

Train-the-Trainer Trauma Care Program in Vietnam

By conducting a train-the-trainer trauma care program in collaboration with the Norwegian Tromsø Mine Victim Resource Centre and the Quang Tri Department of Health, Project RENEW hopes to develop the first-aid capacity of first responders in order to minimize the number of deaths and injuries caused by incidents involving landmines and unexploded ordnance.

by Dang Quang Toan [Project RENEW]



A 250 lb bomb found in Vinh Quang Commune, Vinh Linh District, Quang Tri Province.
Photo courtesy of Project RENEW.

Nearly 40 years after the Vietnam War ended, Vietnamese citizens, particularly those in Quang Tri province, remain at risk of injury or death from landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) that continue to contaminate much of the country.¹ From 1975 to October 2014, more than 100,000 mine/UXO casualties were reported in Vietnam. In Quang Tri, 7,515 casualties (2,986 killed and 4,529 injured) resulted from mine/UXO explosions.²

Today, mines/UXO contaminate 83.8 percent of all land in Quang Tri.³ Despite the efforts of the local government, pro-

vincial military and international nongovernmental organizations to solve the problem, mine/UXO contamination in this province remains a serious issue requiring strategic and long-term solutions in the form of clearance, risk education and victim assistance.

In order to save the lives of mine/UXO victims, the Quang Tri authorities in 2003 sent a delegation of Vietnamese doctors to Cambodia to examine Trauma Care Foundation (TCF) Cambodia's Chain-of-Survival Intervention Model implemented in northwest Cambodia's minefields. The group found

the model suitable to replicate in Quang Tri, with a goal of saving the lives of Vietnam's mine/UXO and other trauma survivors.

Although Vietnam has a very good health network from the national to local level, first aid for trauma victims is insufficient. Public Health University's interuniversity survey shows that Vietnam has 11,000 trauma victims daily needing medical treatment. However, 55 percent of victims do not receive immediate first aid following an accident.^{4,5}

Similarly, a 2007 Quang Tri province-wide survey by the Quang Tri Department of Health showed that 89.4 percent of Quang Tri's trauma victims do not receive first aid *in situ*, which has led to increased fatality rates among mine/UXO victims and can cause complications in later treatments.⁶

Since 2006, the Quang Tri Department of Health has collaborated with Project RENEW—an organization founded in Quang Tri in 2001 to provide survivor assistance and prevent mine/UXO accidents through land clearance—and with the Norwegian Tromsø Mine Victim Resource Centre (TMC), a medical action research center that coordinates networks of thousands of trauma-care providers, to create an effective trauma-care program. From 2011 to 2012, Project RENEW also extended operations to Quang Binh province, where mines/UXO contaminate 28.2 percent of the total land area.³

Dr. Hans Husum, former head of TMC's board, and Dr. Yang Van Heng and Dr. Chan Davoung of TCF Cambodia organized and headed the first trauma care train-the-trainers class in Vietnam. From 2007 to 2013, annual trainings were held in basic and advanced life-support practices. These training programs—among others—certified more than 2,300 health workers in Quang Tri and 180 health workers

in the Quang Ninh district of Quang Binh, qualifying participants to respond to medical emergencies. Additionally, TMC funded Project RENEW and Quang Tri Department of Health's First Aid Film, which aired four times a week on local television from 2010 to 2012. The program provided valuable knowledge on basic life support including instructions for how to respond to different injuries, control bleeding and ensure proper transportation, preparing people throughout the province to support trauma victims in the event of an accident.

Collaboration between Project RENEW and TMC for the trauma-care programs in Quang Tri and Quang Binh concluded in 2013. Project RENEW plans to analyze the projects' results and develop a path forward to continue supporting Quang Tri and expand the project into other provinces.

Project RENEW's impact on the communities of Quang Tri is evident. In 2014, a UXO explosion injured six. A community health volunteer, Hoang Van Mai, utilized his TMC/Project RENEW basic life-support training to stabilize the condition of the injured. Thanks to his prompt first-aid procedures, all six injured persons survived. Mai is one of 1,200 village health volunteers in Quang Tri who contributes daily to saving the lives of trauma victims. ©

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Toan Quang Dang joined Project RENEW in 2004, and is now the mine and cluster victim-assistance program manager, and keeps regular contact with local partners of the project to carry out victim-assistance activities within the project areas. He was the authorized representative of the Norwegian Tromsø Mine Victim Resource Centre in Norway from 2011 to 2013. He formulates victim-assistance proposals and also takes responsibility for organizing cultural exchange events between international friends and local youth. He has a Bachelor of Arts in English and a master's in public administration management from Vietnam's National Academy of Public Administration.

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