



**Restoring the Environment and
Neutralizing the Effects of the War**



Project RENEW 10th Anniversary

A decade of making Quang Tri safe

AUGUST 2011



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INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to introduce this review of 10 years of Project RENEW's humanitarian efforts in Quang Tri Province – 10 years of hard work to make people's lives safer, reduce accidents, injuries and deaths caused by post-war bombs and landmines, and to build a better future for the people of this community.

As authorized by the Prime Minister, Project RENEW – “Restoring the Environment and Neutralizing the Effects of the War” – is a cooperative effort between the People's Committee of Quang Tri, international donors, and foreign non-governmental organizations. Project RENEW was launched in 2001 as a model to develop and test new ways to provide a more effective response to the humanitarian challenge of explosive remnants of war (ERW).

Project RENEW's integrated and comprehensive model has benefited from resources and assistance provided by national and international agencies, institutions and individuals. International partners of RENEW have included the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), the Humpty Dumpty Institute (HDI), Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (GWHF), the Tromsø Medical Center for Mine Victims (TMC), and UNICEF. The project has been supported with funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the U.S. Department of State, and the Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition, many organizations, companies and individuals from many countries have contributed to the project.

The Project RENEW model developed over the past 10 years has achieved substantial progress in neutralizing the effects of ERW, reducing poverty, and supporting socio-economic development. RENEW is now seen as a proven model in effective humanitarian mine action response, and is highly regarded by central government agencies and the international community.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank the government and central ministries for their assistance and support to the project. Thanks to the Quang Tri Province People's Committee for their direction and guidance, provincial departments and district authorities for their collaboration, and local people for their encouragement. Special thanks to the Project's donors for 10 years of support for Project RENEW, and particularly to NPA, HDI, and TMC for their pledges of continuing support and future cooperation in the coming years.

Thanks to RENEW's hard-working and professional staff for their unflagging efforts to make RENEW what it is today. Building on 10 years of experience and achievements, Project RENEW's vision over the next 10 years is to move closer to the goal of ensuring a safe community for the children and adults who live here, while opening the door to greater opportunities for all the people of Quang Tri Province.

Sincerely,



Mr. Hoang Nam
Vice Director, Department of Foreign Affairs
Coordinator, Project RENEW



Chuck Searcy
International Adviser
Project RENEW

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT RENEW

Two decades of war, from 1954 to 1975, caused severe consequences to the land and the people of Vietnam. Since 1975, more than 100,000 Vietnamese have been killed or injured by cluster bombs, landmines, and other explosive remnants of war. Quang Tri Province, located on either side of the former demilitarized zone (DMZ), was one of the most heavily bombed areas in the history of warfare. Quang Tri still suffers the highest contamination of bombs and mines of any place in Vietnam, affecting more than 80 percent of the province's land area (while the average contamination nationwide is 20%). As of late December 2010, Quang Tri Province has recorded 7,075 casualties due to ERW accidents, about 1.2 percent of the province's population. Notably, 31% of the victims have been children.



The DMZ, marked by the Ben Hai River which divided the southern and northern parts of Vietnam during the war, was heavily bombed by B-52 strikes.

New model was needed

Dealing with the problem of ERW had long been a pressing public safety issue, a long-term concern that demanded extensive resources and a new, comprehensive solution. The solution had to meet international standards and be appropriate for Vietnam's needs and circumstances. In 2000, at a meeting hosted by the Quang Tri Province's Foreign Affairs Bureau, now the Department of Foreign Affairs (DOFA), with participation by representatives of provincial government agencies and international mine action NGOs working in the province, many ideas and approaches were put forward and discussed. Out of that meeting, a year later, came Project RENEW, established as a partnership between the DOFA of Quang Tri and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF).



Mr. Hoang Dang Mai of Quang Tri DOFA (2-L) and Chuck Searcy of VVMF (1-R) cutting ribbon to launch RENEW in August, 2001.

Project RENEW –“Restoring the Environment and Neutralizing the Effects of the War” – is a model of integrated and comprehensive management in the field of mine action, the first in Vietnam. In accordance with international standards, the project embraces major pillars of mine action including: (i) surveys and assessments for development of a mine action database, (ii) clearance, (iii) risk education, (iv) victim assistance, and (v) community development. All of these components are managed by a coordination office. Project RENEW's direct authority comes from the People's Committee of Quang Tri Province, with overall leadership and guidance from a Steering Board chaired by the

Deputy Chairman of the province. Steering Board members represent leadership from departments of Foreign Affairs, Health, Science and Technology, Provincial Military Headquarters, and office of the Province People's Committee. Representatives from

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and Humpty Dumpty Institute (HDI) are on the Board, VVMF also participated previously.

The project is designed in a sustainable and cost-effective way that focused on building up local capacity towards international mine action standards (IMAS).

RENEW's Mission

The mission of Project RENEW is to save lives, reduce and eventually eliminate accidents, injuries and deaths, and improve livelihoods for ERW survivors and disabled families residing in contaminated areas.

When Project RENEW was launched in 2001, the rate of casualties from bombs and mines in the years prior had ranged from 76 to 165 fatalities and injuries every year.

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... the annual rate of casualties from bombs and mines has dropped ...

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Project RENEW set about to identify the levels of contamination, the areas that were most dangerous, and the people who were most vulnerable, to start producing measurable improvements in the situation. During the past 10 years, the accident rate per year province-wide has dropped to 18. In 2010, 10 accidents occurred, with three deaths and 15 injuries reported.

In the three districts which have been the focus of Project RENEW – Hai Lang, Trieu Phong and Cam Lo – the annual rate of casualties from bombs and mines has dropped from 29 in 2001 to five in 2010.



Project RENEW's teams use their technical training and certified skills every day to remove and destroy unexploded ordnance that threatens residents' safety.



Surveyors interview local people at their homes, in villages and communes throughout the province, to gather baseline data to target project responses.

Capsule History, Assets Today

Project RENEW, the working concept developed and agreed upon by DOFA and VVMF, was made possible in August 2001 by the generosity and vision of two donors: the Freeman Foundation based in the U.S., and American veteran Christos Cotsakos, who served in the U.S. Army in Quang Tri Province in 1967 and 1968, and went on to become a successful entrepreneur and founder of several international technology firms.

From the very beginning, the guiding principle which has made Project RENEW unique was that the effort would be directed, managed, and staffed by Vietnamese – with outside assistance and expertise as needed – but the project would not be *managed* by foreigners and decisions would not be made by foreigners, but by the Vietnamese. That principle is still in place today. It perhaps accounts for the success achieved and the level of esteem Project RENEW has earned in the eyes of Vietnamese and foreigners alike.

From a modest beginning in 2001 in Trieu Phong District, with risk education programs to teach safety to children and adults, Project RENEW expanded into assistance programs for victims – disabled families who had already suffered accidents – and over the years added teams of explosive ordnance (EOD) technicians, trained and equipped to expertly dispose of ERW on a daily basis. These additions completed the scope of RENEW’s aim to be Vietnam’s first integrated and comprehensive mine action model.

At the start, to determine what needed to be done, what priorities should be addressed initially, RENEW conducted Vietnam’s first baseline surveys (Level 1) to identify the scope of the UXO problem in Quang Tri. Our survey teams and analysts noted known locations of UXO, measured the level of awareness of the local people about the problem, quantified the number of victims, learned the circumstances of their injuries and the kinds of disabilities they must cope with daily, and noted their most pressing needs. These findings provided the basis for appropriate interventions to improve the situation.

We have grown from a core staff of four personnel in 2001 to a full complement of 80 RENEW employees. RENEW’s professional managers and technical staff are trained to IMAS standards and provided with modern tools and equipment. RENEW staff all come from Quang Tri Province. Together with other local resources, they are the foundation for the strong working relationships with government leaders and local residents necessary to carry out the mission of RENEW. The critical “leveraging” of community resources already in place, which has enabled Project RENEW to provide extensive services at lower cost than might be expected, has involved scores of trained volunteers from organizations such as the Youth Union and the Women’s Union. They have helped us to reach into the smallest villages and most

isolated communities. The local media, including newspapers and magazines which have published important information, and Quang Tri TV and radio which have provided free or discounted production and broadcast time to RENEW, have also helped carry the message into nearly every corner of the province.

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Support from international donors and NGOs has been a significant factor in the success of Project RENEW’s work. Project RENEW has received technical assistance and financial support from Golden West Humanitarian Organization (clearance, research and development); Norwegian People's Aid (clearance and mobile EOD response, information management); Tromsø Medical Center for Mine Victims (survivor-trauma care, emergency response); UNICEF (mine risk education, survey); and Humpty Dumpty Institute (victim assistance, income-generation and entrepreneurship). These partners have helped Project RENEW staff to develop management capacity and technical expertise so that Vietnamese directly and fully implement all project activities, with guidance and assistance from foreign experts as needed and requested.

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Direction from Steering Board has ensured that project is on right track...
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Direction from Steering Board has ensured that project is on right track and that all components are smoothly coordinated in combination of internal and external resources, to meet local needs.

REMOVING THE DANGER – CLEANING UP UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE



Controlled demolition of ordnance collected by RENEW teams during a normal week of clearance activity.

After Project RENEW was established in 2001, it was not until 2006 that sufficient funding and resources became available to begin the work of cleaning up explosive ordnance within Quang Tri Province. With funding from the

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RENEW teams removed 2,857 items of ordnance from the two sites and returned to local people a total of 40 hectares of land for safe use . . .

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U.S. Department of Defense and technical assistance from the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (GWHF), Vietnamese team members were recruited and trained to start working on two contaminated tracts of land at Ai Tu near the coast, and Vung Ha across the

river from Quang Tri Town. Both were priority development sites for local governments and residents. In addition to conducting research and testing equipment modifications for field use as part of the funding from DoS, RENEW teams removed 2,857 items of ordnance from the two sites and returned to local people a total of 40 hectares of land for safe use during that two-year period.

In 2007 an agreement was signed between DOFA, VVMF and NPA that set the stage for building capacity for RENEW teams through technical assistance and technology transfer from NPA.

With NPA's support during the last three years, Project RENEW teams have been the first in Vietnam to achieve IMAS (International Mine Action Standards) Level 2 certification. Consequently, as NPA's international staff now extend their efforts into other areas of Vietnam, RENEW teams currently operate independently under Vietnamese

management, without day-to-day outside technical assistance. NPA experts are available for periodic quality assurance and quality control, and technical improvements when required.



NPA Country Director Jonathon Guthrie (1-R) and Technical Adviser Peter Herbst (1-L) award IMAS Level II certificates to RENEW's EOD operators.

Since GWHF and VVMF have ended their involvement in Vietnam, RENEW now is operating four multi-function teams made up of two EOD mobile response teams (explosive ordnance disposal), a BAC team (battle area clearance), and a Community Support Team in three districts of Hai Lang, Trieu Phong and Cam Lo.

Over the past three years, RENEW teams have safely destroyed 6,260 cluster bombs, mines, and other explosives from around people's homes, gardens, schools and fields. Nine sites have been cleared, totaling 100,728 m2, and turned over to local authorities for schools, kindergartens, community centers. Fourteen suspected cluster bombs sites have been identified and mapped for further interventions.



Technical survey using a handheld metal detector to identify defined hazardous areas. Removing safe land from the need for clearance reduces time and costs.

NPA and Project RENEW are also using this partnership to explore innovations in technology and methodology to clear land faster and more effectively – to render it *safe* for normal use – and at less cost to donors and the government.

NPA is trial testing a new approach to land release with RENEW teams working in Trieu Phong District. The focus is on cluster munitions, which have accounted for nearly 40 percent of all deaths and injuries in Quang Tri Province.

responses in the area, interviews with the local population, former combatants, or other relevant stakeholders. From the information derived in this non-technical survey (NTS), the next step is to implement a Technical Survey to be tested using methodology that will create a map and define the hazardous areas containing cluster munitions.

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Identifying the problem . . . will permit time and resources to be used more efficiently and effectively
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Identifying known areas of cluster bomb contamination will allow for more precise mitigation of the immediate danger rather than continuing the old approach of clearing all land requested by authorities when it may not be necessary.

Once the survey of cluster munitions strikes accurately pinpoints and quantifies the problem, a polygon (or ellipse) will identify on a map the Defined Hazardous Area (DHA) – essentially a “footprint” – that can then guide clearance decisions.

Vietnam's dense population and pressing need to use all available land resources are challenges that may be eased significantly through this approach. Identifying the problem through defined hazardous areas will permit time and resources to be used more efficiently and effectively in dealing with the problem today.

This trial has been underway for the first half of 2011, and results are expected to be analyzed at the end of this year.



RENEW's EOD and clearance teams and some of their equipment.

RISK EDUCATION, COMMUNITY NETWORKS: KEEPING NEIGHBORS SAFE

When President Clinton visited Vietnam in 2000 and met four young boys from Quang Tri Province who were disabled because of UXO accidents, at a mine action briefing in Hanoi, he was clearly moved. Clinton said to the boys, and the assembled crowd, "The U.S. will help Vietnam every bomb and mine and removed, no matter how long it takes."



Local students participate in a parade to disseminate UXO safety messages.



A child taking an EOD operator to the location of UXO.

safe behavior to the grassroots level. They are supported by a team of village chiefs who are part of the Community Reporting Network. They encourage all members of the community to be fully involved and to report life-saving information to the EOD teams. In the first six months of 2011, the CRN received and transmitted 153 alerts to the EOD teams for action, an increase of 183% over the same period in 2010.

RENEW's beginning efforts in Trieu Phong District in 2001 consisted of a range of activities organized and implemented by the Youth Union, our main partner in this effort. Trained Youth Union volunteers went from village to village organizing community workshops, classroom presentations, parades and rallies, campouts for teenagers, and children's performance troupes who presented a variety of music and entertainment, always with the theme of safety and awareness of the threat of ERW. This was later expanded into Hai Lang and Cam Lo.

RENEW is continuing every day to clean up cluster bombs, landmines, and other ordnance, working toward the goal of making Vietnam safe.

However, removing "every bomb and mine" may never be done – even in 1,000 years. What is most important for today's generation is *making Quang Tri Province safe*, even while the cleanup and destruction of ERW continue for some years to come.

That's why Mine Risk Education or MRE is so important. MRE teaches children and adults who must live with the danger of unexploded ordnance how to be safe.

Project RENEW has added another dimension to that effort, which involves the entire community in identifying the threat and reporting it on a timely and accurate basis. Their reports activate an EOD team that responds immediately, at most within 72 hours. The Community Reporting Network (CRN) has become an integral part of the MRE program, and is now an essential element of EOD team scheduling on a daily and weekly basis.

Today there are 105 Youth Union collaborators who deliver safety messages and guidelines for safe behavior to the grassroots level. They are supported by a team of village chiefs who are part of the Community Reporting Network. They encourage all members of the community to be fully involved and to report life-saving information to the EOD teams. In the first six months of 2011, the CRN received and transmitted 153 alerts to the EOD teams for action, an increase of 183% over the same period in 2010.



A Youth Union volunteer teaches children about mine warning signs and how to avoid accidents.

These efforts were supported by U.S. Department of State funding and contributions from many individual donors. UNICEF also assisted in the effort.

Project RENEW has enlisted the professional help of Quang Tri Television and Radio, whose staff produced a series of TV public service announcements and lengthier, more extensive programs about UXO safety. Some included broadcasts translated into dialects of the Pac Co and Van Kieu ethnic minorities.

Today less than 2% of Quang Tri residents are unaware of the "safe behaviors" they need to follow to prevent accidents . . .



MRE themed comic books are appealing to young students and they teach valuable lessons about how to be safe from bombs and mines.

In addition, the ripple effect of TV and newspapers and other mass media has reached far beyond RENEW's target areas into the whole province. Surveys report that 81 percent of the population in Quang Tri are now clearly aware of the danger of ERW, and they know what to do to keep their families safe.

Booklets, brochures, children's comic books, and other publications are also widely used to spread the MRE message. RENEW has sponsored children's art contests, with participation of more than 20,000 primary school students who have painted their interpretations, and the messages they wish to share, about the dangers of UXO and how to be safe from injury.

RENEW survey data shows a reduction from 22% to 3.6% between 2002 and 2010 in the level of *unawareness* about the dangers of UXO, and the numbers of people who say they have not been exposed to warning signs or other safety messages. Today less than 2% of Quang Tri residents overall are unaware of the "safe behaviors" they need to follow to prevent accidents, or don't know what to do when they encounter dangerous ordnance.

The result has been a measurable reduction in accidents, injuries, and deaths over the past 10 years both in RENEW's project areas and province-wide.

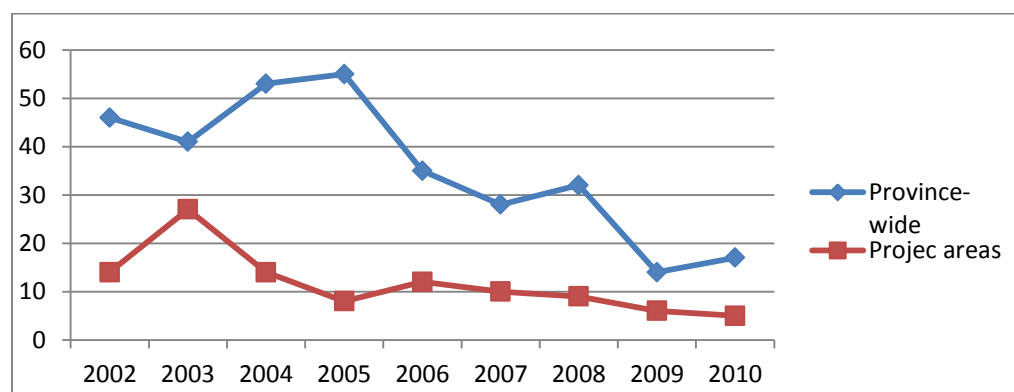


Chart showing reduction in UXO accidents in the main project area (Hai Lang, Trieu Phong, Cam Lo Districts) and province-wide during the period 2002-2010.

RESTORING HOPE THROUGH RECOVERY AND OPPORTUNITY

When Project RENEW was launched in 2001, there were already nearly 7,000 children and adults who had been killed or injured and permanently disabled by explosive ordnance. More than 500 of those had suffered accidents just in the past five years.

Trieu Phong District had the highest number of victims, 1,270 people killed or injured, and there were almost 800 survivors who needed medical and rehabilitation assistance or support with income generation because of their disabilities and related extreme poverty.

Project RENEW's initial efforts in Trieu Phong District were directed toward these disabled families, many of whom were headed by women who were the sole breadwinners.

Income generation

With the Farmers Union and the Women's Union, Project RENEW launched economic development programs built on revolving credit loans which bought cows and water buffaloes for disabled families to raise and breed, and introduced high-yield grass-growing for cattle feed. Initially 80 households benefited from the program.

The effort soon expanded into Hai Lang District, where 1,082 people had killed or injured since the war ended, and where 566 disabled families still needed assistance. In Hai Lang 125 families came into the program. In Trieu Phong participation soon expanded to 100 households. In recent years Cam Lo District, with nearly 500 disabled families injured by UXO, has come into the program as well.



Nguyen Thi Me, a UXO survivor in Hai Lang District, now has seven cows raised with her initial loan from RENEW's credit program.

The Hai Lang District authorities asked for help in expanding a small vocational training workshop they had established for 25 blind people, also victims of explosions. With a new building and new equipment installed, production of toothpicks, brooms, and other bamboo items of the Hai Lang Blind Association has expanded, generating needed income for participants.

Mushrooms with a Mission

One of Project RENEW's most innovative programs, thanks to a partnership with the Humpty Dumpty Institute (HDI) of New York City, is the "Mushrooms with a Mission" initiative launched two years ago. Building on a small income-generating project which provided training and inputs to disabled families so they could grow mushrooms, HDI saw the potential for a much expanded effort with significant benefits not only for disabled families but to expand sustainable agricultural production and economic development in Quang Tri Province.



Do Thien Dang, a UXO survivor in Trieu Phong District, grows mushrooms with support from RENEW.



Processing lab for Mushrooms with a Mission. This agricultural research center, with four hectares and four buildings, was turned over to Project RENEW and HDI as an in-kind contribution by the provincial government in Quang Tri.

With HDI's help and the cooperation of the government of Quang Tri Province, RENEW has now begun to recruit additional families who will eventually expand to a production base of 1,000 families growing high-quality organic mushrooms, making Quang Tri a leader in mushroom production. The families will generate needed income, they will be guaranteed purchase of their crops because they will be meeting certified standards of quality, and HDI and RENEW will create market demand domestically and possibly for future export.

The Mushrooms with a Mission team has agreed upon the first stages of a marketing strategy, and adopted a brand name which will be registered and trademarked in Vietnam and elsewhere: VAMUS is the brand, which combines elements of mushrooms, Vietnam, and U.S. One day in the future it may be on your supermarket shelf!

Emergency Medical Response and Rehabilitation



Medical workers practice advanced trauma care skills on a wounded pig.

After a blast injury from a cluster bomb or mine or other ordnance, the first hour is the most critical for saving the life of a severely maimed and traumatized patient. Two RENEW partners, the Trauma Care Foundation (TCF) and the Tromsø Medical Center (TMC) of Norway, have provided significant funding and resources to upgrade Quang Tri's capacity to respond to medical emergencies. This includes international standards training in emergency medical response.

The effort has resulted in more than 2,300 doctors, nurses, emergency technicians and village health workers being trained in life-saving skills and treatment of injuries. In particular blast injuries require special skills, because they sometimes involve major loss of blood and tissue and are almost always life-threatening. The training covered five of Quang Tri's 10 districts.

As part of the project, 133 mobile medical kits containing 45 items each were distributed to commune health stations in seven of Quang Tri's 10 districts. Additional first aid kits were provided to 538 village health workers in four districts and to district and provincial hospitals.

New surgical equipment to hospitals in Vinh Linh, Huong Hoa, Dakrong, Trieu Hai and Hai Lang will improve the level of treatment for trauma patients.

Proving amputees with new limbs



Measuring amputees for casting artificial limbs at a commune clinic.

The province hospital's Rehabilitation Department in Dong Ha is another RENEW partner. Project RENEW equipped the Prosthetics and Orthotics (P&O) Workshop at the hospital with precision milling machines, air compressors, vacuums, vertical band saws and drills to fabricate custom limbs and braces. The workshop has provided artificial limbs and other prosthetic and orthotic devices to 463 people with disabilities (PWDs) since the cooperation began in 2004.

In 2008, Project RENEW launched a P&O mobile outreach program to provide services to PWDs in rural, mostly mountainous areas of the province who had never had access to such services.

Doctors and technicians travel into remote areas in a van equipped with tools and machines necessary to conduct on-site examinations, to fit and adjust the custom devices, and make sure amputees and other mobility impaired children and adults can function comfortably with their high quality limbs and braces.

Ho Xay, a UXO survivor who lost his leg more than 40 years ago, could never afford or take the time to make the trip from Huong Hoa District into Dong Ha to be fitted for an artificial limb. For decades he hobbled on a crutch. The RENEW

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***Some 480 patients were
examined . . . 275 were pro-
vided with P&O devices . . .***
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Ho Xay is able to walk without using his crutch for the first time in nearly 40 years after being fitted with an artificial limb by the P&O Outreach team.

team came to his village, examined him, measured his stump for a custom fitted artificial leg, and returned to the hospital workshop in Dong Ha to fabricate the device. Ten days later they returned to the village and fitted him with his new leg. After a few minutes of practice, Mr. Ho Xay was able to walk without a crutch for the first time in nearly 40 years.

From March 2008 to June 2011 some 480 patients were examined in Huong Hoa and Dakrong Districts, and 275 were provided with P&O devices.

Surgical interventions

Sometimes surgical interventions are necessary, especially for traumatic injuries from accidents and sometimes for P&O patients as well. Project RENEW has supported major

expansion of staff capacity at district hospitals, and provision of equipment, to allow for high level surgical response in critical cases.

The district hospital in Vinh Linh now has a separate operating room with all surgical equipment provided by Project RENEW. To date 251 patients have been treated in the trauma surgery operating room. So far in 2010 there have been 2,576 trauma patients admitted to the hospital. In the first six months of 2011 there were 779 patients.

District hospitals in Huong Hoa, Da Krong, and Hai Lang have also been upgraded with surgical equipment that has been used to treat 708 patients.

Medical schools and research support



Students enrolled at Quang Tri Medical College practice first aid with trauma care using training equipment provided by Project RENEW.



Conference to present Ketamine study findings at the Ministry of Health in Hanoi. The Quang Tri study opened the door for use of Ketamine as an effective substitute for morphine in Vietnam.

Project RENEW has provided support to the Quang Tri Province Medical College to set up training facilities and upgrade curriculums, which resulted in expanded learning and professional opportunities for some 200 medical and nursing students.

In 2009 Project RENEW staff undertook an unprecedented collaboration with the provincial Department of Health and the Tromsø Medical Center (TMC) in Norway to launch the first-ever province level drug research project. The research study and survey focused on the use of Ketamine as a viable alternative to morphine in emergency medical situations and trauma cases. The results could be important not just for medical emergencies related to blast injuries, but to any medical emergency from motor vehicle accidents to construction site injuries. The collaboration among staff of Project RENEW, the Department of Health, and TMC was totally effective. The results of the research were presented and defended before a review board at the Ministry of Health (MOH) in Hanoi in June 2011. In July 2011, MOH issued a decision to allow wide application of the Quang Tri study's findings.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – SCHOOLS, CLINICS, COMMUNITY CENTERS

One of the important outcomes from cleaning up ordnance and making land safe and available is that schools, clinics, community centers and other public facilities can be built to serve villages and communes.

Project RENEW, with generous funding from veterans and other donors, has helped to build or renovate a number of facilities in Quang Tri Province for use by students and the general public. Starting with a public library in Quang Tri Town in 2004, Project RENEW has since built another library in Da Krong District, increased the number of classrooms in a school in Trieu Phong District, and cleared land for construction of a new vocational college that will be constructed on the edge of Dong Ha. In addition, RENEW teams have cleared land that will be used for a community center and for residential housing development, to be funded through provincial government budgets.



Renovated and newly built classrooms at Tuong Van Primary School provide a spacious, pleasant learning environment for local students.



Ground breaking for a public library in Dakrong District where minorities previously have had limited access to basic services.

A KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

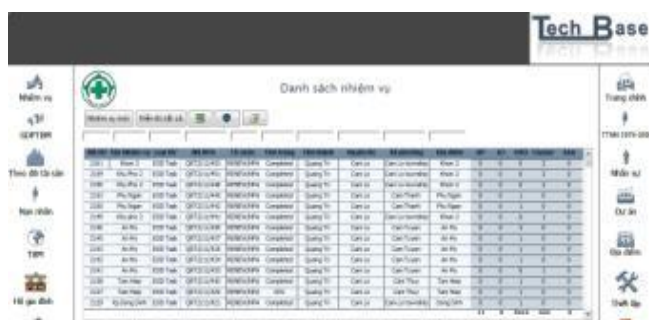
When Project RENEW started work in 2001, a major information gap existed about the impact of UXO on local people, institutions, and social and economic factors. There was little hard data about locations of known UXO and the extent of contamination.

RENEW broke new ground by launching Vietnam's first of several surveys which measured the seriousness of the problem and the effects on people's lives, as well as detailed statistics on the number of victims, the circumstances of their accidents, and their most pressing needs today. Survey reports and our expanding database are available for analysis, assessment and planning by government agencies, other mine action organizations and NGOs working in Quang Tri, students, researchers, and the media. The government of Quang Tri Province made the decision quite early that this valuable information should be considered a public asset for use by those with a need to access comprehensive and reliable information about the UXO situation in Quang Tri.



RENEW collaborator interviewing residents about their knowledge of UXO in the area where they live.

Surveys that RENEW staff and other collaborators have conducted during the past 10 years include preliminary landmine/UXO impacts in Trieu Phong District (2002); scrap metal collection in three provinces of Thua Thien Hue, Quang Tri and Quang Binh (2008); and a Study of Knowledge - Awareness - Practices to the Danger of Postwar Landmines/Unexploded Ordnance and Accidents in Quang Tri Province (2002, 2006 and 2010).



With NPA's TechBase management tool now in use and expanding every day, RENEW staff, provincial leaders, and other NGOs can access extensive data to help them in setting priorities and developing appropriate mine action strategies.

Project components have real-time information about project activities and measurements of progress

Project RENEW has now created the most comprehensive and accessible database of UXO information in Vietnam. It is being increasingly refined and developed in accordance with international standards. With

technical assistance from NPA and implementation of NPA's versatile TechBase information management system, staff from all project components now have real-time information about other project activities and measurements of their progress.

RENEW has also extracted much of the most critical information and compiled it in a system of documents and publications that have been made widely available in to others involved in mine action work.

THE MINE ACTION VISITOR CENTER

Years of war not only devastated Quang Tri Province during the conflict but left a lingering impact on impoverished people and barren lands for many years after. Explosive remnants of war (ERW), in particular, have remained a problem that still haunts the land and its people here.

At the end of the war, major efforts were launched by the army, local authorities and community residents to clear bombs and mines for reconstruction. Large quantities of ERW were removed. Many hectares of land were cleared and turned over for farming and resettlement. This work took a heavy toll in human losses and sacrifices. Accurate records were not kept at that time, so we can only imagine the severity of the problem and the selflessness and courage of those who were clearing bombs and mines then.

In 1996, Quang Tri Province began to encourage international support in this effort. Since then a number of non-governmental organizations have cooperated in addressing the consequences of ERW. These activities have brought significant attention to the humanitarian consequences of ERW. Central government agencies and the international community have responded by developing and implementing policies, programs and projects to deal with the problem throughout Vietnam and in Quang Tri in particular.



An interior display section of the Visitor Center

In another ten years or so, experiences and memories of the war will remain a matter of relevance mainly for older generations, both Vietnamese and some foreigners. In the future, however, many of the younger generations who were born after the war will want to learn about their parents' experiences, especially children of veterans.

The Mine Action Visitor Center is intended to convey facts, truths, and images about the war, its consequences and the impact of ERW on the people. It describes their efforts to overcome losses of land and property, personal injuries to family members, and grinding poverty. The Center describes government and international NGO responses to these challenges. Visitors may come to appreciate the immense costs of war, and better understand why the Vietnamese people so value their hard-won peace.

The Center also reflects reconciliation and friendship which join together Vietnamese and people of good will from around the world, after years of turmoil and misunderstandings. The Center is a symbol of mutual respect among people and nations who may have been adversaries, who now are putting the past behind and looking to a brighter future.

Our deep appreciation goes out to Sally Benson and Steve Nichols and their colleagues at the Chino Cienega Foundation for providing funds to establish the Mine Action Visitor Center and to operate it for the first year. Thanks also to NPA and TMC for supplemental funding for some of the Center's exhibits and displays. We also thank the Quang Tri Province People's Committee for their valuable in-kind contributions to the Center, and to local organizations and individuals for their donations of images, materials and exhibits to complete the displays.

We welcome comments from visitors. And we very much appreciate donations to help support the Center's operations and mine action projects in Quang Tri Province.

PROJECT RENEW DISBURSEMENT AND ALLOCATION OF FUNDS, 2001-2011

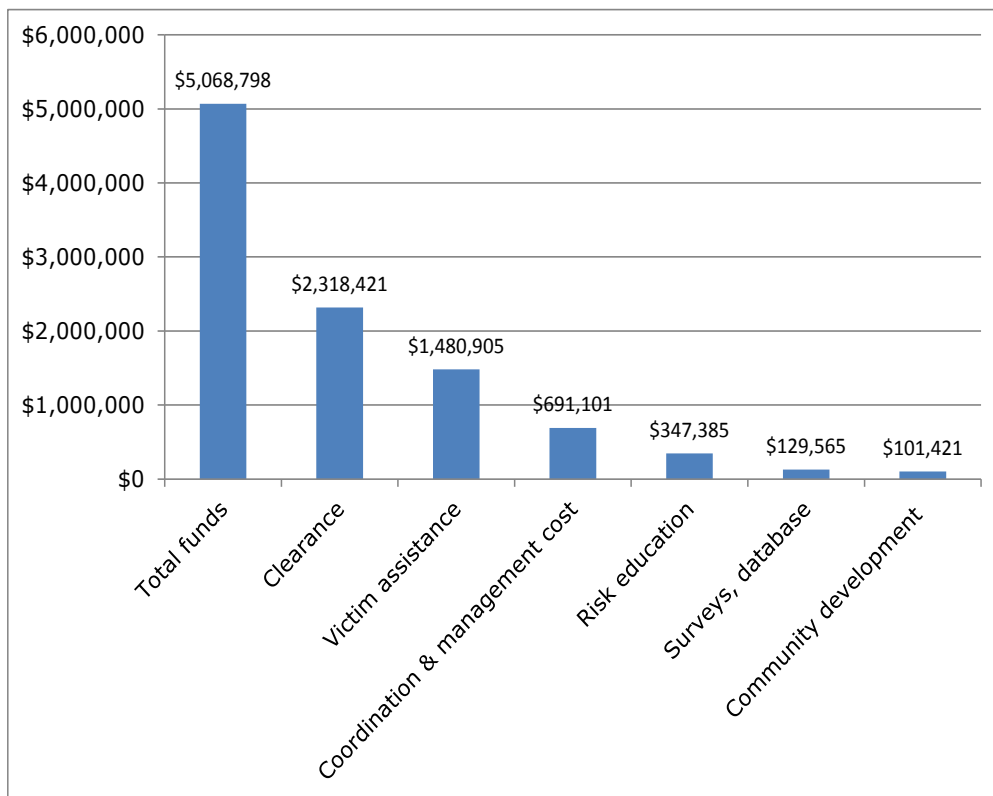


Chart 1: Disbursement of funds

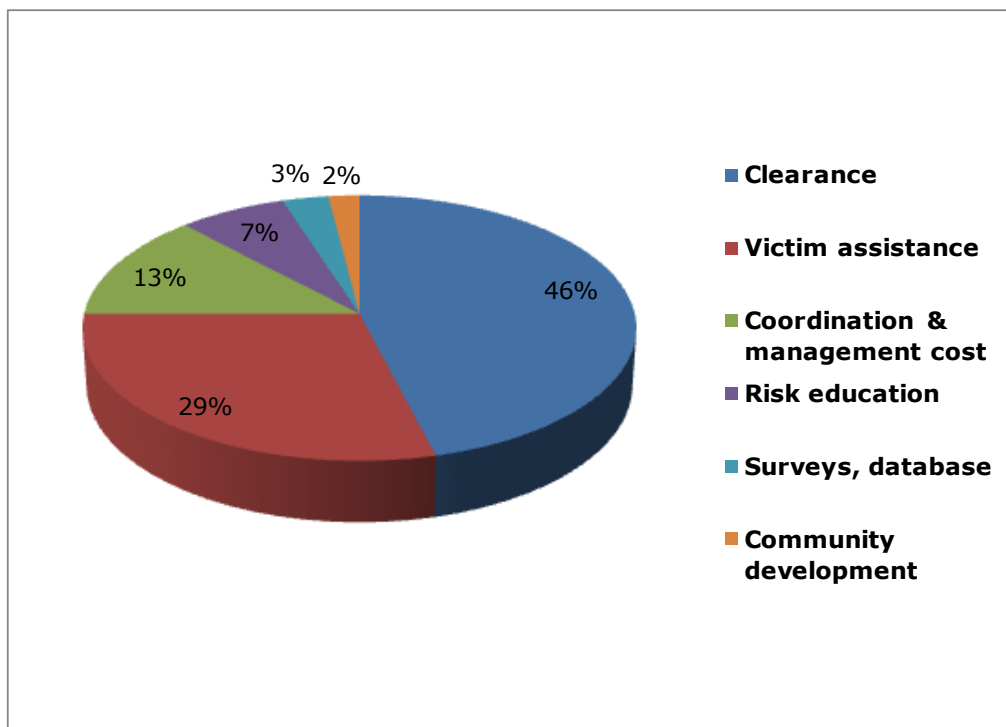


Chart 2: Allocation of funds

THE FUTURE

The threat remaining from cluster bombs, landmines, and other ordnance in Quang Tri Province is still serious. When accidents occur even now – as recently as July 22 of this year when a 31-year-old father of two children was killed as he was collecting scrap metal in Cam Lo District – we are reminded, tragically, that there is still much work to be done.

The staff of Project RENEW, with broad support from the communities where we work and in cooperation with other mine action organizations, have made progress in clearing ordnance, reducing accidents and casualties, and offering hope for a better future for people in Quang Tri.

We are proud of our accomplishments. And we will continue to work, because the job is not yet done.

Our goal is *to make Quang Tri Province safe* – and to continue improving the livelihoods of disabled families in this province.

Together with other key partners and institutions, we believe we can do it. We can do it with continued financial and technical support from individuals, foundations, institutions, governments and international organizations. We can do it with continued cooperation and assistance from the provincial government in Quang Tri, the central government in Hanoi, the military, local people – the neighborhood residents, the families with growing children, the hard-working breadwinners toiling to give their children a better life. All are essential to this effort, *to make Quang Tri Province safe and to better the lives of disadvantaged people here.*

We hope you will join us in the effort, to continue providing us with the encouragement, support, and financial and technical resources necessary to do this job.

Project RENEW is ready to go forward, to make the next 10 years more meaningful, more successful, and more positive – building on the lessons and achievements of the past 10 years.

To all our friends, supporters, donors, and colleagues in mine action, and to the people of Quang Tri Province, we say a heartfelt “thank you” for joining with us in meeting this challenge.

WITH APPRECIATION TO OUR DONORS AND PARTNERS

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Quang Tri Province People's Committee
U.S. Department of State	Quang Tri Department of Foreign Affairs
U.S. Department of Defense	Quang Tri Province Military Headquarters
The Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Quang Tri Department of Health
Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund	Quang Tri Department of Science and Technology
Norwegian People's Aid	People's Committees of Districts
Golden West Humanitarian Foundation	Farmers' Union
UNICEF	Women's Union
Tromsø Mine Victim Resource Center	Youth Union
Humpty Dumpty Institute	
Adopt-A-Minefield	
Freeman Foundation	
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Other individuals and institutions Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations	

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