



Contracting Authority: The European Union

**Support for the National Strategic Plan for UXO as part of
sustainable development in the uplands of Lao PDR**

Guidelines
for grant applicants

Open Call for Proposals

Budget line: 19 10 0101

Reference: EuropeAid/DCI-ASIE/132607

Deadline for submission of proposals:

4 January 2013

at 16.00 hrs Vientiane local time

NOTICE

This is an open Call for Proposals, where all documents are submitted at one stage (Concept Note and full proposal). However, in the first instance, only the Concept Notes will be evaluated. Thereafter, for the applicants whose Concept Notes have been pre-selected, evaluation of the full proposal will be carried out. Further to the evaluation of the full proposals, an eligibility check will be performed for those which are provisionally selected. This check will be undertaken on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority and the signed "Declaration by the Applicant" sent together with the application.

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1. SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN FOR UXO AS PART OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE UPLANDS OF LAO PDR

1.1 BACKGROUND

In 2010, according to the UNDP's Human Development Index, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) was ranked 122 out of 169 countries¹. 80% of its 6.4 million inhabitants, divided into 47 ethnic groups, live in rural areas with often uncertain livelihoods. Despite serious efforts by the Government and generally improved macro-economic indicators, the bulk of the population still faces hunger-related problems, partly due to limited access to arable land. The country is highly dependent on foreign aid, with Official Development Assistance (ODA) making up more than 50% of capital expenditure in 2010/2011².

In addition, thirty five years after the Second Indochina Conflict ended, UXO continues to present a major humanitarian and socio-economic challenge to the country. Lao PDR is per capita the most heavily bombed nation in the world. Records indicate that during the conflict, over two million tons of bombs, including more than 270 million sub-munitions from cluster bombs were dropped, and up to 30% of them failed to detonate. About 80 million cluster munitions are still littered across 10 affected provinces: Savannakhet, Xiengkhouang, Saravane, Khammouane, Bolikhamxai, Sekong, Champassak, Houaphan, Attapeu and Luang Prabang. More specifically, it is estimated that 2,861 villages or equivalent to 25% of the total villages nationwide are still contaminated by UXO. Accidents are reported frequently, the victims being mainly male adolescents and children. Every year about 300-400 victims are injured or killed by UXO accidents³. The recent estimation made by the Government of Lao PDR shows that the total contaminated areas in the 10 impact provinces is about 656,796 ha⁴. This figure is much higher than the estimation made by an external evaluation carried out in 2008⁵.

Due to an increasing population and expanded economic activities (including mining, hydropower and plantation agriculture), the country faces an increasing demand for land. The dynamics involved in this process often push vulnerable rural populations to seek for new land, thereby increasing human exposure to previously avoided UXO-contaminated areas. The major part of contaminated land still awaits systematic and documented clearance beyond surface checks.

Actions under the UXO sector support programme will complement and support the overall European Union Cooperation Strategy in Lao PDR⁶ which aims at supporting the Government of Lao PDR to implement its Strategy of Poverty Reduction.

The programme will be implemented through two methods: a contribution agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a Call for Proposals, the latter is presented in these guidelines.

The Regulation (EC) n° 1905/2006⁷ of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 378, 27 December 2006), establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation (DCI), and more specifically its article 5 Geographic Programmes, constitutes the legal basis for this new thematic programme.

¹ <http://hdrstats.undp.org/images/explanations/LAO.pdf>

² IMF projections, July 2010

³ National Survey of UXO Victims and Accidents, National Regulatory Authority, Lao PDR (supported by EU funding)

⁴ Presentation of 10 Year Plan Concept Paper, June 2011.

⁵ Sector evaluation report 2008

⁶ http://eeas.europa.eu/laos/csp/07_13_en.pdf

⁷ Available at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/legislation/legal_bases/documents/dci_en.pdf

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this Call for Proposals is to support the MDG agenda of the Government of Lao PDR with special prominence given to the newly defined local MDG 9 to reduce the long-term negative impact of unexploded ordnance (UXO) on the development potential of affected rural communities.

The **specific objective** of this Call for Proposals is to significantly reduce the impact of unexploded ordnance (UXO) on rural livelihoods and rural development through support to activities related to UXO clearance, risk information and awareness-raising, and victims' assistance.

The **priority issues** of this call for proposals are the following:

- Projects can be conducted in UXO related activities that contribute to poverty alleviation, provided that the specific objective of the call for proposals is met.
- The action must prioritise UXO related activities in at least one of the following areas :
 - **mine risk education;**
 - **area clearance;**
 - **medical and victim assistance.**
- The action should prioritise locations where the most vulnerable households who are affected by UXO contamination are located. The action should build on previous UXO related projects
 - Particular attention should be paid to cross-cutting issues contributing to the achievement of the global objective of poverty reduction, such as the promotion of gender equality, human rights and democracy, the protection and promotion of women and children's rights, indigenous rights, rights of persons with disabilities, integration of environmental questions, respect of the rule of law. In particular, for Gender equality: Risk-awareness measures must include and specifically address a younger male target group. While UXO Lao and the NGOs active in clearance all have female members in their teams, it is important to provide adequate training possibilities and vertical mobility for female deminers, surveyors and risk education providers to become team leaders or coordinators
 - Environmental sustainability: UXO is per se an environmental contaminant by its very presence and its removal should be an enhancing factor. However, to mitigate the impact to the environment, National Standards have been put in place since the operation of UXO clearance, and are described in the Chapter 21: Environmental Management of Lao PDR National UXO/Mine Action Standards (NS) 8[1]. Article 3 of the CCM clearly prescribes the applicability of "international standards for protecting public health and the environment" for the removal and the destruction of UXO.

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this Call for Proposals is **EUR 2 600 000**. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Size of grants

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: EUR 300 000
- maximum amount: EUR 1 000 000

Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 50 % of the total estimated eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 90% of the total estimated eligible costs of the action of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.4).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting Authority) must be financed from the applicant's or partners' own resources, or from sources other than the European Union budget or the European Development Fund⁹.

⁹ Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing.

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of actions financed under this Call, in conformity with the provisions of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions, which is applicable to the present call (available on the Internet at this address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm).

2.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

- applicant(s) which may request a grant (2.1.1), and their partners (2.1.2);
- actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.3);
- types of cost which may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.4).

2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants: who may apply?

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants **must**:

- be legal persons **and**
- be non profit making **and**
- be specific types of organisations such as: non-governmental organisations, **Non-Lao** public sector organisations¹⁰, international (inter-governmental) organisations as defined by Article 43 of the Implementing Rules to the EC Financial Regulation¹¹ **and**
- be established in ¹² a Member State of the European Union and other eligible countries as stipulated in the Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation (DCI Regulation)¹³ ¹⁴. This obligation does not apply to international organisations **and**

¹⁰ Pursuant to Art 31.4 Development Cooperation Instrument, Lao Government Organisations will be excluded from the Call for Proposals as these have exclusive access to the UXO Trust Fund, and the Call for Proposals is meant as an alternative source of funding for NGOs which are for the time being excluded from this Trust Fund. http://www.undplao.org/whatwedo/factsheets/uxo/2010/Factsheet%20Trust%20Fund%20_Nov%202010.pdf

¹¹ International organisations are international public-sector organisations set up by intergovernmental agreements as well as specialised agencies set up by them; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Investment Fund (EIF) are also recognized as international organisations.

¹² To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a "Memorandum of Understanding" has been concluded.

¹³ Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation (DCI Regulation) see in particular the Article 31 of the Regulation and related annexes.

¹⁴ Countries eligible are listed under the annex A2B "Eligibility programmes 2007-2013 EDF" under the section DCI Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006. The group of countries eligible under this Geographic Programme are listed under the points a, b, d, e and f (pages 4,5 and 6) of Annex A2B available under the link below: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?group=A>

- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations which are listed in Section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions (available from the following Internet address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm);

In Part B section 7 of the grant application form (“Declaration by the applicant”), applicants must declare that they do not fall into any of these situations.

2.1.2 Partnerships and eligibility of partners

Applicants may act individually or with partner organisations

- Partners

Applicants' partners participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the grant beneficiary. They must therefore satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable on the grant beneficiary himself.

The following are not partners and do not have to sign the “partnership statement”:

- Associates

Other organisations may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in section 2.1.1. The associates have to be mentioned in Part B section 5 - “Associates of the Applicant participating in the Action” of the Grant Application Form.

- Contractors

The grant beneficiaries have the possibility to award contracts. Contractors are neither partners nor associates, and are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

- Sub-grantees

The grant beneficiaries may award financial support (sub-grants) to third entities (the sub-grantees). Sub-grantees are neither partners nor associates nor contractors. Sub-grantees are subject to the nationality and origin rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

The applicant will act as the lead organisation and, if selected, as the contracting party (the "Beneficiary").

2.1.3 Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

Definition:

An action (or project) is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than **24** months nor exceed **40** months¹⁵.

¹⁵ The duration of the implementation of the action can not go beyond the Final Date of Implementation of the Financing Agreement between the European Union and the Lao Democratic Republic. The said end date being set at the 25/12/2016 (54 months as from the entry into force of the Financing agreement dated 26/06/2012).

Sectors or themes

The applicant has to duly justify the selection of the sectors or themes with reference to the support for the National Strategic Plan for UXO as part of sustainable development in the uplands of Lao PDR.

Location

Actions must take place in the **Lao People's Democratic Republic**. They must be mainly implemented in one or several provinces most affected by UXO in Lao PDR (Savannakhet, Xiengkhouang, Saravane, Khammouane, Bolikhamxai, Sekong, Champassak, Houaphan, Attapeu and Luang Prabang). Activities may also take place in Vientiane and other provinces, especially for victim assistance support (result 3).

Actions involving UXO clearance should not take place in Attapeu province¹⁶.

Types of action

Actions will include relevant UXO activities aiming at eradicating poverty and benefiting large poor/vulnerable communities. Therefore, all actions and activities shall contribute to achieve the local MDG 9¹⁷ to reduce the long-term negative impact of unexploded ordnance (UXO) on the development potential of affected rural communities.

Types of activity

Types of activity must cover one, two or three of the following expected results:

Expected Result 1) Mine Risk Education (MRE) with a direct relationship to casualty reduction;

Expected Result 2) Area clearance coherent with the Government of Lao PDR priorities and development outcomes;

Expected Result 3) Medical and victim assistance.

Applicants are encouraged to cover more than one result, proposing an action using an integrated approach.

The following is a **non-exhaustive list of activities** per result that could be financed under this 'Call for Proposals' (eligible activities).

Hence, applicants need to demonstrate how their choice of activities contributes to the achievement of the above listed results.

The activities may involve but are not necessarily limited to:

Main activities under Expected Result 1: Mine Risk Education (MRE) with a direct relationship to casualty reduction:

MRE should always be conducted within targeted communities by competent bodies.

a. Delivery targeted risk education activities focusing on behaviour change within identified at risk groups, awareness-raising in response to UXO accidents, and classroom-based education for school children in contaminated area¹⁸.

b. Provide appropriate support to village volunteers who act as peer educators among at-risk groups. and/or

c. Promote a more coordinated and timely response to prevent accidents through mine risk education (MRE), clearance or Victim Assistance cooperation.

¹⁶ A separate funding modality was made through the Contribution Agreement with UNDP.

¹⁷ <http://www.undplao.org/newsroom/2010/MDG%20Compact%20for%20Lao%20PDR.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://www.nra.gov.la/resources/Risk%20Education%20Materials/MRE%20Materials%20Literature%20Review.pdf>

Main activities under Expected Result 2: Area clearance coherent with the Government of Lao PDR priorities and development outcomes:

Area clearance tends to be the main output of clearance agencies. It will be a key activity also under this support programme. The prioritisation system applied to selection of areas for clearance needs to be clearly brought into line with those established by local authorities (districts) in their development plans. Proper and complete documentation on reporting areas cleared will need to be submitted to the appropriate authorities and in a timely manner.

- a. Identify priority land based on clear criteria and taking into account existing Village, District, Provincial and National Development Plans.
- b. Release priority land through a risk management approach using data analysis first, then general survey followed by technical survey, roving response and/or, finally, full clearance.
- c. Monitor clearance and land release programmes in terms of impact and cost.
- d. Ensure all operations comply with national standards.

Main activities under Expected Result 3: Medical and rehabilitation of victim assistance:

The medical and rehabilitation needs of victims will be provided for and this will be in line with the six pillars of victim support document/strategy¹⁹. It is understood that such activities can not in practice target UXO victims exclusively but actions will focus on communities affected by UXO.

Thus, support will encompass activities such as:

- a. Emergency (trauma) treatment at village level.
- b. Establishment and/or strengthened rehabilitation facilities.
- c. Support to economic reintegration.

Cross cutting issues (refer as well to Section 1.2 "Priority issues"):

Cross cutting issues of children's and older people's rights, rights of persons with disabilities, the environment and climate change, rural development and relocation, as well as the fight against HIV/AIDS, will be ensured. All projects will need to show, whenever relevant, how these issues are taken into account in the design, implementation and monitoring of their activities. Principles such as empowerment, participation, non-discrimination of vulnerable groups and accountability will be adequately taken into account.

Principles of human rights, good governance and gender equality must apply to all activities. Considering that there is a clear need to strengthen the capacity of local organisations, to inform citizens about their rights, to increase their capacity to understand government policies and their implication in eradicating poverty and inequality, as well as the internal and international context in which decisions affecting their daily life are being taken, all actions to be supported under this component of the programme should include an element of capacity building of local actors.

Monitoring and evaluation

Each application should plan both the necessary human resources and the appropriate budget to ensure the mid term and final evaluation of the action. It shall include any appropriate measures for the monitoring of the proposed Action, including baselines and end lines. A performance monitoring system will have to be described in the proposals, using the logical framework tool.

Sub-granting

In order to **support the achievement of the objectives of the action**, and in particular where the **implementation of the action proposed by the applicant requires financial support to be given to third parties**, the applicant **may** propose awarding sub-grants. However, sub-granting may not be the main purpose of the action and it must be duly justified.

In case where the applicant foresees to award sub-grants, it has to specify in its application the total amount of the grant which may be used for awarding sub-grants as well as the minimum and maximum amount per

¹⁹ The six pillars are: 1. Data collection; 2. Medical care for UXO victims; 3. Physical rehabilitation; 4. Psycho-social rehabilitation support; 5. Economic reintegration and vocational training; and 6. Advocacy for UXO victims' rights

sub-grant a list with the types of activity which may be eligible for sub-grants must be included in the application, together with the criteria for the selection of the beneficiaries of these sub-grants. The maximum amount of a sub-grant is limited to EUR 10.000 per third party while the total amount which can be awarded as sub-grants to third parties is limited to EUR 100.000.

Visibility

Communication and visibility activities should be properly planned and budgeted at each stage of the project implementation. These activities should not only focus on publicising the EU support for the action but also on its outcome and impact.

Note that the applicant must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU-financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions laid down and published by the European Commission at (see http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm)).

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- one-off conferences: conferences can only be funded if they form part of a wider range of activities to be implemented in the life-time of the action. For these purposes, preparatory activities for a conference and the publication of the proceedings of the conference do not, in themselves, constitute such "wider activities";
- actions which consist exclusively or primarily in capital expenditure, e.g. land, buildings, equipment and vehicles, except in special circumstances;
- actions which discriminate against individuals or groups of people on grounds of their gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, religious beliefs or lack of them, or their ethnic origin;
- actions supporting political parties;
- actions including proselytism;
- actions involving UXO clearance in Attapeu province²⁰;

Number of applications and grants per applicant

An applicant may not submit more than one application under this Call for Proposals.

An applicant may not be awarded more than one grant under this Call for Proposals.

An applicant may at the same time be partner in another application but in not more than two applications provided that the proposed actions are different in nature from each other.

Partners may take part in not more than two applications provided that the proposed actions are different in nature from each other.

The non respect of the above mentioned rules will lead to the automatic rejection of all applications Concerned.

2.1.4 Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for a grant. The categories of costs considered as eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and a ceiling for "eligible costs". Note

²⁰ A separate funding modality is made through a Contribution Agreement with UNDP.

that the eligible costs must be based on real costs based on supporting documents (except for subsistence costs and indirect costs where flat-rate funding applies).

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checking process which precedes the signing of the contract does not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (for instance arithmetical errors, inaccuracies or unrealistic costs and other ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the Contracting Authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. The amount of the grant and the percentage of the EU co-financing as a result of these corrections may not be increased.

It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under the Call for Proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the General Conditions to the Standard Grant Contract (see Annex G of the Guidelines).

Note that taxes, including VAT will only be accepted as eligible costs when the Beneficiary (or, where applicable, its partners) can show it cannot reclaim them. Taxes shall in such case be included in the Budget of the Action under each heading Information on taxes can be found in Annex J to these Guidelines.

The decision²¹ on the eligibility of taxes will be taken by the Contracting Authority either at the time of the award decision or at the latest at contracting stage for those proposals awarded. The evaluation committee will assess the potential eligibility of the taxes on a case by case basis. The Contracting authority's decision will be supported by the evidences submitted by the applicant and its partners to demonstrate the taxes could not be reclaimed (refer to section 2.4 below).

It is the grant applicant's obligation to familiarise itself with the generally applicable tax regime, for example by addressing the competent authorities of the relevant administration in the country in which the applicant is established and/or of the beneficiary country or countries.

Contingency reserve

A contingency reserve not exceeding 5% of the estimated direct eligible costs may be included in the Budget of the Action. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the Contracting Authority.

Eligible indirect costs (overheads)

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding fixed at not more than 7% of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another heading of the budget of the standard grant contract. The applicant may be asked to justify the requested percentage before contracting. However, once the flat-rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the standard grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If the applicant is in receipt of an operating grant financed from the EU, no indirect costs may be claimed within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind are not considered actual expenditure and are not eligible costs. The contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing by the Beneficiary.

Notwithstanding the above, if the description of the action as proposed by the Beneficiary foresees the contributions in kind, such contributions have to be provided.

Ineligible costs

²¹ The Contracting authority will analyse the tax legal framework within the country where the action is to be implemented to sustain its decision on the eligibility of taxes.

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- interest owed;
- costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another action or work programme;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred to the final beneficiaries and/or local partners, at the latest by the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties.

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Prior registration in PADOR for this Call for Proposals is obligatory

Registration is obligatory for all applicants and their partners.

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register themselves and update regularly their data, through the Europeaid website: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/onlineservices/pador/index_en.htm

Before starting the registration of your organisation in PADOR, please read the "Quick guide" available on the website. It explains the registration process.

You have to indicate on the paper version of the proposal the EuropeAid ID (EID). To get this identification, your organisation must register, save and "sign" (committing your responsibility) in PADOR obligatory data (on each screen the fields written in orange) and the related documents (see section 2.4).

Notwithstanding the above, if the organisation is in a situation where it is impossible to register in PADOR, it shall submit a justification proving that such impossibility is of a general nature and goes beyond the control of the applicant and or its partner(s). In this case, the applicant and/or the partners concerned shall complete the "PADOR off-line form"²² in annex of these Guidelines and send it by the submission deadline along with the application to the address indicated in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.6. Subsequently, the registration in PADOR will be initiated by the European Commission. If, at a later stage, the organisation wishes to update itself its data, an access request will have to be sent to the PADOR helpdesk.

All questions related to the registration in PADOR should be addressed to the PADOR helpdesk at: Europeaid-pador@ec.europa.eu.

2.2.1 <i>Application form</i>

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the Concept Note and the Full application form included in the Grant Application Form annexes to these Guidelines (Annex A)

Applicants must apply in **English**.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions on the Concept Note or any major inconsistency in the application form (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear, thus preventing the Contracting Authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

²² Which corresponds to Sections 3 and 4 of Part B of the application form.

Please note that only the application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.2 *Where and how to send the Applications*

Applications must be submitted in one original and three copies in A4 size, each bound. The complete application form (Part A: concept note and Part B: full application form), budget and logical framework must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-Rom) in a separate and unique file (e.g. the application form must not be split into several different files). The electronic format must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

The Checklist (Section 6 of Part B the grant application form) and the Declaration by the applicant (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form) must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope

Where an applicant sends several different applications (if allowed to do so by the Guidelines of the Call), each one has to be sent separately.

The outer envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the Call for Proposals**

"Support for the National Strategic Plan for UXO as part of sustainable development in the uplands of Lao PDR - EuropeAid/DCI-ASIE/132607", together with the full name and address of the applicant, and the words "Not to be opened before the opening session" and

" ຫ້າມເປີດກ່ອນມີເປີດຊອງ " .

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:

Postal address

Delegation of the European Union to Laos
Support for the National Strategic Plan for UXO
Post Office Box: 9325
Souphanouvong Road, Vientiane Lao PDR
Tel: +856 21 241134

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service

Delegation of the European Union to Laos
Support for the National Strategic Plan for UXO
Souphanouvong Road, Vientiane Lao PDR
Tel: +856 21 241134

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Section 6 of Part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications may be rejected.

2.2.3 *Deadline for submission of Applications*

The deadline for the submission of applications is on **04/01/2013** as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is at 16.00 hours Vientiane local time as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

However, for reasons of administrative efficiency, the Contracting Authority may reject any application received after the effective date of approval of the first evaluation step (i.e. Concept Note) (see indicative calendar under Section 2.5.2)

2.2.4 *Further information for the Application*

An information session on this Call for Proposals will be held on 03/10/2012 at 9.00 hours.

Date, time and location of the information session will be confirmed on the following websites:

EuropeAid web site <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/index_en.htm and
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/laos/index_en.htm

Questions may be sent by e-mail or by fax no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes to the below address(es), indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals:

E-mail address: Delegation-Thailand-FCS @eeas.europa.eu

Fax: (+66) 2 255 9110

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes. The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide further clarifications after this date.

In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant, a partner, an action or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, may be published on the internet at the EuropeAid web site <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and the Delegation websites: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/index_en.htm and http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/laos/index_en.htm as the need arises. It is therefore **highly recommended** to regularly consult the abovementioned website in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to PADOR registration should be addressed to the PADOR help desk:
europeaid-pador@ec.europa.eu

2.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Contracting Authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All actions submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in paragraph 2.1.3, the application shall be rejected on this sole basis.

(1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

The following will be assessed:

- The submission deadline has been respected. If the deadline has not been respected the application will automatically be rejected.
- The Application Form satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-5 of the Checklist (Section 6 of Part B of the grant application form). If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The evaluation of the Concept Notes that have passed the first administrative check will cover the relevance and design of the action.

The Concept Note will be given an overall score out of 50 points in accordance with the breakdown provided in the Evaluation Grid below. The evaluation shall also verify the compliance with instructions provided in the guidance for Concept Note.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following assessment categories: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Scores

1. Relevance of the action	Sub-score	30
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?*	5x2**	
1.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) is the proposal? (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)	5x2*	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4 Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as environmental issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, or innovation and best practices and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of these guidelines?	5	
2. Design of the action	Sub-score	20
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the action? In particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and relevant stakeholders?	5x2**	
2.2 Is the action feasible and consistent in relation to the objectives and expected results?	5x2**	

TOTAL SCORE 50

* Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses more than the required minimum number of priorities as indicated in Section 1.2 (Objectives of the programme) of these guidelines.

** the scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

Once all Concept Notes have been assessed, a list will be established with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

First, only the Concept Notes which have been given a score of a minimum of 30 points will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the list of Concept Notes will be reduced in accordance to the ranking to those whose sum of requested contributions amounts to at least twice the available budget for this Call for Proposals, taking into account the indicative financial envelopes foreseen by lot.

Following the Concept Note evaluation, the Contracting Authority will send a letter to all applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted prior to the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated and whether the Concept Note were evaluated and the results of that evaluation. The Evaluation Committee will subsequently proceed with the applicants whose proposals have been pre-selected.

(2) STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

First, the following will be assessed:

- The full application form satisfies all the criteria specified in points 1-8 of the Checklist (Section 6 of Part B of the grant application form). If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

An evaluation of the quality of the applications, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant and its partners, will be subsequently carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria are intended to help evaluate the applicants' financial and operational capacity to ensure that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding;
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This also applies to any partners of the applicant.

The award criteria allow the quality of the applications submitted to be evaluated in relation to the set objectives and priorities, and grants to be awarded to actions which maximise the overall effectiveness of the Call for Proposals. They enable the selection of applications which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover such aspects as the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the Call for Proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring:

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicant and, if applicable partners have sufficient technical expertise? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed.)	5
1.3 Do the applicant and, if applicable, partners have sufficient management capacity? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance of the action	30
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>	
3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	20
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is evaluation foreseen?	5
3.4 Is the partners' level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
4. Sustainability of the action	15
4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the action and dissemination of information.)	5

4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable: - financially (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>) - institutionally (<i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local “ownership” of the results of the action?</i>) - at policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?</i>) - environmentally (if applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5x2*
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5
Maximum total score	100

*the scores are multiplied by 2 because of their importance

Note on Section 1. Financial and operational capacity

If the score is less than 12 points for section 1, the application will be rejected.

Provisional selection

Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications ranked according to their score and within the available financial envelope will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT AND PARTNERS

The eligibility verification, based on the supporting documents requested by the Contracting Authority (see Section 2.4) will only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available financial envelope.

- The Declaration by the applicant (Section 7 of Part B the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of the applicant, the partners, and the action will be verified according to the criteria set out in Sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

Following the above analysis and if necessary, any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application in the reserve list that falls within the available financial envelope, which will then be examined for the eligibility of its applicant and the partners.

2.4 SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

Applicants who have been provisionally selected or listed under the reserve list will be informed in writing by the Contracting Authority. They will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify the eligibility of the applicants and their partners:

Supporting documents may/must be provided through PADOR, see Section 2.2

1. The statutes or articles of association of the applicant organisation²³ and of each partner organisation. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission. A list of the relevant framework agreements is available at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/financing/international_organisations/other_international_organisations/index_en.htm

2. Where the grant requested exceeds EUR 500 000, an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the applicant's accounts for the last financial year available.

This obligation does not apply to international organisations.

This obligation does not apply to public bodies

3. Copy of the applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the previous financial year for which the accounts have been closed)²⁴.
4. Legal entity sheet (see annex D of these Guidelines) duly completed and signed by the applicant, accompanied by the justifying documents which are requested therein. If the applicant has already signed a contract with the Contracting Authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and its supporting documents the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in its legal status occurred in the meantime.
5. A financial identification form conforming to the model attached at Annex E of these Guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank must be located in the country where the applicant is registered. If the applicant has already signed a contract with the European Commission or where the European Commission has been in charge of the payments of a contract, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead, unless a change in its bank account occurred in the meantime.

This bank account must yield interest or equivalent benefits. If the costs for opening and/or maintaining such an account equals or exceeds the expected interest, applicants may be exempted from this obligation by submitting a declaration of honour to this fact.

6. Should the applicant and/or its partners claim for the eligibility of taxes under the action, it must demonstrate that (both as applicants and/or partners) they are not tax exempted and that taxes cannot be recovered under the applicable national law. Hence the applicants and its partners will have submit the evidences at the eligibility stage (Step 3) that as an entity (applicant and/or partner(s)), they are not entitled to reclaim taxes.

This evidence may take the following forms (list is not exhaustive):

- an extract of the national VAT tax law showing that the entity is not entitled to reclaim taxes, and
- official document from the competent tax authority stating that the entity is not entitled to reclaim taxes (and that this does not depend on the simple fact that it does not wish to be subject to VAT). This official document may be a specific declaration by the competent tax authority, and/or failing to provide the latter, a declaration of honour from the entity concerned accompanied by an expert statement (e.g. by an independent lawyer, an independent auditor)

Where the requested supporting documents are not uploaded in PADOR they must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union or in the language of the country where the action is implemented, a translation into **English** of the relevant parts of these documents, proving the applicant's eligibility, **must be attached and will prevail** for the purpose of analysing the application.

²³ Where the applicant and/or (a) partner(s) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided

²⁴ This obligation does not apply to public bodies nor to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.4.2.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than English, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the applicant's eligibility, into **English**.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the applicant by the Contracting Authority, the application may be rejected.

Based on the verification of the supporting documents by the Evaluation Committee it will make a final recommendation to the Contracting Authority which will decide on the award of grants.

2.5 NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.5.1 Content of the decision

Applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, in case of rejections, the reasons for the negative decision.

Applicants believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint. See further Section 2.4.15 of the Practical Guide.

2.5.2 Indicative time table

	DATE	TIME*
Information meeting	3 October 2012 (tbc)	9.00
Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	14 December 2012	-
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	21 December 2012	-
Deadline for submission of Application Form	4 January 2013	16.00
Information to applicants on the opening & administrative checks and concept note evaluation (step 1)	March 2013	-
Information to applicants on the evaluation of the Full Application Form (step 2)	May 2013	-
Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (step 2)	June 2013 *	-
Contract signature	July 2013*	-

* **Provisional date.** All times are in the time zone of the country of the Contracting Authority

This indicative timetable may be updated by the Contracting Authority during the procedure. In such case, the updated timetable shall be published on internet at the EuropeAid web site <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and the Delegation websites: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/index_en.htm and http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/laos/index_en.htm

2.6 CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION FOLLOWING THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the Beneficiary will be offered a contract based on the Contracting Authority's standard grant contract (see Annex G of these Guidelines). By signing the Application form

(Annex A of these Guidelines), the applicant declares accepting, in case where it is awarded a grant, the Contractual conditions as laid down in the standard grant contract.

If the successful applicant is an international organisation, the model Contribution Agreement with an international organisation or any other contract template agreed between the international organisation concerned and the Contracting Authority will be used instead of the standard grant contract provided that the international organisation in question offers the guarantees provided for in the applicable Financial Regulation, as described in Chapter 6 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the Beneficiary to award procurement contracts, it must award the contract to the tenderer offering the best value for money, that is to say, the best price-quality ratio, in compliance with the principles of transparency and equal treatment for potential contractors, care being taken to avoid any conflict of interests. To this end, the Beneficiary must follow the procedures set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

2.7 EARLY WARNING SYSTEM AND CENTRAL EXCLUSION DATABASE

The applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (EWS) for the use of authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies (OJ, L 344, 20.12.2008, p.125) or
- the Commission Regulation of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (CED) (OJ L344, 20.12.2008, p.12),

their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the EWS only or both in the EWS and CED, and communicated to the persons and entities listed in the above-mentioned Decision and Regulation, in relation to the award or the execution of a grant agreement or decision.

3. LIST OF ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

ANNEX A: GRANT APPLICATION FORM (WORD FORMAT)

ANNEX B: BUDGET (EXCEL FORMAT)

ANNEX C: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (EXCEL FORMAT)

ANNEX D: LEGAL ENTITY SHEET

ANNEX E: FINANCIAL IDENTIFICATION FORM

ANNEX F: PADOR OFF-LINE FORM

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION

ANNEX G: STANDARD GRANT CONTRACT

- ANNEX II: GENERAL CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO EUROPEAN UNION-FINANCED GRANT CONTRACTS FOR EXTERNAL ACTIONS
- ANNEX IV: CONTRACT AWARD PROCEDURES
- ANNEX V: STANDARD REQUEST FOR PAYMENT
- ANNEX VI: MODEL NARRATIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORT
- ANNEX VII: MODEL REPORT OF FACTUAL FINDINGS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN EXPENDITURE VERIFICATION OF AN EU FINANCED GRANT CONTRACT FOR EXTERNAL ACTIONS
- ANNEX VIII: MODEL FINANCIAL GUARANTEE
- ANNEX IX: STANDARD TEMPLATE FOR TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF ASSETS

ANNEX H: DAILY ALLOWANCE RATES (PER DIEM), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/index_en.htm

ANNEX I: STANDARD CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT, APPLICABLE IN CASE WHERE THE BENEFICIARY IS AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

ANNEX J: INFORMATION ON THE TAX REGIME APPLICABLE TO GRANT CONTRACTS SIGNED UNDER THE CALL.

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/manuals-tools/t101_en.htm