective**

194. UXO LAO operations in Savannakhet are not as efficient as they could be. Most of the inefficiencies are caused by equipment support. Some are caused by personnel related factors, and others by procedural factors (liaison, coordination and work planning). All of these have been discussed in this report.

195. The continued training by HIB against their project objectives will help in improving efficiency. Also, the additional training or technical support as suggested in this evaluation, if carried out, will also help. Support from the UXO LAO National HQ will be needed for this to occur. However, the biggest contribution to improving efficiency with UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations can be made by the UXO LAO National HQ carrying out the management initiatives that they indicated were going to occur this year as part of a management review.

### **Sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet**

196. One of HIB's project objectives was, "enhancing the sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet".<sup>35</sup> The sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet after HIB support ceases is dependant on certain conditions which include, continued political support for a national UXO clearance capability, continued availability of funding, the continued availability of technically qualified personnel and the continued availability of critical equipment. Some of these factors are very closely linked.

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<sup>35</sup> Grant Application Form (Project Document) for Phase Four of HIB Technical Assistance to UXO Clearance Operations in Savannakhet.

197. There is nothing that the HIB project can do to ensure that these conditions will be met. All the project aims to do is ensure that the current staff that UXO LAO Savannakhet has are technically skilled and managerially capable or that UXO LAO Savannakhet is technically and managerially sustainable.

198. This evaluation has identified a number of training or technical support activities that still need to be done to ensure this occurs. These are:

- a. Continue with the current project objectives and complete the outstanding activities.
- b. Conduct computer training for the DPC, SEODT, Operations Assistant and the Personnel/ Administration/Finance Assistant.
- c. Conduct TOT for the Medics.
- d. Conduct OJT for the PC, DPC, SEODT and DC's in work planning covering the liaison and coordination requirements and the actual preparation of a work plan.
- e. Conduct formal training for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff on QM and then continuation OJT for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff with a responsibility for QM activities.
- f. Development of a bomb fuze manual.
- g. Carry out formal or OJT for any new staff appointed to the Provincial HQ, and for the second SEODT when he returns to Savannakhet.

199. Provided that these activities are able to be completed then it is considered that HIB will have done as much as possible to ensure the technical and managerial sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet. The support of the UXO LAO National HQ and UXO LAO Savannakhet will be needed to ensure that these activities are able to be completed.

200. Much of the sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet is dependant on the support of the UXO LAO National HQ with particular focus on improving equipment and personnel support.

### **UXO LAO National HQ Support**

201. During the evaluation the UXO LAO National HQ stated that they were carrying out a number of management initiatives as part of an overall management review. These are important to the future efficiency and sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations. Details of the UXO LAO National HQ initiatives are summarised here:

- a. Equipment support. The initiatives being carried out to improve equipment support to UXO LAO operations include:
  - (1) A review of the tables of equipment (TOE's) for each of UXO LAO's 11 locations. This was to be carried out and then followed by a stock check. Equipment would then be redistributed or procured to bring all equipment holdings up to scale.
  - (2) A review of the whole area of equipment support to make it more responsive to the needs of the operations in the field.
  - (3) Improvements to the way vehicle maintenance is carried out. They also have plans for the replacement of the older vehicles.

- b. Personnel support. A review of staff requirements for all locations is currently being carried out. When this is completed all vacancies identified as part of the review will be filled.<sup>36</sup>
  - c. Support service procedures. Procedures to cover finance, personnel and administration would be produced this year as part of the management review.
202. Other support from the National HQ. There are other areas where the UXO LAO National HQ stated that it would take or consider action in response to specific situations with UXO LAO Savannakhet. Details of these are:
- a. Return of the second qualified SEODT to Savannakhet. According to the UXO LAO National HQ a second qualified SEODT from Savannakhet, who is currently on temporary attachment to the National Training Centre, will return to the province. This should occur well before the end of the HIB project so that OJT for this person can be carried out.
  - b. Continued refresher training of Medics. Complete refresher medical training for all UXO LAO Medics during the remainder of 2004.
  - c. Future training for the introduction of new equipment and procedures. The UXO LAO National HQ stated that training and the provision of reference materials and equipment user guides for new equipment or procedures introduced to the programme, would be carried out at a national level as has been done in the past. This should include training on any new management procedures that are introduced as part of the management review.
  - d. Future technical support to UXO LAO Savannakhet. The UXO LAO National HQ indicated that they understand the need for continued technical assistance and will look at options for the future to ensure that technical advice or assistance is available to UXO LAO Savannakhet.

### **Support Required from UXO LAO Savannakhet Staff**

203. The following support would be required from UXO LAO Savannakhet staff to improve the efficiency and sustainability of UXO LAO Savannakhet's operations:

- a. PC:
  - (1) Ensure that UXO LAO Savannakhet staff are selected for appointment or promotion based on qualifications, experience and performance.
  - (2) Provide management support to the staff carrying out monitoring assessments, particularly in relation to corrective action.
  - (3) Take a leading role in the coordination of work planning at a provincial level.
  - (4) Assist the DC's with the coordination and liaison required for work planning at a district level until such time as the DC's are accepted as being capable of carrying out this task themselves.
  - (5) Ensure that only clearance tasks that are district priorities for development are included in work plans.

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<sup>36</sup> If this review is carried out against actual work requirements then it should identify that Savannakhet needs two SEODT on its Provincial HQ establishment.

- (6) Take a more active interest in all the training carried out for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff both during the HIB project and for the future with particular attention to ensuring the attendance of all staff at training.
- b. All UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. Attend or make themselves available for all of the training activities (formal and OJT) that are planned to be carried out by HIB for the remainder of their project time.

## **SECTION EIGHT: WITHDRAWAL OF HIB TECHNICAL SUPPORT FROM UXO LAO SAVANNAKHET**

### **Introduction**

204. Prior to the withdrawal of HIB technical support from UXO LAO Savannakhet there are number of activities that still have to be carried out both to complete the project's objectives and administratively. There are also the other training or technical support activities identified as being needed, to be considered.

### **Activities to Complete the Project's Objectives**

205. The activities to be carried out to complete the project's objectives are:
- a. Complete the formal training in accordance with the 2004 training plan.
  - b. Complete TOT for all UXO LAO Savannakhet operational staff from DPC down to SC level and ensure that these staff are given the opportunity to conduct training.<sup>37</sup>
  - c. Refine the training packages and complete all the marking guides.
  - d. Continue OJT as follows:
    - (1) For the DPC and the SEODT; in the management and use of training packages, in the management of reference materials, on the use of the training database and the management of training records.
    - (2) For the DPC, SEODT, DC's, TL's, STL's and SC's; in the use of operational task monitoring assessment forms relevant to their job.
  - e. Carry out a review of the monitoring assessment forms needed and the refinement of these.
  - f. Re-establish the operations database and carry out training for the DPC, SEODT and the Operations Assistant in its use.

206. These activities should be the highest priority for the HIB staff as they are already included in their current project objectives. HIB should plan on continuing with these activities.

### **Administration Requirements to be Completed**

207. The administrative requirements to be completed by HIB before the end of their project time includes:

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<sup>37</sup> Where possible the training provided by the TOT staff should be on the outstanding formal training.

- a. Handing over of the equipment and materials that are to be given to UXO LAO<sup>38</sup>. This includes office furniture, computers, workshop tools and parts and any European Union (EU) vehicles that are not going to be used on other EU projects.
- b. Recovering any of the HIB owned equipment not to be handed over. This may need returning to Vientiane.
- c. Handing back of the HIB rented houses.
- d. Taking any leave owed before the end of the project time or before the end of individual contracts.
- e. Carrying out any final administration for the HIB staff. This includes the writing of final reports and references.
- f. Completing any final reports to donors or to HIB.

208. The completion of some of these administrative requirements may be able to be carried out concurrently with completing the project objectives, however a certain amount of the remaining project time needs to be allocated to these activities.

#### **Additional Training or Technical Support Activities**

209. There is a number of additional training or technical support requirements that were identified as being needed by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff. These have been discussed in this report already. Those that are able to be carried out by HIB are shown below and where applicable, an estimation of the time and HIB staff support necessary to carry them out is made:

- a. Computer training for the DPC, SEODT, Operations Assistant and the Personnel/Administration/Finance Assistant. This training may also be required by any new Provincial HQ staff that are appointed. Some of this training could be carried out concurrently with the current planned OJT activities or if necessary, formal computer training could be outsourced.
- b. TOT for Medics. There are 16 medics and a minimum of 8 are needed to support operations. This training would require two training sessions so that operations are not disrupted. The MOI training should not take more than two days and then three days should be allocated for the preparation and delivery of lessons by the Medics themselves. This should be done in two groups so two assessors would be needed. This training should take two weeks for all Medics to be covered and require two HIB staff. This training should be carried out in a central location in the districts.
- c. OJT for the PC, DPC, SEODT and DC's in work planning covering the liaison and coordination requirements and the actual preparation of a work plan, possibly as part of a review of the 2004 work plan or for the 2005 work plan. This would involve the support of one HIB staff member for up to two months, not necessarily full time, with the timing of this training depending on which work plan the training is carried out on. If it is the 2004 work plan then the training will have to be earlier in 2004. If it is the 2005 work plan then the training will be later in 2004. The two month time allocation is a very rough estimate, the actual time required depends on the availability of the external agencies involved, their level of preparation with their priorities and the actual

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<sup>38</sup> Some equipment has been handed over in the past and procedures already established for this will be used for future hand overs.

locations of some of the activities. There are too many factors for an accurate estimation of time to be made.

- d. Formal training for all UXO LAO Savannakhet staff on QM and then continuation OJT for UXO LAO Savannakhet staff with a responsibility for QM activities. The consolidation of all of the HIB developed materials, tools and systems that contribute to the achievement of quality and the production of a localised QM manual should take one HIB staff member two weeks to complete. From there the planning of the formal training and lesson preparation, assuming two HIB staff will conduct the training, will take a further week. For the formal training this should be carried out in the districts in a central location in two groups. Two full days would be required for each group. Including travel, one week would be required for this training to occur.
- e. Development of a bomb fuze manual. Some work on this has already been carried out by the HIB staff. If HIB carry out this task they have indicated that it will take one HIB staff member the remainder of the current project time, plus a four month extension to complete. Additional support from other HIB staff will also be necessary.
- f. Providing input into the UXO LAO National HQ management review. HIB should be able to provide input into the UXO LAO National HQ management review concurrently with other activities within the remaining project time.
- g. Formal or OJT for any new staff appointed to the Provincial HQ, or in the case of the second SEODT, OJT for him in his responsibilities, if and when separate job descriptions for the two SEODT's are developed. This training may be able to be carried out concurrently with other training already planned but this depends on when these personnel are available. No estimation of time or HIB staff support can be made for this activity.

210. Management training was also identified as being needed by UXO LAO Savannakhet staff, however it was considered that this training was best conducted by UXO LAO staff using their own management procedures when they are developed.

**TENTATIVE WORK PROGRAMME MAY TO DECEMBER 2004**

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
<b>TA</b>	Bomb Fuze Manual							Admin	
<b>TA</b>	Support to Current Project Objectives				TOT	QM <sup>1</sup>	QM <sup>2</sup>	Work Planning <sup>3</sup>	Admin
<b>TA</b>	Support to Current Project Objectives				TOT	GS <sup>4</sup>	QM <sup>2</sup>	GS <sup>4</sup>	Admin

Table 1

Notes to table:

- 1. The production of the QM Manual.
- 2. The preparation and conduct of QM Training.
- 3. The timing of the work planning will depend on the work plan being prepared. It may have to occur earlier in the year. This may not be a full time task for the TA and general support to other work can be continued in the available spare time.
- 4. GS = General support which can be to the bomb fuze manual or the current project objectives, whichever is the priority.



211. As can be seen by table 1 above, if a four month extension to the project was provided taking the project completion time to 31 December 2004,<sup>39</sup> all of the current training requirements and the additional training and support requirements could be achieved, but time would be tight with one TA required to work full time on the bomb fuze manual. Any delays at all, particularly with the availability of UXO LAO Savannakhet staff for training would affect the ability for all of the activities to be completed. The continued support of three HIB staff would be needed for this to occur.

212. One non measurable advantage of a project extension is that UXO LAO Savannakhet gets a longer period of HIB input into their activities. This means that OJT activities can continue for longer for the benefit of UXO LAO Savannakhet staff.

### **Recommended Future Action**

213. The activities that are required to complete the project objectives have already been planned to continue until the end of the current project time and presumably the administrative requirements have also been planned to be carried out within this time. HIB should continue with these activities for the present time.

214. HIB should consider which of the additional training and support activities they wish to support. As can be seen from table 1 they are able to support them all. HIB should then prepare a plan to permit the activities that they are willing to support to be carried out. This should include timings and staff support requirements. This plan should also cover the current project objectives as there will be some overlap.

215. HIB should then submit a proposal to the UXO LAO National HQ advising that they require an extension to their project time, provide the details of the activities that they are going to carry, include timings and staff requirements and request UXO LAO National HQ's support for the extension. HIB should specify a time limit for a reply as obviously there are certain other administrative activities that have to occur whether an extension goes ahead or not.

216. If the UXO LAO National HQ does not want any of the planned activities to occur then HIB should continue with the current project objectives and plan on ending their support in August. If the UXO LAO National HQ does want some of the activities to occur then there will need to be a period of negotiation as details are worked out until a final agreement is reached. HIB will then have to prepare a plan to ensure that the current project objectives and any new objectives are met.

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<sup>39</sup> UXO LAO National HQ has confirmed that UXO LAO Savannakhet has funding to continue their work until 31 December 2004.