
J. Peter Pham
James Madison University

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal

Part of the Defense and Security Studies Commons, Emergency and Disaster Management Commons, Other Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons, and the Peace and Conflict Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol10/iss2/42

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction by an authorized editor of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.
The majority of the victims are between 14 and 49 years old, and most of them were working when the accident occurred. Out of 582 contaminated communities, 41 percent have primary schools in the vicinity of contaminated areas, indicating that children are still at risk of landmines and UXO. The project was implemented by the General Directorate of Mine Action, which is the regional mine-action center for Southeast Asian governments. Laotian PDR. UNICEF has been working closely with Minas Advisory Group since June 2006 to conduct a UXO risk-assessment study. A stakeholders meeting was organized as of the end of September to discuss the findings and recommendations.

In total, 1,312 adults completed a Knowledge Attitude Practice questionnaire, of which 54 percent were men and 46 percent were women. UNICEF and MAG selected a research group to have focus-group discussions with 14 groups of men and 12 groups of women. A total of 720 children over eight years of age completed the KAP questionnaire (495 boys and 225 girls), and the research team held 38 focus-group discussions with children, using UNICEF ethical guidelines.

The study distinguished between intentional (i.e., voluntary) exposure to live ordnance, in which actors are aware of the risk purposefully exposed themselves to live ordnance, and unintentional (involuntary) exposure. While some of the prevention activities may be the same, unintentional exposure is an important variable and particularly relevant in Laos, where UXO injury due to intentional exposure to live ordnance (for example, through the deliberate tampering of ordnance for the scrap-metal trade) is increasing. The assessment found a generally high level of UXO awareness and knowledge of risk-taking and risk-reduction behaviors; however, the assessment also found that many people, including women and children, continue to voluntarily interact with live, or potentially live, ordnance on an almost daily basis.

The findings from the study will be used in close collaboration with the recently established UXO National Regulatory Authority to inform MRE strategy development as well as the development of new messages for at-risk populations—especially children—who are attracted to scrap-metal collection. The UXO Needs Assessment data provides a unique opportunity to assist the government in taking the next strategic steps to develop appropriate messages and responses that more effectively target areas and people. The study activities include a four-day UXO Risk Education Strategy Planning Workshop to be conducted by staff from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, UNICEF and the Laos Youth Union. In addition, finalization of the UXO Risk Assessment as well as translation of the IMAS Best Practice Guidelines will continue. UNICEF will also give support to the Community Awareness Technical Working Group of the NRA for the first technical working group meeting. The UNICEF office is seeking new funding to expand support in its collaboration with the UXO NRA and the development of new risk-reduction strategies.

See Evaluation, page 112