

2012 PROJECT RENEW Annual Report

Summary and Highlights

January 2013



**PROJECT
RENEW**

Restoring the Environment and
Neutralizing the Effects of the War

Nguyen Bao Chau and Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, two secondary schoolgirls from Trieu Phong District of Quang Tri Province, are posing with their beautiful painting entitled "Stay away from landmines/UXO" while attending an integrated MRE session held at the Mine Action Visitor Center, an integral part of Project RENEW's Mine Action Model.

Photo: Phu Nguyen

FOREWORD

We are pleased to present the 2012 Annual Report of Project RENEW and to highlight major accomplishments in our mine action work in Quang Tri Province.

2012 was another successful year of working with our key partners – Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), Humpty Dumpty Institute (HDI), Tromsø Mine Victim Resource Center (TMC), and Vietnam Assistance Project (VAP) – with significant support from individuals, foundations, institutions, governments and other international organizations.

RENEW's clearance teams safely removed and destroyed more than 4,000 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) that had endangered people's safety and hindered development efforts for decades. Important changes in clearance methodology introduced by NPA were adopted by RENEW teams, resulting in the clean-up of 250% more hectares of land than last year. This land was turned over to Quang Tri residents for resettlement and farming.

Our victim assistance initiatives continued to provide significant support to hundreds of UXO survivors and their families, fitting prosthetic limbs and braces, offering rehabilitation services, and creating opportunities to generate incomes for better livelihoods.

RENEW brought nearly 4,000 kids from rural and remote areas into Dong Ha to attend integrated UXO risk education events at the Mine Action Visitor Center, where they learned how to be safe from UXO.

In 2012, no child under 17 was injured or killed in a UXO accident during the year. There were a total of nine such incidents in the province, two-thirds of them outside RENEW's operational areas. This demonstrates why the RENEW model needs to be expanded into the remaining districts of Quang Tri Province.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the government and central ministries for their assistance and support to Project RENEW. Thanks to the government of Quang Tri Province for their direction and guidance, provincial departments and district authorities for their close collaboration, and local people for their encouragement. Special thanks to NPA, HDI, VAP and TMC, and donors PM/WRA in the U.S. Department of State, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, the Embassy of Japan, the government of Taiwan, and the MiVAC Trust for their pledges of continuing support and future cooperation in the coming years.

Nguyen Hieu Trung
Coordination Manager
Project RENEW

Jonathon Guthrie
Country Director
Norwegian People's Aid

REMOVING THE DANGER:

CLEANING UP UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE

The year 2012 marked a period of increased effectiveness and enhanced response capacity in Project RENEW's roving Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Battle Area Clearance (BAC) operations, with teams working mainly in two of Quang Tri Province's districts, Cam Lo and Trieu Phong.

RENEW's BAC Team completed cleanup of three major sites covering a total of 180,000 square meters, with the land then returned to the local people for resettlement, afforestation, and community development. A total of 568 UXO were safely destroyed during clearance operations. The biggest clearance site was at Ai Tu Village, where a BAC team in late December 2012 handed over 120,000 square meters of land free from landmines, cluster bombs and other explosive remnants of war (ERW). There villagers will grow acacia trees, the major source of income for the entire village. For years, people were prevented from normal use of land because of their fear. They knew the area was heavily impacted by ERW. Since the war's end, Ai Tu Village had sustained 47 ERW casualties, including 32 deaths.

To respond to ERW sightings and ERW information reported by the local population and passed on through RENEW's Community Reporting Network (CRN), two roving EOD teams would move into action when a call came in from the CRN in Trieu Phong and Cam Lo Districts. The teams conducted 1,555 EOD tasks during the year, resulting in 3,557 items of ERW being destroyed or safely removed from people's gardens, rice field, plantations and road sides.

On 15 March 2012, a mother and her three children in An Tru village of Trieu Phong were digging up a tree in their backyard when they unearthed five items of UXO at a depth of about half a meter (1.5 ft). They immediately stopped digging and called Project RENEW's EOD hotline number, requesting assistance. The UXO was only a few meters from their house. Fifty minutes later, Project RENEW's EOD Quick Response Team arrived and conducted a non-technical survey of the area. They uncovered 193 items of UXO including 60 mm and 82 mm mortars and rocket-propelled grenades. The team safely removed the items from the family's home and transported the UXO to their demolition site.

In addition to roving and static operations, RENEW focused on surveying for cluster munitions remnants, which are the major obstacle preventing normal use of the land, and the most dangerous remnant of war still threatening community residents. Using U.S. Air Force bombing data and local reports, RENEW's Cluster Munitions Team conducted numerous technical surveys covering an



A RENEW team member counting the number of UXO removed from the woman's house, part of stringent record-keeping procedures, before the items were transported to a demolition site for destruction.

area of 343 hectares. As a result, 18 sites have been confirmed to be ERW contaminated, and those areas will need full clearance in the coming year.

During 2012, RENEW's Community Support Team visited thousands of families in the two districts of Trieu Phong and Cam Lo, interviewing 45,776 people to gather information about ERW.

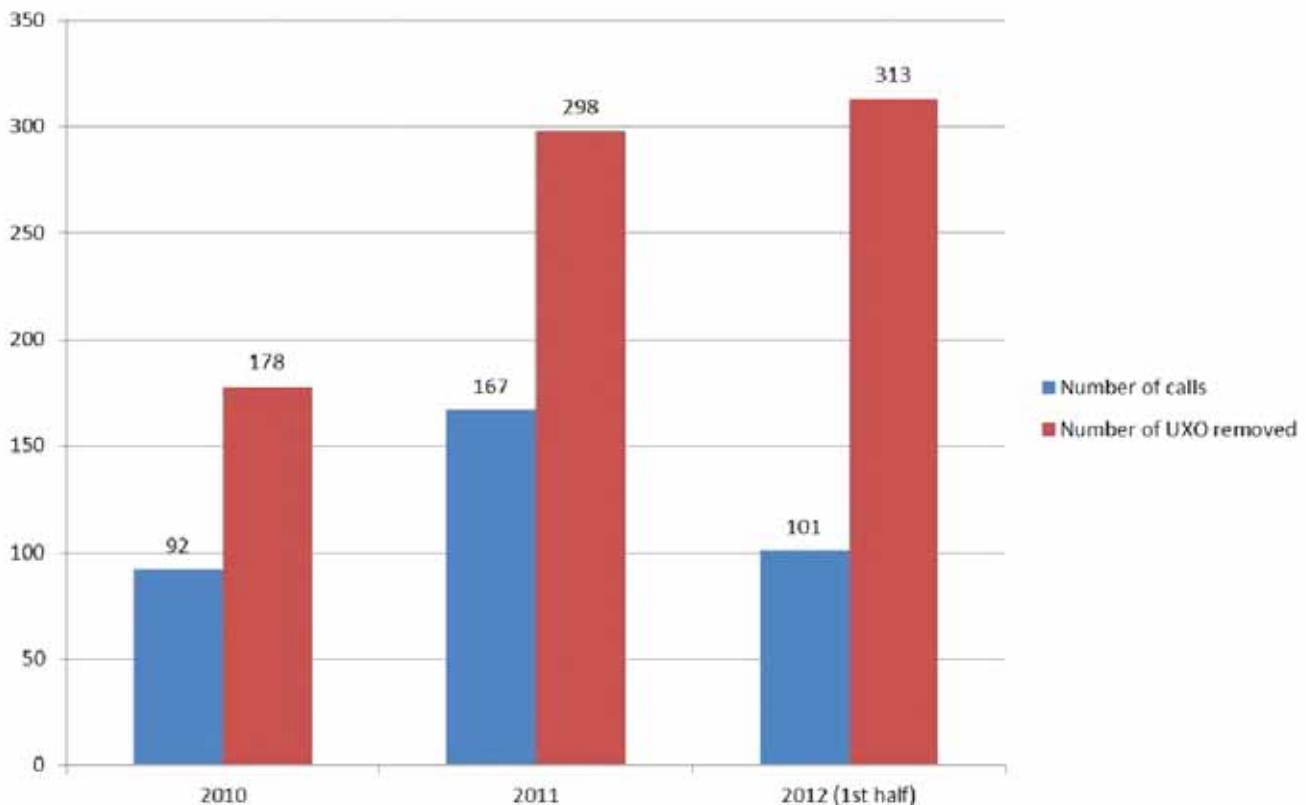


An unexploded U.S. MK 82 bomb found in Lang Vei, a former U.S. Army Special Forces camp, was safely removed by a Project RENEW's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Quick Response Team for destruction on 17 August 2012.

RISK EDUCATION, COMMUNITY REPORTING NETWORKS:

NEIGHBORS KEEPING NEIGHBORS SAFE

In November 2012 in An Hung Village of Cam Lo District, a family decided to build a fence around their house. The local workers suddenly found a **large cache** of unexploded munitions **where** the foundation **was to be laid**. The **homeowner** immediately called Project RENEW to report the unexpected discovery. RENEW's EOD Team arrived **that** same morning and safely removed 10 items of ERW, six of which were cluster bombs the team had to dispose of in situ (**in place**).



This chart shows a steady increase in the participation of the community in the reporting system, resulting in a higher number of UXO removed over the three-year period.

This homeowner, as all residents of Quang Tri Province, had participated in RENEW's integrated Mine/UXO Risk Education (MRE) and Community Reporting Network (CRN) training, in support of EOD operations. The CRN supports RENEW's EOD operations by finding and pinpointing the location of ordnance, identifying it by description and type based on MRE training they have received, and reporting it immediately. This activates a timely response from the EOD team, which sets its priorities by the hour based on urgency and level of danger.

As long as local residents are on constant alert to report UXO discoveries and a system is in place to immediately respond to such threats, deaths or injuries caused by UXO accidents can be reduced, minimized, hopefully eliminated entirely. This is the approach that RENEW has been practicing to address the challenge of ERW in Quang Tri Province, and advocating the same approach elsewhere.



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Including Youth Union officials and village heads, 483 MRE collaborators were trained on basic ERW identification and communication skills. These collaborators later helped organize 500 community-based MRE sessions, which reached 52,364 children and adults. In 2012, local people made 200 telephone calls to Project RENEW reporting ERW discoveries, resulting in 475 ERW being removed and safely destroyed. In addition, 55 ERW sightings originated outside RENEW'S project area and were passed on to SODI and MAG so their teams could respond.

2,419,500 notebooks with ERW safety messages were delivered to poor students living in ERW impacted areas in the province. Through the school system, RENEW distributed 25,500 MRE leaflets and 9,500 MRE comic books to children and adults.

In addition to community-based MRE activities, RENEW made good use of the Mine Action Visitor Center (MAVC) which opened in August 2011. There, during field trips which now are eagerly anticipated by students all over the province, young children and teenagers are offered lively and entertaining risk education sessions. Activities focus on basic facts and figures about ERW legacies, joint efforts to overcome the threat, stories of survivors, and comprehensive lessons presented through exhibits, photos, documentary films, scaled wooden copies of UXO, and other teaching models. A stop at the Provincial Museum is also included as part of the day's activities. As a result, students gain a new perspective about war and peace, the history of the place where they live, and the importance of the mine action work that they see all around them every day. They develop a correct attitude, and safe behaviors and practices, toward ERW dangers.

Painting MRE pictures is one of many activities local students are engaged at the Mine Action Visitor Center where they learn about the importance of mine action work and develop a correct attitude and safe behaviors towards ERW risks.

At the end of each tour at the Mine Action Visitor Center, students the safety messages and practices learned are summarized and reinforced by the MACV staff and the accompanying teachers. During 2012, a total of 4,000 students attended the program, from primary and secondary schools in the four districts of Hai Lang, Trieu Phong, Cam Lo and Dakrong.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE, REHABILITATION, INCOMES FOR VICTIMS

RESTORING HOPE THROUGH RECOVERY AND OPPORTUNITY**Providing amputees with new limbs and assistive devices**

Stricken by polio at the age of one and a half, Huong had relied for many years on the use of one leg and a pair of wooden crutches for mobility. Huong earns her living as a tailor, which doesn't require much mobility. However, monthly income from tailoring just barely meets her family's needs as this 45-year-old woman is supporting two growing sons, both enrolled in school. Huong never dared to dream of a prosthesis to help her walk. Today a new prosthetic brace, custom designed for her leg, is a dream come true.

In 2012, RENEW's Mobile Prosthetic & Orthotic (P&O) Outreach program expanded into Gio Linh and Trieu Phong districts, where 155 ERW survivors and people with disabilities were examined and provided assistive devices, free of charge (thanks to funding from RENEW's donors).

Trauma care and delivery life support program

Improving the local health care system was the aim in 2012 of trauma emergency training for 30 provincial medical staff and 640 village health workers conducted by Project RENEW in the two districts of Vinh Linh and Huong Hoa. Of special note was the expansion of the program into neighboring Quang Binh Province, where 180 grassroots health workers were trained in life-saving skills and emergency treatment of injuries.

In Dakrong District, where ethnic minorities make up 80% of the total population, a pilot obstetric care program was introduced to improve the quality of delivery services for pregnant women and the rate of live births.

As part of the project, two surgical lights and one operating table were distributed to Trieu Hai and Huong Hoa Districts, aimed at improving the level of treatment for trauma patients at the district level.

A video providing basic life support instruction was broadcast four times a week throughout 2012 on the provincial television station, providing basic instructions on how ordinary people can give basic first aid to traumatized accident victims. In addition, the two districts of Huong Hoa and Vinh Linh had continuing support to implement a pilot trauma emergency dispatch service in their localities.



Phan Thi Mien, a double amputee because of UXO accident in Trieu Phong District, walking on her new limbs provided by RENEW.



RENEW staff and Norwegian expats visiting a hill tribe family in Dakrong in the process of implementing obstetric care program.

Income generation and improved living conditions

While routinely clearing weeds from around their acacia trees, Thuy's husband hit a UXO. Thuy, working some distance away, was injured. Not as lucky, her husband was severely injured, and in the hospital five hours later, he died. Unable to ease the pain, of course, for someone who has just lost a loved one, RENEW nonetheless was able to reduce some of Thuy's worries by offering her much-needed financial support. With a loan provided by Project RENEW's micro-credit program, Thuy bought a water buffalo which later gave birth to a calf. Her third son, a seventh-grader, is now able to help her tend to both water buffaloes after class.

In partnership with the district Women's Union, one of Project RENEW's most durable and successful economic development programs is micro-credit, which offers revolving credit loans used to purchase cows and water buffaloes for families living with disabilities. These loans have helped 165 women climb out of poverty in Trieu Phong, Hai Lang and Cam Lo Districts. Many more families are hoping to take part in the program as additional funding becomes available.

RENEW also supported disadvantaged families in the districts of Cam Lo, Hai Lang and Trieu Phong with water tanks that provide clean water for daily use. Five hundred hill tribe families in Dakrong received 500 water tanks for the first time ever, to improve their health through using clean water.

Medical schools and research support

Obstetric and trauma models – polypropylene, life-size “dummies” – were provided to Quang Tri Medical School for use in training for 500 medical and nursing students per year.

An international conference held in March 2012 in Dong Ha City presented major findings of a study conducted by Project RENEW, the Quang Tri Department of Health, and Tromsø Mine Victim Center. The research study compared the analgesic applications, benefits, and adverse effects of Ketamine compared to Morphine for accident-site trauma response. Results of the research demonstrated that the analgesic effect of Ketamine is the same as that of Morphine, but side effects such as nausea and vomiting are less than those of Morphine. Morphine has been the pain relief drug that is mostly used in pre-hospital trauma care, under current regulations of the Ministry of Health. As a result of the new research study and findings presented in Quang Tri, the Ministry of Health is reviewing that policy.

Mushrooms with a Mission

October 2012 was a time of hope for Ms Doan Thi Muon, a single mother of three, and many other landmine survivor families and female-headed households in Quang Tri Province. With support from the Mushrooms with Mission (MwM) program, these families would go into the Lingzhi mushroom growing season with the promising prospect of earning much higher incomes to improve their living conditions.

With support from MwM, 130 farming families in two districts of Cam Lo and Trieu Phong are now cultivating four different types of mushrooms: wood ear, shiitake, oyster, and the expensive, medicinally valuable lingzhi. In the last crop, these families harvested 1,000 kilograms of dried wood ear mushrooms which generated extra incomes to supplement their rice farming and other work.

RENEW also completed registration of VietGap certification for mushroom products, which will allow NAMUS branded mushrooms to move into an expanded domestic market with national sales potential.

In August 2012, RENEW received a grant of \$123,000 from the Government of Japan to support the MwM program. The Japanese funding will be used by RENEW to purchase state-of-the-art production equipment including steam boxes, bagging machines, mushroom driers and clean rooms with High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters. This equipment will help RENEW substantially increase production of mushroom spawn bags at the facility, and thereby increase the number of disabled farmer families participating in the program.

Nguyen Thi Cuc, whose father was killed in an explosion of explosive leftover while he was reclaiming land for farming, is working inside her family's mushroom grow house. In addition to daily house chores, she also spends a couple of hours taking care of 500 ready-to-fruit blocks of Lingzhi, a medicinally valuable mushroom. In March 2013, she will be harvesting approximately ten kilos of dried lingzhi, which will be then purchased by Mushrooms with a Mission – an initiative program of Project RENEW to improve livelihoods of UXO survivor and female-headed families in Quang Tri Province. The income from selling mushrooms will significantly ease her family's economic difficulties.



Photo: Ngo Thien Loi / www.landmines.org.vn

A GLANCE AT RENEW'S 2012 DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS

2012 saw generous funding commitments from RENEW's donors to support our mine action mission in Quang Tri Province, totaling nearly \$1.5 million USD. The following chart provides a quick breakdown of the funding which supports our mine action programs.

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMOFA) remained our biggest contributor through RENEW's primary partner, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), which funds the ERW clearance program as well as costs of the coordination and management functions based in RENEW's Dong Ha office. NPA also provides support to maintain RENEW's information/database system.



RENEW's Victim Assistance program also received NMOFA funding through the Tromsø Mine Victim Resource Center (TMC) for emergency medical response and trauma training, maternal delivery life support, mobile rehabilitation, and surgery equipment upgrades.

The U.S. Department of State (DoS) continued to be an important donor for RENEW's Mine Risk Education program, through the U.S.-based non-profit Vietnam Assistance Project (VAP). This funding enabled us to expand our integrated Risk Education / Community Reporting Network (CRN) in four districts of Quang Tri Province.

The Embassy of Japan and the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, along with DoS, are current donors of the Mushrooms with a Mission (MwM) program, an initiative between Project RENEW and the New York-based Humpty Dumpty Institute (HDI). The MwM program helps unexploded ordnance survivor families rise out of poverty by growing high-quality mushrooms for supplemental incomes. The MiVAC Trust – "Mines, Victims, and Clearance" – an Australian veterans organization – became RENEW's most recent donor with a gift of \$30,000 USD to complete construction of a new building that will house state-of-the-art mushroom processing equipment. In addition, Veterans For Peace (VFP) donated \$2,000 USD to support the Mine Action Visitor Center. Many other generous individuals made donations ranging from \$200 to \$6,000 to Project RENEW through PayPal or direct bank transfers.

GETTING THE WORK DONE:

RENEW'S STAFF, DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY SERVING THOUSANDS

In this 2012 Annual Report, we would like to introduce our readers and supporters to our staff – so you can get to know the names and faces, the interests, the backgrounds and the contributions of the people who make up the RENEW team.

When RENEW was launched in August 2001, it was agreed by the government of Quang Tri and international NGOs that the effort would be directed, managed and staffed only by Vietnamese – with external assistance and expertise from foreign experts as needed. That principle is still in place today. It perhaps accounts for the success achieved by Project RENEW and the level of esteem the staff has earned in the eyes of Vietnamese and foreigners alike.

From a core staff of four personnel in 2001, RENEW has grown to a full complement of over 90 employees. RENEW's professional managers and technical staff are trained to international standards and provided with modern tools and equipment. RENEW's clearance teams were the first in Vietnam to be certified according to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). Our program managers have participated in training

programs, workshops, and international conferences in more than 20 countries over the years. They have earned respect for Vietnam's efforts in mine action and developed professional relationships that continue to provide us with useful tools, information.

However, even 90 staff, alone, can never meet the needs of Quang Tri Province in dealing with the problem of ERW. RENEW's indirect services are a critical component of our success. Our program managers coordinate and supervise hundreds of unpaid, trained, volunteers from other local resources and institutions. Key personnel from the military, the Youth Union, the Women's Union, the Farmers Union, and provincial Health Services, are an essential part of the RENEW team. Together with our staff, they are the foundation for the strong working relationships with government leaders and local residents necessary to carry out the mission of RENEW.

Please visit the below link to learn more about who the people are who are doing the work and getting the job done at RENEW.

http://landmines.org.vn/who_we_are/our_team.html

DONORS AND PARTNERS



Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



U.S. Department of State



Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Japanese Embassy to Vietnam



Norwegian People's Aid



Humpty Dumpty Institute



The MiVAC Trust



Vietnam Assistance Project



Tromsø Mine Victim Resource Center

