













Friends and supporters,

In the spirit of the coming year, we all take a moment to reflect on the journey of 2023. It has been a year of resilience, adaptability, and collective growth. We have faced challenges, learned from our experiences, and emerged stronger as a program and as a team dedicated to reducing the impact of explosive ordnance in the local communities where we work here in Vietnam.

As Norwegian People's Aid heads into 2024, we aim to expand our reach, deepen our impact, and foster even greater collaboration among our different stakeholders. Together, we aspire to achieve our objectives in the field of humanitarian mine action, creating a positive impact for the future here in Vietnam.

In 2023, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) Vietnam is proud to have continued supporting the government of Vietnam in reducing the impact of explosive ordnance (EO) to levels where people can live safely and development is not

constrained. The success of the NPA programme was enabled by the stable funding provided by the governments of the United States and Norway, the contributions of which totalled more than NOK 75 million, or more than USD 7.1 million.

Activities implemented by NPA staff members, and the personnel within the national and provincial mine action units that are supported with funding from our donors, are the most diverse, efficient and productive they have ever been. Through the year, NPA teams found and safely destroyed more than 8,563 explosive items, representing 25% of all items found globally by NPA.

In 2023, NPA's work benefitted 17,362 people including 5,013 women, 3,269 girls, 5,589 men and 3,491 boys. Our teams identified more than 64.6 km2 of contaminated land through the cluster munitions remnants survey (CMRS) methodology and cleared more than 10,200,000 m2 of confirmed hazardous area (CHA).

In 2023, NPA continued to conduct cluster munitions remnants survey (CMRS), clearance activities and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) in the provinces where we work. This includes work conducted in Quang Tri, Quang Binh, Thua Thien Hue and Kon Tum Provinces.

NPA's capacity development activities were able to continue, further enabling increased capacity within and better coordination between all partners.

NPA has witnessed increased coordination and improved teamwork between authorities and partners at the national and provincial level, which has contributed to more efficient and effective management and coordination of mine action activities.

This year NPA was the proud recipient of several prizes including the Human Act Prize that highlights NPA's commitment and contribution to the society here in Vietnam.

This year as an organization we made significant improvements in the integration of environmental protection and climate change resilience in our mine action work.

Our staff's dedication to making Vietnam safe from the threat of explosive ordnance is what made NPA Vietnam's achievements possible in 2023. It is their commitment and the effort that they put in every day in the provinces where we work that makes our activities and success possible as a team.

NPA is grateful for the continued support from our donors including the United States Department of State, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United States Department of Defense, Friends of RENEW and the Norwegian Retailers' Environment Fund. It has been a pleasure to continue to work together with them and our other partners in Vietnam to ensure our collective success.





Jan Erik Støa Country Director, NPA Vietnam

Cover photos clockwise from left: Mrs. Hoang Thi Can sharing information about explosive ordnance related accidents while harvesting cassava; NPA team member conducting technical survey operations; Item identification before conducting demolition work; One of hundreds of cluster munitions that still contaminate Vietnam.

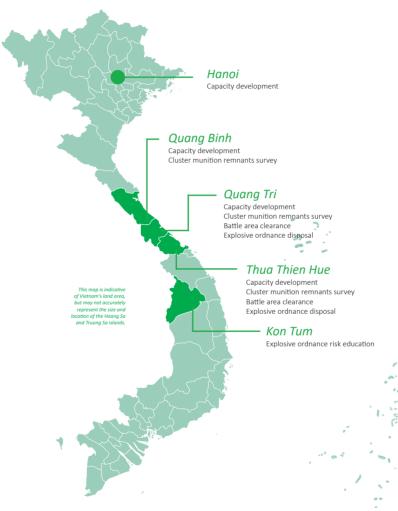












Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) has worked in Vietnam since 2007, implementing five key activities:

Cluster munition remnants survey (CMRS)

CMRS is the use of non-technical (NTS) and technical survey (TS) to identify a confirmed hazardous area (CHA) from cluster munition remnants.

Battle area clearance (BAC)

BAC is the systematic and controlled clearance of confirmed hazardous areas defined through CMRS.

Explosive ordnance disposal (EOD)

EOD is the identification and demolition of explosive ordnance outside of a CHA, usually in response to an item reported by the community.

Explosive ordnance risk education (EORE)

EORE seeks to reduce the injury of explosive ordnance by raising awareness of women, girls, boys and men in accordance with their different vulnerabilities, roles and needs, and promoting behavioural change.

Capacity development (CD)

CD is a long-term cooperative partnership to strengthen the ability of national and provincial partners to monitor, manage, regulate and coordinate the mine action sector.





To achieve its vision of reducing contamination from cluster munitions to a level where people can live safely and where development is not constrained, NPA contributes to provincial cluster munition remnants survey and to the clearance of highpriority confirmed hazardous areas. In 2023, the programme achieved the following results:



176 villages covered by NTS



10.2 square kilometres of CHA cleared



824 EOD spot tasks responded to



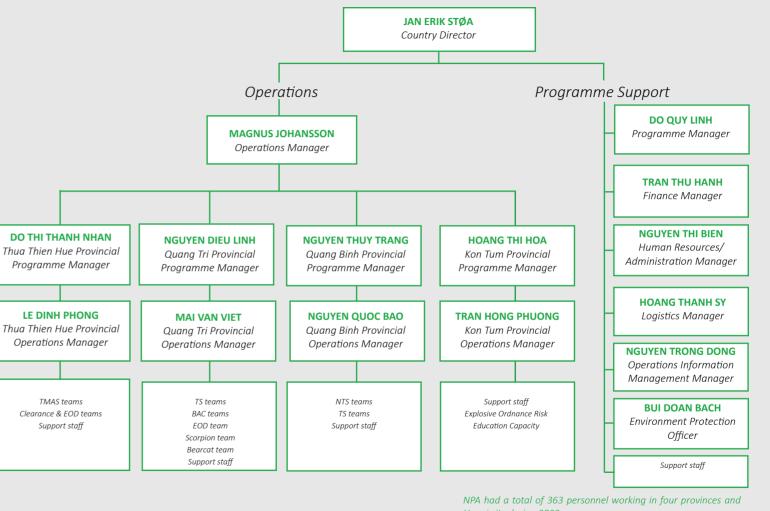
119 CHAs created totalling 64.4 square kilometres



8,563 items of explosive ordnance destroyed



33% of NPA personnel are female (121 of 363)



Hanoi city during 2023

Land Release Activities

In 2023, NPA continued to conduct cluster munitions remnants survey (CMRS), clearance and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) activities in the provinces where we work. This includes work conducted in Quang Tri, Quang Binh, Thua Thien Hue and Kon Tum Provinces.

In Quang Tri Province, NPA continues to work with the Quang Tri Mine Action Center (QTMAC) and the provincial Mine Action Steering Committee to support Quang Tri province in achieving its goal of becoming the first province to be free from the impacts of explosive ordnance by 2025. The technical survey teams completed the last technical survey tasks in the accessible areas of Quang Tri province on 16 April 2023.

After finishing the cluster munitions remnants survey work, NPA converted its survey capacity into teams that are conducting battle area clearance and explosive ordnance disposal work.

In Quang Binh province, NPA continued to conduct CMRS activities as an integral component of the joint project implemented by the consortium between Norwegian People's Aid Vietnam, MAG Vietnam and PeaceTrees Vietnam. These activities are conducted with the support of the local authorities in the affected communities.

In Quang Binh province, NPA completed Non-Technical Surveys (NTS) in 11 communes, covering 87 villages in the province. The teams completed a technical survey of all available evidence points in three communes, identifying confirmed hazardous areas of 32,987,446 square meters.

NPA also continues to support the Database and Coordination Unit (DBCU) in its role as coordinator of mine action in Quang Binh province. This ensures that mine action data is collected, stored and shared in line with national requirements.

In Thua Thien Hue, NPA continued to conduct survey, clearance and EOD activities with the support from the local authorities. Focus was placed on supporting the most at-risk communities in A Luoi and Phong Dien districts due to high contamination levels in these areas.

In 2023 NPA piloted a new more comprehensive approach to survey called the Total Mine Action Survey (TMAS).

In close cooperation with the provincial Department of Foreign Affairs, NPA continues to support the Thua Thien Hue Database Unit (DBU), including the provincial explosive ordnance reporting hotline, to enable reporting of dangerous items by community members. This unit enables the collection of mine action data for analysis and prioritisation of activities.







Introduction of Total Mine Action Survey (TMAS)

In 2023, NPA Vietnam piloted a new survey approach called Total Mine Action Survey (TMAS). This approach is based on the traditional non-technical survey (NTS) methodology but takes a more holistic approach. Additional information connected to the need for further explosive ordnance risk education and victim assistance activities is also collected, along with information on climate change and environmental protection issues. This expanded and integrated approach shifts the survey work to be more community oriented. encompassing a broader range of factors related to the impacts of conflict.

The TMAS methodology acknowledges the interconnectedness of various factors influencing the lives of individuals living in conflict-affected areas. It recognizes that addressing the consequences of conflicts requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond solely identifying hazardous areas. By incorporating victim

assistance, explosive ordnance risk education, and environmental and climate change considerations, the TMAS has improved NPA's ability to develop targeted strategies to mitigate the effects of conflicts on communities based on the information collected.

With the support of the US Department of State, NPA Vietnam established its first Total Mine Action Survey (TMAS) team in the NPA Thua Thien Hue province at the beginning of 2023. The team is composed of one male team leader and twelve survey staff (six males and six females, working in pairs).

The TMAS team spends more time with the local villagers, thus creating more trust and building higher confidence from the population, which in turn increases the quality of the information collected. This extended type of nontechnical survey has already increased the accuracy of the evidence NPA collects on the remaining cluster munition and other ordnance.

During the first 12 months of the pilot implementation in 2023, the TMAS team has completed the survey in 89 villages of Phong Dien and in A Luoi districts, interviewing a total of 6,810 individuals including 3,388 men, 3,052 women, 180 boys, and 190 girls.

The team generated 34 technical survey tasks and 105 EOD tasks. In addition, the teams have collected details of 207 EO accidents in these two districts, and mapped victim assistance needs of a total of 607 victims, of which 282 cases were due to accidents from different explosive ordnance (EO) and another 325 victims from the use of agent orange (AO).

All data are reported by NPA to Thua Thien Hue provincial database unit (TT-Hue DBU) managed by TT-Hue Department of Foreign Affairs for follow-up analysis, and coordination of tasking for further support and actions.

The NPA Vietnam program aims to deploy this updated survey methodology in other provinces in Vietnam in 2024.









Increasing Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Capacity

In 2023, NPA strengthened its capacity to conduct Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE). This was done by drawing on the expertise of other partner organizations, including NPA's partner, Project Renew who have a long experience working in the EORE field.

NPA plans to increase its EORE capacity to conduct awareness activities when needed, connected both to NPA's work in implementing TMAS activities, and the program's expansion into Kon Tum province.

Connected to this initiative, NPA organized and participated in an EORE Train-the-Trainers (ToT) training course facilitated by Project RENEW in August of 2023.

The aim of the course was to enhance the participant's EORE knowledge and to provide them with best practices on how to conduct EORE to help prevent EO accidents in the provincial communities where they work. Eleven NPA staff completed the course.

During the course, representatives from PeaceTrees Vietnam, Mines Advisory Group, and Quang Tri Mine Action Center also participated and shared their risk education experiences with the NPA Vietnam participants.

NPA Vietnam is grateful to the Project RENEW management team for organizing this important training and to the Friends of Project RENEW for funding the course.

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education in Kon Tum

In Kon Tum, NPA conducted some explosive ordnance risk education activities in partnership with the Kon Tum Provincial Military Command and continues to explore the possibility to expand our activities in schools and communities in this province in 2024 together with other local stakeholders.







Strengthening National and Provincial Partnerships

NPA Vietnam and VNMAC are jointly committed to addressing the legacy of the wars in Vietnam, and increasing the socio-economic development opportunities for the Vietnamese people in the areas where we work.

Based on the MOU signed between the Vietnamese National Mine Action Center (VNMAC) and NPA, the two parties continued to strengthen this partnership and mutual cooperation in 2023.

The NPA Senior Technical Advisor works with VNMAC to give advice on the strategic level and to assist in strengthening VNMAC's capacity at a managerial level. This includes formulating the next national mine action strategy, which will replace the existing one at the end of 2025. The project is also assisting VNMAC in the formulation of a national ordinance on mine action.

NPA continued to support VNMAC's capacity in the area of information management. This includes assisting VNMAC to maintain the Information

Management System in Mine Action (IMSMA) database and conducting information management (IM) trainings for Vietnamese personnel including VNMAC staff, provincial IM staff and other survey/clearance operators in Vietnam.

NPAalsoprovides capacity development support to local provincial authorities to prioritize areas for further survey and clearance work, based both on national interests and local community needs. This includes establishing criteria for explosive ordnance safe areas for selected provinces.

VNMAC and NPA also conduct joint trainings, including explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) courses in line with International Mine Action Standards.

The NPA Vietnam program would like to express its appreciation to Mr. Tim Horner, NPA's Senior Technical Advisor to VNMAC for his service to the capacity development project. In June of 2023, he retired after handing over to Mr. Sean Moorhouse who will continue to carry the project forward.

NPA Vietnam appreciates the support and collaboration of VNMAC in the implementation of mutually-beneficial activities and is proud of the good results we have achieved together. The NPA Vietnam program is committed to continue working together with VNMAC to ensure the success of the Vietnam National Mine Action Program in the coming year and beyond.

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Joint Initiatives and Partnerships

NPA continues to work with the support of the US Department of Defence to further research and development activities linked to the trials of new detection and ground preparation tools. The Bearcat multi-tool has continued to prove itself as a reliable ground preparation tool to increase the efficiency of clearance on tasks with dense vegetation, while the Scorpion deep search detection tool and the mobile bomb cutting system have both also proven to be beneficial to NPA's continued operations.

NPA is also working in partnership with VNMAC and the United States Army Pacific Command (USARPAC) to conduct explosive ordinance disposal training courses for selected staff working in mine action in Vietnam.

An IMAS EOD level 1 course for VNMAC staff was conducted in June / July of 2023 followed by a level 2 course, that included an additional practical training

in the field for all participants facilitated by NPA. These courses are part of an agreement between VNMAC and the Office of Defence Cooperation, U.S. Embassy in Hanoi for 2023 humanitarian mine action trainings.

NPA Vietnam, VNMAC and USARPAC have already started planning for several new IMAS EOD courses to take place in 2024, which will further strengthen the capacity of VNMAC in its role as the national mine action authority.

NPA is also planning to partner with the Tropical Science and Technology Research Center in Hanoi to increase the capacity of detection dogs. To this end a delegation from Vietnam visited NPA's global training center in Bosnia to learn more about NPA's approach to training detection dogs this year and NPA plans to develop a more formal partnership with the center to build the capacity of their own detection dogs in 2024.



Climate and Environment in Mine Action

The impact of conflicts and explosive ordnance extends beyond immediate human casualties and risks. It can have profound consequences on the environment, including contamination of land, water, and air. Explosive remnants of war and the improper disposal of ordnance can lead to pollution, habitat destruction, and disruption of ecosystems. These environmental effects can persist long after conflicts have ended, posing risks to human health, biodiversity, and sustainable development.

Furthermore, the changing climate patterns and increased frequency of extreme weather events have implications for mine action efforts. Climate change can affect the stability and integrity of hazardous areas, potentially shifting or exposing previously hidden explosive ordnance. It can also impact the safety and effectiveness of clearance operations, as adverse weather conditions can

hinder access and increase risks to personnel.

Recognizing the importance of environment and climate change and integrating these considerations into mine action is essential for developing comprehensive and sustainable solutions. By understanding the environmental implications conflicts and taking proactive measures to minimize environmental damage, the NPA Vietnam mine action program can contribute to long-term environmental conservation and promote sustainable development.

NPA intends to reduce our negative and increase our positive impact on the climate and environment in Vietnam. This means that we must reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and our contribution to local pollution of the soil, water and air, to prevent potential negative impacts from the degradation of nature and natural resources. We must also analyse and

understand how climate change and environmental degradation affects the people we work with and for, and work based on this analysis.

In 2023. NPA increased

commitments regarding climate and the environment. We have followed up on measures to ensure our clearance operations reduce waste and energy consumption. We started work on targeted capacity building activities within climate and environment. carried out pilot projects to reduce the use of plastic, and ensured that we continue to integrate climate change into our work - especially when it comes to long-term priorities of which areas are to be surveyed and cleared of cluster munitions. In this way, we can hand over land to the population that is not only free of cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war, but is also ready for sustainable long term use.

The NPA Vietnam program is working

to implement and further develop an environmental management system for our programme activities. This includes the development of the NPA green-field tool to methodically minimize the environmental impact of NPA field operations. This tool is an integral component of the NPA global environment monitoring system, supporting programmes aimed at comprehending the environmental context of our operations and implementing mitigation measures in the field.

This work will continue in 2024. The aim is to reduce Norwegian People's Aid's environmental and climate footprint, and to map and manage possible environmental risks.

On a national scale, NPA Vietnam has taken a leadership role in the sector of environment and climate change, overseeing the Environment Task Force of the Vietnam Mine Action Working Group.



Six co bang pressing machines have been installed in six villages in Phong Binh cor providing a shared resource for the local community to use.



Grassroots Environmental Engagement

NPA is working with local partners in Thua Thien Hue province to develop a project that will produce sand bags made from co bang, a local grass, to replace the plastic sandbags currently used by NPA teams as a protective measure during explosive ordnance disposal activities. This reducing plastic waste project is funded by the Norwegian Retailers' Environmental Fund.

As part of the project, NPA donated six new co bang pressing machines and protective equipment to the Pho Trach traditional craft village in Thua Thien Hue province. NPA also supported additional activities in the village including exchange visits, and visibility measures to promote the development of handicraft.

The new machines will help to significantly increase the production, in comparison with using manual labour, while the protective equipment will support a safer working environment for manufacturing for the village craftsmen.

The success of the project has led to an order for 11,000 of these new sandbags, directly benefiting the local population's work and income.

Expressing his gratitude on behalf of the government and the local community, Mr. Tran Van Huy, Chairman of the People's Committee of Phong Binh commune, acknowledged the project's significance, hailing it as "an effective initiative for the development of our traditional craft village, which has a 500 year history in Thua Thien Hue province."

This project shows NPA's commitment to supporting communities affected by explosive ordnance, combining environmental protection efforts and livelihood enhancement in the context of climate change challenges.

NPA would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the Norwegian Retailers' Environmental Fund for its invaluable support in funding this impactful project in Vietnam.









Equity and Inclusion

Norwegian People's Aid is an organisation built on the basic values of the trade union movement: unity, solidarity and human dignity. Our value base is founded on equal rights for all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, functional ability and social status. We work actively to promote an inclusive, safe working environment where all employees, regardless of background, can feel seen, acknowledged, and valued.

Gender and diversity remains a priority when working with national partners, and NPA Vietnam makes every effort to share best practices on positive gender and diversity mainstreaming whenever possible.

This year, NPA has been invited to participate in various talk shows and media events that profile women in mine action. Two of NPA's female provincial programme managers were

also invited to New York to speak at an event organized by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) on the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action emphasising the role of women in mine action and the idea the mine action cannot wait.

Responding to a question related to the importance and role of women in NPA mine action at the Human Act Prize Ceremony, Ms. Nguyen Thuy Trang, Quang Binh Provincial Programme Manager said NPA Vietnam, gender inclusion is consistently our top priority and today 33% of all staff are women and more than 50% of senior management positions are filled by female staff. To further highlight our gender equality commitments and promote more women working in mine action, we have also established Vietnam's first two all-female operational teams."





Recognition of NPA's Contributions

NPA was honoured this year to be the recipient of several prizes that recognize the contribution that NPA is making to society and to local communities in Vietnam.

In December 2023, Norwegian People's Aid Vietnam was honoured to receive a Certificate of Merit and Token of Appreciation from Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations for our outstanding performance in 2023, with significant contributions to the sustainable development of Vietnam

NPA also received the Human Act Prize for Vietnam. This award is in recognition of the daily efforts of all NPA staff in Vietnam, to identify and eliminate the dangers from unexploded remnants of war in the country.

To be honoured in this highest award category of this year's Human Act Prize, NPA Vietnam has met all five required criteria of commitment, sustainability, creativity, high impact and pervasiveness.

The work of Norwegian People's Aid in Vietnam is made possible by our donors:



United States Department of State United States Department of Defence



Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

