Dear Friends,

Sabaidee from the field in Laos! Eleven Legacies board members, friends and supporters joined us on this year's Laos learning trip to get a first-hand look at current developments in the areas of unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance, assistance to survivors, and risk education. A huge thanks to our participants, who not only paid their own way, but also donated to Legacies of War to support our education and advocacy programs! Over the following weeks, we will highlight the many individuals and partner organizations that made this trip.
The Executive Director Khamvongsa and board chair Peachey in Xieng Khouang with the parents who are still grieving the loss of their 10-year-old child in March of this year.

During our trip, the team of Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown joined us to meet with survivors in Luang Prabang. Check out the episode about Laos and the UXO issue. Also see the Q&A interview with our Executive Director Channapha Khamvongsa.

Big WIN!
Just one day after we landed in Laos, we learned that the second installment ($30m) of President Obama's pledged $90 million made it safely into the fiscal year 2017 budget. This is a huge win! We are grateful to the members of Congress including Senator Leahy, Rep. McCollum and Rep. Duffy. But the thanks also goes to YOU, our supporters. We asked you in our March campaign to urge your Congressional members to show their support by signing onto the "Support Unexploded Ordnance Removal in Laos" Dear Colleague letter! As a result of your efforts, we gathered 18 signatures from Congress in support of providing no less than $30 million for UXO clearance in Laos in fiscal year 2018. This letter helped to highlight the importance of life-saving UXO removal in Laos. We have so much to be proud of, but our work is far from done.

Just this week, the proposed White House budget shows a severe threat for the UXO sector in Laos with a suggested budget of $10 million in fiscal year 2018 instead of the now-approved $30 million for fiscal year 2017. This means a budget cut over 65% for the UXO sector in Laos. Without this funding, the comprehensive national survey of UXO in Laos, demining activities and victim assistance programs are at risk.

I'm writing to you today to ask you to help us launch our the next phase of work with a special gift to Legacies of War. We need to raise at least $50,000 by the end of this summer to build on the success we had for fiscal year 2017, which will help us fight for the last installment of the pledged $90 million. Your critical donation will help us to organize events and bring voices to advocate on the UXO issue.

During our Laos learning trip, we met with the grieving families and survivors who suffered a dreadful cluster bomb accident on March 21 of this year. Twelve villagers were injured and a 10-year old girl Ear Lee, was killed when a cluster bomb was mistaken for a toy. The family receives medical treatment from one of our partner organizations, World Education - an organization which receives U.S. funding through our advocacy and education efforts. We must not forget about the much-needed, long-term support for the 12,000 UXO survivors still living in Laos. The meetings with the survivors and many beneficiaries of U.S. funding are a reminder of the importance of our work to advocate for much-needed support.

Will you please make a tax deductible gift today of $5,000, $1,000, $500, or $100 to help us reach our goal? I hope we can count on you.

Remember, none of the funding we fight for in Congress will go to Legacies of War. We are working hard to ensure that the last installment of the pledged $90 million is included in the 2018 budget, so our partners on the ground can continue their life-saving work.

Thank you for being part of our journey. We never could have done all of this work without your support!

With deep appreciation, The Legacies Team

After you make your gift, will you share this appeal with 5 other people who might also be able to make a similar contribution?
THE FIGHT TO DEMINE LAOS

Read our Executive Director, Channapha Khamvongsa's interview with the team of Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown here!

Map of U.S. Bombings Dropped on Laos, 1965-1975

ANTHONY BOURDAIN: PARTS UNKNOWN - LAOS

Laos: Just the Facts
Anthony Bourdain's Field Notes and Fact Sheet

The Fight to Demine Laos
A Q&A with Legacies ED Khamvongsa

Beyond Borders: What you should have been taught in school about Laos
By Joshua Kurlantzick & Brett Dakin, Legacies Board Emeritus

Stories: Laos - The Forever War
By Claire Knox

Obama in the World's Most Bombed Country
A Q&A with Obama administration official Ben Rhodes
By Cara Parks

Our Executive Director Khamvongsa was featured as part of the National Geographic feature. Watch the National Geographic Explorer piece here, in which correspondent Justin Hall traveled to Laos to learn about the dangers of unexploded bombs from the Vietnam War and victim assistance in Laos.
PRESS RELEASE ON UXO FUNDING INCREASE AND THREATS TO 2018 FUNDING

BIG WIN - the second installment ($30m) of President Obama's $90m pledge made it safely into the fiscal year 2017 budget! But the 2018 White House budget proposal suggests a cut to $10m (over 65%). Read our Legacies Press Release here.

UPCOMING EVENTS - SAVE THE DATE

SEATTLE, WA
Lao'd and Clear - The 4th National Lao-American Writers Summit will take place in Seattle, WA from June 23-24 at Highline College. Come for readings, writing circles, the exhibit and informal social gatherings with great Lao food! Legacies will be there! Register here.

LOWELL, MA
2017 Southeast Asian American Studies Conference "Community Engagement, Research, and Policy in Action" seeks to build bridges across disciplines and different fields ranging from policymakers, artists, scholars and community leaders. Legacies will be part of the panelist at this year's conference from July 27-29 at UMass in Lowell, MA.

WASHINGTON, DC & SAN DIEGO, CA
Kids in your family? Join Legacies at this year's summer camp at the Lao Heritage Foundation, a non-profit preserving and promoting Lao culture through the arts. Every year, Legacies provides young children, ages 4-18, with a curriculum on the Secret War and UXO issue in Laos. Know history, know self! Summer camp in Washington, DC dates: July 22-29; San Diego: August 6-12. Register and volunteer here.

COMING UP NEXT: OUR LAOS LEARNING TRIP SERIES - STORIES FROM THE FIELD
STAY TUNED...

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