

Province: Khammouane
Districts: Boualapha / Lang Khan
Status: Ongoing (Jan 2006 - Dec 2007)
Partners: World Food Programme

Humanitarian UXO Clearance

In Boulapha, MAG is working closely with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). WFP is implementing both a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation and a Food for Work Scheme. MAG is involved in clearing UXO in the same district. Our cooperation involves linking our activities in villages to maximise the overall development impact.

Boulapha district has been identified as one of the 46 poorest and most vulnerable in the country. Most residents are characterised as subsistence rice farmers with extremely limited access to basic public services and safe water, who suffer from chronic food insecurity. For these reasons, and due to its remote location, the Lao Government has selected Boulapha and Lang Khan districts for priority poverty alleviation efforts through establishing an economic development zone.



Making use of local resources to move UXO in Khammouane.
Photo: Sean Sutton / MAG

Boulapha is located next to the Vietnamese border, and parts of the Ho Chi Minh Trail used during the Indochina conflict ran through the district. As a result there is heavy UXO contamination in the area.

The zone involves an integrated approach to development and poverty reduction by improving access, stabilising shifting agriculture, promoting livelihood diversification, including market-orientated production, and improving access to services such as health and education. MAG supports this process by providing direct and timely UXO clearance.

In Lang Khan district MAG has deployed two Village Assisted Clearance Teams, two Roving Teams as well as Community Liaison Teams. Partnering WFP also helps to maximise the impact of clearance resources, with WFP providing post clearance inputs. Recruiting locally will also help to stimulate the local economy and directly involves local communities in the solution to the UXO problem.