A cluster bomb explosion killed Nguyen on the day before Tet, on February 12, while he was cutting weeds around his banana trees and preparing his garden for the holiday. The 40-year-old father of six daughters had left home after breakfast, taking his favourite farming tool, a bush-hook, with him to do weeding work on a large plot of land planted with bananas, cassava and maize, the major source of income for local residents. A few hours later, a huge explosion could be heard from the direction of the hillside where his family lived. Nguyen Van Hoi, Nguyen's uncle, heard the explosion and was the first to rush to the scene. When he arrived, he saw his nephew lying lifeless on the ground. Both his hands were severed, his eyes were badly damaged, and his skin was burned from the chest to his face. On the eve of Tet, Nguyen's tragic death suddenly thrust his family into extreme difficulties. Today, still grieving, his wife and six daughters are uncertain about their future. Nguyen, who was the only breadwinner, also supported his aging parents. In Vietnam, about 100 people die every year because of landmines. Unexploded bombs in the country represent 5 per cent of the total number of bombs used during the war, or around 800,000 mines, according to figures from the Technology Centre for Bomb and Mine Disposal in Vietnam. Children make up 62 per cent of landmine victims, according to a survey conducted by the American organisation, Project RENEW (Restoring the Environment and Neutralizing the Effects of the War), which is funded by the US government and Norway's People's Fund. Based in central Quang Tri Province, Project RENEW operates mine clearance and public safety programmes collaboratively developed by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and the Quang Tri Province People's Committee. Among its activities are mine-risk education, the safe removal and destruction of ordnance, medical assistance, and the provision of artificial limbs. It also offers vocational training and income generation for families of the disabled as well as community outreach.

Along with People's Aid and UNICEF, Project RENEW interviewed scrap metal collectors in the central region and concluded that nearly all were aware of the risks they faced by engaging in such dangerous activity. Most of the people who search for and cut apart scrap metal, which is illegal under Vietnamese law, are driven by economic pressures. Poverty is the primary factor that keeps the activity going, despite the tragedies that often ensue and the increasing public awareness of the danger. Several families that have suffered from unexploded ordnance have received funds from Project RENEW to set up household businesses. After Nguyen's death, many people in the community offered the family money, and Project RENEW plans to pay the school fees for Nguyen's daughters. Besides the efforts of Project RENEW and other similar groups, private individuals have responded to the needs of the families who are affected by landmine deaths. A young man in Ho Chi Minh City, Le Duc Thuan, managing director of Thuan Le Group, started an organisation for landmine victims, including children after visiting and seeing bomb shelters in Cu Chi Tunnel and Quang Tri Province. He set up a florist shop called Flowerbox in Ho Chi Minh City, with support from Project RENEW and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. Funds from the shop, located on Ho Chi Minh City's 74E Hai Ba Trung Street, go to Thuan's charity, which also receives direct donations. The funds help children who live in difficult circumstances because of landmine accidents that have occurred in Quang Tri Province. "I was touched after seeing the bombs and the victims there. With my programme, I hope everybody joins hands to create more opportunities for these unlucky people," Thuan said. 

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