

**QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS:**

**Construction of Tuong Van primary school completed and handed over for upcoming new school-year.**

**Integrated MRE based on local youth union was expanded to Cam Lo to raise children awareness and in support of ongoing mobile EOD operations.**

**A high-ranking delegation from Norwegian People's Aid observed a live EOD task and talked with the provincial authorities on continuous NPA's support to project RENEW.**

**A team of additional five BAC searchers have completed basic training facilitated by the GW EOD TA and been ready for field work.**

**EOD Quick Response Team was qualified to conduct a certain limited EOD tasks without the presence of international TA.**

**Continuous commitment to destroy cluster bombs**

The mobile EOD team arrived at a local man's house in Cam Lo Township immediately after he called through the team's toll free hotline number reporting that he found a bomb while building his house.

Removing UXO in response to UXO findings from local people has been a daily routine for the team. Most of the UXO reports which were responded by the team are found on rice field, river bank, in the garden or nearby the village road. This case was totally different because the bomb was 60cm deep from the surface.

"When we arrived there, the item was lying in a ditch made as footing for this man's house construction", recalled Vinh, team leader. Identified the item as a cluster bomb BLU 63, already armed, Ulric Eriksson, EOD technical advisor asked the team members to prepare for a blow in place.

"It took us more time than usual to persuade the landlord to allow us to destroy it right there", said Vu, Operations Manager. "A lot of people who were evacuated from a nearby coffee bar, curiously came back to see whether the detonation had caused any damage to the man's house. They were happy to see the bomb was gone without any damages to the building", recalled Vu.

Within a cooperation program between Project RENEW and the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), under the funding of Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this EOD team has been operational since June 2008, providing EOD quick responses to UXO reports from local people in five communes of Cam Lo district. More than thirty years after the war, Cam Lo remains one of the areas still contaminated with explosive remnants of war, primarily cluster munitions. According to a KAP survey in 2006, cluster munitions and 40mm grenades (locally known as bombies and M79 respectively) have been the leading cause of deaths and injuries in Quang Tri since 1975.

Under supervision of NPA Technical Advisor, the EOD team has conducted 292 tasks and safely destroyed a total of 1,100 UXOs, of which one third are cluster bombs. Most of the EOD tasks have been based on local UXO reports to the toll free hotline number and direct reports to the team's presence on-site, including UXOs findings gathered from the local youth union-based MRE network which was expanded into Cam Lo in March 2009.

A new team was put into ground operations in May 2009, working along with leadership and technical backup from the experienced personnel. Satisfactory performances of the EOD team during the past year have resulted in an important breakthrough of the NPA and Project RENEW cooperation program. As of 1 June 2009, the team is qualified to conduct a certain limited EOD tasks without the presence of an international technical advisor.

**Project RENEW's operations are made available by the following key donors and many other organizations, individuals**

## Former battle field cleared for expansion of Quang Tri Town

Located on the north bank of the Thach Han River, the other bank is the Old Citadel, Vung Ha is the historic location of the bloodiest fighting of the war, what the Vietnamese call “blaze summer” of 1972. Vung Ha was also the place where POWs were released from both sides after the Paris Agreement was signed in 1973.

This site covers a total of 60 hectares which have been demarcated for an expansion plan of Quang Tri Town, including an economic zone project. Project RENEW with technical assistance by the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (GWHF) has completed preparatory work for conduct clearance operations in 27 hectares as the phase 1 of the site. To speed up the clearance, a modular detection array (MDA) combined with DGPRS and geophysical software has been employed in support of manual search. This clearance technology was developed by the GWHF under U.S DoD Humanitarian Deming Program in Cambodia and was brought into Vietnam for the first time ever.

By using area reduction principles which are supported by the MDA system and DGPRS reacquisition of targets, it would help reduce man-hour and labour efforts required for manual investigation of suspected UXO.

According to plan, it is estimated that Vung Ha site will be completed and handed over to Quang Tri Town’s authorities for development at the end of this year.



## Women of Project RENEW

In May 09, Ms. Nguyen Thi Ha Lan joined Project RENEW as a field medic responsible for providing medical support to the mobile EOD team. Lan graduated from the local medical school, earning a good ranking. Before working for Project RENEW, Lan spent four years as a nurse working for Dakrong District’s Medical Center. Asked what made her to taking over a quite hard-working men-dominated job as a field medic, Lan said that the biggest motivation is that she wishes there will be no one to suffer from the deadly legacies of unexploded ordnance like her own mother. That’s why she chose to work with Project RENEW. Lan’s mother lost two legs and one arm

in an accident triggered by unexploded ordnance when she was young.

Also spending most of working hours on the field is Ms. Nguyen Thi Dieu Linh. After earning a B.A in English from Hue College of Sciences, Linh started to work as an interpreter for Chia Se - a Vietnam-Sweden poverty reduction project in Gio Linh and Vinh Linh districts. She has been working as an Operations Officer/Field Translator for RENEW/Golden West clearance research and development program since Feb 09. Linh is responsible for daily operations of the clearance team providing translation of technical information related to UXO clearance operations.

Ms. Le Thi Thuy Hang has been in charge of Project RENEW’s mine risk education program since 2004. Prior to working in Project RENEW, Hang was an employee of Quang Tri Taxation Department. Hang has helped to developing a good model of MRE network in two districts of Hai Lang and Trieu Phong, key contributions to a measurable reduction of UXO accidents and increased awareness of local people and children on the hazards of explosive remnants of war. This integrated MRE network is now being expanded to Cam Lo district. Hang has built up good working relationship with local youth union and local media to carry out risk education campaigns. She holds a B.A degree in economics from Hanoi University of Economics.

A project support officer, Ms. Tran Thi Tu Van is in charge of providing logistical and financial support to Project RENEW/NPA Mobile EOD team. Van holds a B.A degree in environmental science from Da Lat University. She used to work for an urban and environment company for two years before joining Project RENEW in 2007.

Tran Thi Thanh Huyen joined Project RENEW as a Finance Assistant since August 2007. Her main tasks are to assist Finance Officer in controlling the adherence to finance procedures, accounting etc. Huyen holds a B.A degree in English from Danang University of Foreign

*“My greatest wish is to see nobody gets hurt or killed by these deadly remnants of war like my mother”*

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## About Project RENEW

Project RENEW is a cooperation program between Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) and the Department of Foreign Affairs of Quang Tri Province, Vietnam. Approved by the Prime Minister of Vietnam and launched in August 2001, Project RENEW is aimed at creating and development a comprehensive and integrated management model to deal with the issues of explosive remnants of war. At present, the following components of humanitarian mine action are being implemented:

1. EOD clearance and mobile quick response teams to safely remove hazardous ordnance.
2. Risk education for children and adults to teach accident avoidance and prevention of ERW casualties.
3. Victim assistance to provide medical treatment, rehabilitation services, and income generation to survivors families.
4. Data management and analysis of survey and other ERW-related information collected.

Read more news on Project RENEW at:

[www.landmines.org.vn](http://www.landmines.org.vn)

## P&O mobile van helps UXO survivors in far-off areas

Ho Xay, an 60 year-old Van Kieu man, didn't feel uncomfortable at all when he had to wait almost the entire morning for the P&O mobile van. He smiled to see the van slowing turning into the yard of Thuan commune's medical station. He said his artificial leg which was provided to him last year just needed a minor modification to fix his knee that was shrinking over the time.

A B52 bomb raid in 1968 didn't kill Xay but claimed his left leg. It was first time after 40 years relying on a pair of crutches; Xay could walk as easily as an intact man when he received this artificial leg from the P&O van.

Ho Xay has been one of the beneficiaries of Project RENEW's P&O mobile program since May 2008. Under funding from the U.S State Department and the Trauma Care Foundation, this P&O mobile unit has provided artificial limbs and braces to UXO survivors who live in remote areas of Quang Tri Province.

Since the launch of this P&O mobile van, 171 UXO survivors and others with disabilities have accessed to artificial limbs and braces, proper fitting of devices and adjustments, and other P&O and rehabilitative services.



## Project RENEW is working with the following technical partners:

