



Positive relations with Lao government

Following initial consultations with the village committee at Ban Xai we have received excellent support and guidance at District, Provincial and National government levels.

Goals for 2011/12

• Ban Xai

A victim-assistance program that will take place in Xieng Khouang province in Lao to develop the community and improve socio-economic conditions..

• Minefield clearance

Minefields and UXO clearance will continue throughout the coming year and that will entail the continued training of female deminers.

• Partnering with RENEW

Negotiations are continuing with RENEW to identify projects for joint participation which may include the provision of a full equipped ambulance in Quang Tri province where medical facilities are still quite rudimentary.

• Kon Tum kitchen and the future

The construction of a new kitchen and fishpond for aquaculture at Vinh Son 4 orphanage and toilets/washrooms at Vinh Son 5 orphanage.

The future

Members are invited to submit any project they would like to follow through within MiVAC's scope for consideration by the Trustees.

MiVAC 2011 Annual Report



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The way forward

While the past year has been one of growth and achievement the year ahead is shaping up to be another year we will be proud of.

Heading the list will be our model victim assistance project at Ban Xai. Full details of the project are on our website and members are encouraged to get involved.

A growing membership is adding to our capacity both in volunteers abroad and here in Australia.

While we are trying improve communications, next year will see more newsletters and more frequent website updates. If you have something to say please let the Trustees know.

MiVAC's Mission

In the past MiVAC has conducted mine clearance projects in Sri Lanka and Lao while also providing humanitarian assistance in those countries as well as Vietnam and Cambodia.

The past year saw a re-evaluation of MiVAC's mission which remains unchanged but how MiVAC goes about achieving its purpose has changed.

Communities affected by UXO's also have social and economic issues that result from their environment being unsafe. MiVAC now recognizes the vital role victim assistance can offer through poverty alleviation.

At the same time we realize that no amount of humanitarian aid will alter the need to continue our UXO clearance work. Without such work assistance recipients would continue to live with the threat of death or injury on a daily basis.

A lack of funding undermines our capacity and we acknowledge the need to lay a foundation for ongoing fundraising. However, from the graphs opposite you will see sound growth in MiVAC's revenue which funds our projects.

MiVAC is proud that more than 95% MiVAC's revenue goes toward project outcomes.

In the coming year we will seek from members more help with defining and refining the reality of victim assistance.

While we still expect all projects to result from UXO clearance, we anticipate that members will listen to the concerns of locals and absorb such concerns in project implementation.

In the past we managed to establish rapport with village communities based on mutual respect. When we provide a safe and secure home environment, villagers respond by calling on us for more assistance.

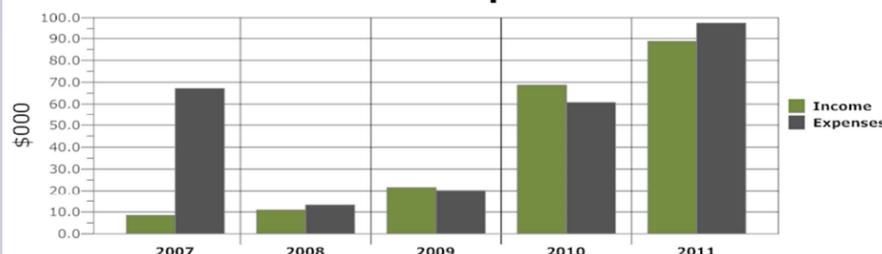
Our volunteers understand the empowerment gained through skills transfer. Many walk away with lifelong friendships they have forged in working on our projects.

Volunteers too learn the importance of recognizing and respecting cultural differences and the communal nature of village life.

Our current major project is planned for Ban Xai in Lao PDR but we are also committed to new projects in Vietnam and Cambodia.

More members means more capacity to meet short term contingencies. and also to widen our skill base.

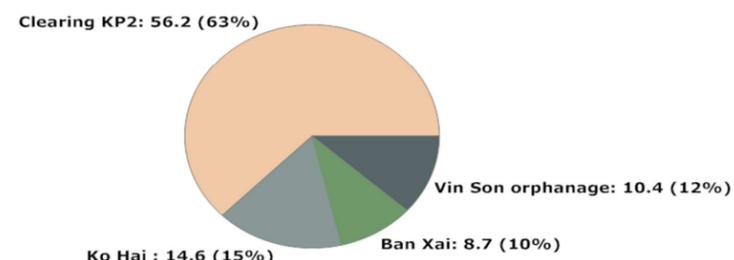
Income vs Expenditure



MiVAC has grown steadily in the past few years and the enthusiastic involvement of members will ensure continuing growth in the years ahead.

Transparency is paramount to us. Thus members and donors may seek to know where any moneys donated to MiVAC have gone at any time.

Project Expenditure



More than 95% of our funds go directly into overseas projects. No donations go towards administration expenses. As a volunteer organisation administration costs are kept low.

When working overseas, projects costs are channelled into local communities by purchasing all materials as close to the project site as possible.

Fundraising

General

Each year shows a slow but steady increase in funds raised. Introducing annual membership fees has enabled all donations to go to the purpose that the donor nominates.

Major donors are now acknowledged on our website. MiVAC would like to recognise corporate donors without whom our work could not proceed: MOJO Communications ARMS Global Group BIO-DISTRIBUTORS Gekko Systems.

Several members have also given above the call of duty: Steve & Dorene Carroll Bob Musgrove

We would acknowledge contributions of Lions and Rotary clubs and Hope Adelaide in the past year.

Many other members have given as they have been able to assist MiVAC reach its goals.

However, we foresee that 2011/12 will be a year that where we need to call upon as many members as possible to assist in completing our project at Ban Xai.

Organizing a small local function can not only raise funds but also help educate people about the threat of landmines around the world and show the work we do in the field of victim assistance.



What MiVAC accomplished in 2010/11

Each year our mission grows as we build lasting relationships based on trust, mutual respect by providing safety & security



Female deminer training

After the successful training and employment of female deminers in Southern Lao, MiVAC agreed to replicate the programme at Ban Xai to clear Khangpunghor 2 minefield.

Nine female and three male deminers passed their training which covers UXO location, demolition and also embraces first aid.

These trained deminers were then employed clearing Khangpunghor 2 minefield which was known to contain the dreaded M14 mine.

During the clearance undertaken so far, the team detected and destroyed forty-five UXO's. A small section of the minefield still remains to be cleared and we hope to complete this in the next dry season..

Ko Hai School

After our in-country partner, PCL, cleared three school playgrounds in and near Ko Hai, parents sought further help from MiVAC. They asked for funding to build new accommodation for the increased school population, a new well, toilets and water tower to supply the water to the toilets and kitchens.

Steve Carroll with his daughter Natalie arrived in November. After a few initial setbacks and with the help of parents, teachers, and pupils, the project was completed in just three weeks.

We learnt valuable lessons from this project – to source materials locally and to channel funds into the local community.



Khangpunghor2 minefield

This project consisted of two components; training of twelve local deminers and the clearance of 2.3 hectares of minefield. Originally the minefield was estimated to be 5 hectare but was decreased during the reduction phase.

A small part of this field remains to be cleared after the wet season.

“Becoming a new IT manager means you must actively take the reins”

Lessons learnt at Ko Hai resurfaced – clearance leads to requests further development assistance.

This minefield was suspected of containing the almost undetectable M14 mine. Twelve of these mines were found during the clearance phase along with a range of other UXO's.

With a strong relationship with villagers at Ban Xai we hope to return to complete a series of poverty alleviation programmes that will help the village in the longer term.

Administration

During the year, MiVAC uploaded its new website which is available at www.mivactrust.org. We are grateful to the efforts of Darryl Westrup, Tal Gur, David Cain and Sandy MacGregor for turning the concept into the completed website.

Another step forward was the adoption of double entry accounting due to the efforts of our Treasurer, Robert Kitchell. Any member wishing to query the accounts or where our money goes, may now do so at any time.

Public Relations

The year saw two newsletters published and distributed by email. Both newsletters are available on MiVAC's website.

The landmine issue continues to gain international media coverage but the current focus has turned to cluster munitions as countries around the world ratify the treaty that was brought down in August 2010.

MiVAC is currently seeking someone to take on the PR role to promote MiVAC in the Australian media..

Membership

Three emerging features are shaping our membership.

First membership is still growing. Secondly an ever increasing number of members are visiting overseas projects thereby gaining a better understanding of what MiVAC does.

The third encouraging sign is that more members are getting involved in fund raising here in Australia. In a year with major challenges all the signs are positive.

A FIRST Female deminer and M14 mines

After successfully clearing a minefield near Ban Xai village MiVAC opted to clear the second of twenty eight minefields in the area.

With a generous donation from the Hope Foundation, MiVAC engaged its in-country partner in Lao, Phoenix Clearance, to recruit and train female deminers to undertake the clearance. While this second field was suspected of containing M14 mines it was not known how many nor where they were. With their hard plastic construction, M14 mines are especially difficult to detect.

Ms Bouson Young mother in action

The decision to employ female deminers was boosted when Ms Bouson became the first female deminer in Lao to find and uncover an M14 mine with detectors paid for by Queensland donors. one of whom later remarked: "Seeing your contribution being put to such good use makes it worthwhile."

Ms Bouson herself commented: "Only three months ago I was just working in the rice fields but now I am making a difference by saving the lives of children."

From the past to the future

The rewards

With MiVAC growing many members are recording more involvement in the activities. In the coming year we imagine we will need more volunteers to help in the main project at BanXai. This offers opportunities to work closely with villagers



and learn about a foreign culture.

From the other side we have learned that respecting the contribution that villagers can make to their own future helps build goodwill and collaboration in the reconstruction process. For this reason we have adopted string vetting of potential volunteers to ensure that they will not only act in the interests of MiVAC but build good relationships with Indigenous villagers.