



Save the Children

SAVE THE CHILDREN'S RESPONSE TO THE FLOODS IN LAOS

2025



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of Save the Children International in Laos, we extend our sincere gratitude to all partners and donors for their invaluable support in emergency response efforts. Contributions through the **Humanitarian Fund** enabled the delivery of essential food and non-food assistance, relief supplies, and unconditional cash support to families affected by flooding in three districts, including Nan, Phonxay and Xieng Ngeun, Luang Prabang Province, helping to meet urgent needs and improve daily living conditions.

We gratefully acknowledge the **START Network** for its support in providing life-saving non-food items and establishing Child-Friendly Spaces, offering children safe places to learn, play, and recover following the floods. Special appreciation is also extended to the **Cummins Foundation, Inc.** for its support to Education in Emergencies programmes in Luang Prabang, ensuring learning continuity during times of crisis.

Our sincere thanks also go to the Government of Lao PDR, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Disaster Management Committees and the Lao Red Cross for their strong partnership and coordination throughout the emergency response.

The collective commitment and generosity of all partners continue to strengthen our shared mission to save lives, support recovery, and build resilience for children and families affected by emergencies in Laos.

INTRODUCTION

HEAVY RAINS, RISING RISKS: FLOOD IMPACTS ACROSS LAOS

Laos continues to face recurrent climate-related disasters, with heavy rainfall and flooding increasingly affecting communities, infrastructure, and livelihoods. From 21–23 July 2025, Tropical Depression Wipha brought intense rainfall across northern Laos, placing families—especially children—at heightened risk. Subsequent storms, including LingLing, Boualoi, and Matmo, further exacerbated the situation, with Luang Prabang Province among the most severely affected.

In Nan District, Luang Prabang Province, flooding affected 14 villages and 895 households, impacting 2,722 people, including 855 women. Many homes were left filled with mud, sanitation conditions deteriorated, and food insecurity persisted

In Xieng Ngeun and Phonxay Districts, damage to roads and communication infrastructure temporarily isolated communities. Sanitation conditions were poor, access to clean water was only restored later, and food insecurity remained a concern. Communications were disrupted due to electricity cuts, and families were evacuated to temporary shelters.



After the flash flood in Nan District, Luang Prabang Province, Laos

RESPONDING WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

SAVE THE CHILDREN'S SUPPORT FOR FLOOD-AFFECTED CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN LAOS

Save the Children International in Laos (SCIL) initiated its emergency response following severe flooding in late July 2025, focusing on the most affected communities in Xieng Ngeun, Nan, and Phonxay District, Luang Prabang Province. The response prioritized cash assistance, food security and livelihoods, child protection, and coordination with government partners to address urgent needs and support early recovery.



OUR REACH



1,204

Flood-affected households



5,549

People reached



1,407 / (♂ 893)

Children



84 (♂ 34)

Persons with disabilities

Note: Reach figures for the flood and landslide response in three target districts of Luang Prabang Province, 2025.

A portable water filter system, consisting of a yellow plastic housing and an orange plastic frame with a mesh filter, lies on the ground. The device is surrounded by debris, including a blue plastic bag and a white pipe. The background shows a rough, rocky surface.

FLOOD RESPONSE IN LUANG PRABANG PROVINCE

In July 2025, flash floods affected several areas across Laos, including Nan, Xieng Ngeun, and Phonxay Districts, forcing many families from their homes and disrupting access to food and safe drinking water. In response, Save the Children, with support from the Humanitarian Fund, provided unconditional cash assistance, essential food, and household supplies, helping affected families meet urgent needs and restore stability.

Additional support from the START Network enabled the distribution of life-saving non-food items (NFIs) to the most vulnerable households, supporting early recovery and rebuilding efforts.



If my husband hadn't gotten up to go to the toilet that night, we wouldn't have survived. The flood would have taken us in our sleep.

*-Vone (Mother), 41 years old
Luang Prabang Province*





My son should be playing and learning—not waking from nightmares or asking when the next flood will come. I just want him to feel safe again

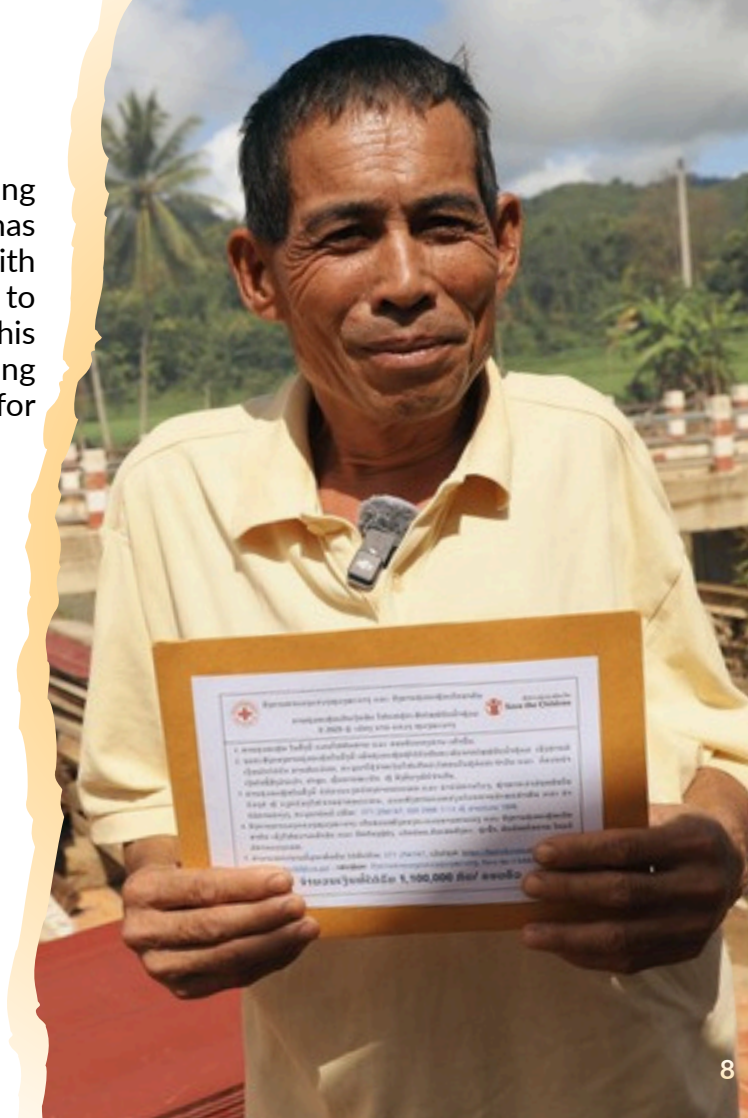
*-Keo, 31 years old and
Son, 10 years old
Luang Prabang Province*

REPLANTING HOPE AFTER THE FLOOD

At 64 years old, Mr. Thitchanpheng, a retired teacher living with a disability in Sibounheuang village, Nan District, has spent his life serving his community. Despite living with kyphosis since infancy, he dedicated nearly 30 years to teaching before retiring in 2019. Today, he lives with his children and grandchildren, supporting his family by farming rice—work that is physically demanding but essential for their food and income.

Flooding was not new to Sibounheuang village, but the floods of July 2025 were unlike anything experienced before. On the morning of 23 July, the river rose rapidly, forcing families to flee. After helping neighbors move their belongings to safety, Thitchanpheng rushed to his rice field—only to find it completely destroyed. Where rice once grew, there was now only mud. His harvest, investment, and hopes for the year were gone.

The loss was devastating. With limited ability to find other work and having invested heavily in the field, Thitchanpheng feared that his grandchildren would face hunger or be forced to leave school. For days, he felt overwhelmed and uncertain about the future.



Relief came through support from the Humanitarian Fund, implemented by Save the Children in partnership with the Luang Prabang Red Cross. Thitchanpheng's family received cash assistance, easing the immediate financial burden and enabling them to plan for replanting by hiring labour to restore the damaged field.

The support brought more than practical assistance—it restored hope. ***“We will replant again, and we will fight again,”*** Thitchanpheng said with quiet determination.

Today, with renewed strength and the support of his family and community, Thitchanpheng looks ahead with hope—grateful that in the aftermath of loss, he was not left to face recovery alone.





We held each other and cried. My mother kept whispering through her tears, our house... our everything... it's all gone.

*- Vanh , 70 years old
Khuem, 43 years old
Luang Prabang Province*



THE NIGHT THE RIVER TOOK EVERYTHING

The river beside Sibounheuang village had been part of Kheum's life – not a threat, but a trusted companion.

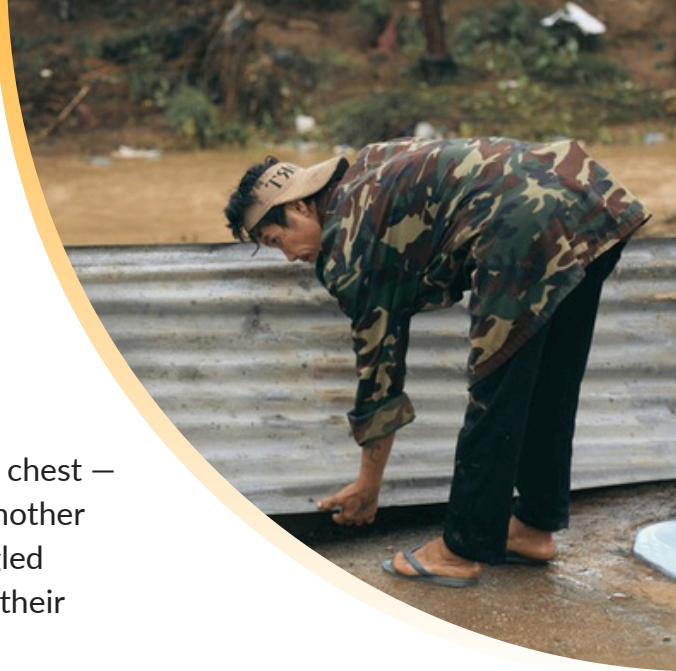
Kheum, a 43-year-old man, lived in a small house by the river with his 70-year-old mother, Vanh. Together, they had built the house with their own hands, choosing the riverbank because it gave them everything they needed. The soil was fertile. Vegetables grew easily. Chickens thrived. They sold what they could, kept what they needed, and lived simply. They never had much, but they always had enough.

Their days followed a steady, comforting rhythm. Each morning, Kheum left for work as mist lifted from the river. Each evening, he returned to feed their 40 chickens, while his mother tended her garden, carefully pulling weeds and checking the soil. During the rainy season, the river often rose – sometimes even reaching their knees – but it had never frightened them. There was always time to prepare. Always time to move belongings to higher ground. They believed the river would warn them.

On the night of 23 July 2025, it did not.

At around 2 a.m., Kheum sat near the river with neighbors, watching the water as it crept higher than usual. The air was heavy with humidity, the night quiet except for the steady rush of water. Then, without warning, a deep, thunderous roar echoed from upstream – the sound of something breaking loose. Kheum knew immediately. The flood was coming. And it was coming fast. He ran. His mother was asleep alone in their house.

By the time Kheum reached it, the water was already up to his chest – cold, powerful, and rising with terrifying speed. He shook his mother awake, pulling her from sleep into panic. Together, they struggled through the rushing water, gripping each other as they fought their way toward higher ground.



“I was asleep when my son shook me awake. The water was already around us. We didn’t think – we just held onto each other and ran.”- Vanh said.

Moments after they escaped, they turned back. Their house was gone. In minutes, the river had swept everything away – the home they had built together, the chickens they depended on, their savings, their belongings, their memories. The place that had sheltered them for two decades vanished into the dark water.





Kheum held his mother as she cried, her body shaking. Through her tears, she whispered again and again, *“Our house... our everything... it’s all gone.”* There was nothing he could say. The loss was too sudden, too complete.

Kheum and his mother were left with only the clothes they were wearing that night. They stayed with relatives, sharing food, space, and whatever could be spared. Of their home, only one structure remains standing—the toilet—left behind like a fragile marker of what once was.

The days after the flood have been heavy. More than 800 families were affected across the area, and while some organizations have provided food and clean water, the needs remain overwhelming. Thick mud still covers the land. Mosquitoes swarm. Snakes have appeared in places they were never seen before. People are falling ill. Women and girls struggle without basic hygiene supplies. Many families still lack clothing, sanitation, and safe shelter.



Kheum and his mother are afraid to rebuild near the river. The memory of that night still lingers, and so does the fear of the water returning without warning. But they have no other land to move to – no safer place to start again. And so the questions remain: What if it happens again? What if next year brings the same terror?

Thanks to the support of Save the Children, funded by the Humanitarian Fund, Kheum and Vanh received essential construction and household items that enabled them to rebuild their home, restore daily life, replant vegetables on the small piece of land that remains, and prepare for the cold months ahead with warm blankets—while also saving some money for future needs. For now, they are surviving. But survival is not the same as living. Kheum hopes that, with continued support from Save the Children and those who stand with affected families, life can slowly begin again—with safe shelter, clean water, sanitation, clothing, and, in time, a renewed sense of security. The river took everything they had. With help, it does not have to take their future.





After the flood, it felt impossible to start again. With Save the Children's support, we could rebuild our house and regain our resilience. I am so grateful for the help that allowed us to move forward.

A newly rebuilt home of Khuem and Vanh, made possible with support from Save the Children

*- Vanh , 70 years old
Luang Prabang Province*



Even though we are poor, I take my children's education as the most important thing in life.

*- Bao, 39 years old
Tamon, 9 years old
Luang Prabang Province*



A MOTHER'S STRENGTH AND A DAUGHTER'S FUTURE

Bao is a 39-year-old Khmu woman from Phonxay District, Luang Prabang Province. She lives with her husband, two daughters, and one son in a small house beside the river. For many years, her family depended on the land behind their home, where they grew vegetables for food and income and planted large trees as an investment for the future. The garden was their lifeline—it helped put food on the table and cover basic expenses, especially the cost of sending their children to school.

One night, everything changed.

The river rose suddenly and swept away more than half of their land. In a single flood, Bao lost her vegetable garden, the trees she had planted for years, and the hard work that sustained her family. What remained was only a small piece of land—and deep uncertainty about the future.

Despite the loss, Bao remained determined to protect her children's education. Unable to read or write herself, she carries a strong dream for her children to achieve what she could not. To manage costs, she sent her son to a monk's school, where expenses are lower, while keeping her daughters enrolled in regular school.

“My youngest daughter, Tamon, is only nine, but she already represents her school and wins competitions,” said Bao, a proud mother.





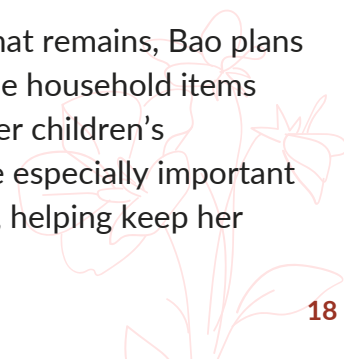
When we received the blankets and household items, I felt relief for the first time since the flood. Knowing my children will stay warm gives me strength to keep working for their future.”

*— Bao, 39 years old
Luang Prabang Province*

Her youngest daughter, Tamon, is only nine years old but already shows remarkable promise. She consistently earns top marks and has represented her school in district-level competitions. Bao sees her potential clearly and continues to support her in every possible way to pursue her education.

When Save the Children delivered emergency relief supplies with support from the START Network and the Humanitarian Fund, Bao felt that life was beginning to turn in a better direction. Her family received 20 essential household items, including cooking pots, a kettle, mats, and blankets. These supplies helped them resume daily routines and eased financial pressure.

With the small piece of land that remains, Bao plans to replant vegetables, while the household items allow her to save money for her children’s schooling. The blankets will be especially important during the cold months ahead, helping keep her children safe and warm.





The flood did not only destroy Bao's physical assets—it also left her children with lingering fear and emotional distress. Through the child-friendly space supported by the Safe School Project, her children have found a place to rebuild confidence, learn new skills, and rediscover joy after the trauma. For Bao, this psychosocial support is just as valuable as the material assistance.

Today, Bao continues to work tirelessly for her family, holding tightly to the hope that her children—especially Tamon—will receive the education they deserve. The assistance she received provided stability during a difficult time and renewed her courage to keep moving forward.

The assistance provided by Save the Children and local authorities has been crucial in addressing urgent needs following the floods. For families like Bao's, this support has been a lifeline in the long journey toward recovery.

Her story reflects the lasting impacts of flooding—emotional trauma, disrupted livelihoods, interrupted education, and ongoing struggles for stability.

Through her resilience, Bao illustrates the human face of climate disasters and the urgent need for continued support to rebuild lives and restore hope for a safer, more secure future.





CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACE (CFS)

CFS is a safe, inclusive place where children can play, learn, and receive psychosocial support during emergencies and recovery.

With support from the START Network, Save the Children established 8 CFS, reached 377 children (170 girls) in flood-affected communities in Nan and Phonxay Districts, Luang Prabang Province, providing safe and nurturing environments for children to learn, play, and recover after the floods.

Child-Friendly Corner activities were launched in eight villages, offering children joyful opportunities to draw, play games, sing, and express themselves. Carefully assessed by trained village volunteers and Save the Children staff, these spaces helped restore a sense of safety, happiness, and emotional well-being for children and their families





After the flooding, the children were very quiet and looked unhappy and afraid. When the Child-Friendly Corner started, we saw them drawing, playing, singing, and smiling again. It helped them feel safe and happy, and it also brought great relief to the parents.

- Bouavanh,
SCI Project Officer
(Emergency Response Team)



Supported by the **START Network**, these Child-Friendly Spaces helped restore safety, joy, and emotional well-being for children—proving that after an emergency, healing children’s hearts is just as important as rebuilding homes and schools.

Click or Scan to watch the SCI response with START Network support





RISING STRONGER: SCHOOLS RECOVER AFTER FLOODS

The impact on education has been especially severe. Many children have been unable to return to school after losing their uniforms and learning materials, leaving them feeling isolated, discouraged, and uncertain about their future. Community consultations revealed that at least 70 families are deeply worried about their children's education, as they cannot afford to replace school uniforms, learning supplies, or even basic necessities for the new academic year. Without timely support, these financial pressures risk increasing school absenteeism and, for some children, permanent dropout.



Before the response
School in Phonxay after flood



After the response
School in Phonxay following renovation works

Flooding damaged classrooms, toilets, and water systems at several schools, including Paphai Kindergarten, Simoungkhun Primary School, Phonxay Primary School, and Huay Sala Primary School. Fences, playgrounds, and essential learning materials were destroyed, disrupting teaching and learning.

Through careful planning, on-site verification, and close coordination with school principals and teachers, timely and equitable assistance was delivered with the support of Cummins Foundation, Inc



Standing in a flooded classroom where children once learned is heartbreaking—but it strengthens our commitment to rebuild schools and protect every child’s right to education

— Luke Ebbs,
Country Director,
Save the Children Laos

Click or Scan to
watch the interview
video of Luke here:





RESPONSE IN EDUCATION

In the aftermath of flooding, SCI, with generous support from Cummins Foundation, Inc, worked closely with the Ministry of Education and Sports, Provincial and District Education authorities, and the Education Working Cluster to assist affected schools in Nan and Phonexay Districts. Together, we assessed school repair needs, identified the most affected students, and ensured that—alongside basic household items—Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) kits, essential school supplies, and school uniforms were appropriate and fairly distributed.

This support goes beyond meeting immediate needs. By strengthening school readiness and ensuring that children can safely return to learning, the response has helped restore not only classrooms, but also hope and continuity for children and their communities.

Before the response: The school in Nan District was badly impacted by flooding, with thick layers of mud covering the compound and classrooms. As a result, many school facilities were damaged.



After the response: following the intervention, the school was thoroughly cleaned and rehabilitated. The thick mud was removed from the compound and classrooms, damaged facilities were repaired, and learning spaces were restored. The school is now clean, safe, and ready for students to return and resume their learning.





I'm very happy to have new clothes after the flood. I lost mine, and these make me feel happy again

*-Nampherng, 7 years old
Luang Prabang Province*



Heavy rains caused rivers to overflow, severely flooding communities and damaging homes, schools, and essential infrastructure. For many children, the disaster disrupted not only daily life but also their ability to continue learning safely.

Nampherng, a 7-year-old Grade 2 student, was among those affected. When the floodwaters receded, her family had lost many basic items—including her school's uniform. ***"I'm very happy to have new clothes after the flood. I lost mine, and these make me feel happy again,"*** she said.

SCI worked closely with government partners, schools, and communities to support children's safe return to learning. Detailed surveys and on-site verification were conducted to confirm school needs, identify affected students, and ensure accurate sizing of uniforms. This careful preparation helped ensure assistance was delivered efficiently and with dignity.

Across six flood-affected schools in Nan and Phonxay Districts, 389 students received school uniforms, learning materials, and essential WASH supplies. Teachers and school leaders were actively involved from the outset—from measuring students for accurate uniform sizing to supporting smooth distribution—ensuring children could return to class with confidence.

This aid not only eased financial burdens for families but also brought joy and relief to children like Nampherng.





“

We love our new bags and will use them every day.

-Naem, 6 years old
-Koung, 5 years old
Luang Prabang Province



Growing Green Again: Life After the Flood

Save the Children's flood response goes beyond delivery through post-distribution follow-up, community feedback, and quality assurance—supporting resilience and recovery for children and families while ensuring assistance remains effective and accountable.



A Feedback and Reporting Mechanism (FRM)—including red feedback boxes and the Hotline (1606)—enabled community members to safely share their views on the assistance received and the overall response process. Feedback collected from 140 individuals (95 women), together with Post-Distribution Monitoring conducted during November 2025 with 181 households across five villages, confirmed very high levels of satisfaction—over 93% for food assistance and 99% for non-food items—demonstrating the relevance, quality, and effectiveness of the response.





SEEDS OF RECOVERY FOR CHANTEE

Chantee Langsy, 39, is a mother of two and a farmer supporting a household of ten family members in Nan District, Luang Prabang Province. A sudden flash flood destroyed her home, crops, livestock, and farmland, wiping out her family's only source of income.

In response, SCI provided essential household items and vegetable seeds to support her recovery. For Chantee, the seeds were critical allowing her to replant immediately after the flood.

With the crops now healthy and thriving, she plans to expand planting and resume selling produce to generate income and support her family.



Receiving these essential items helped us survive the hardest days after the flood. We are deeply grateful for the care and support during this difficult time.

*-Chantee, 39 years old
Luang Prabang Province*





This support arrived when we needed it most. It helped our family recover, protect our children, and begin rebuilding our lives with dignity.

*- Sonechit, 33 years old
Luang Prabang Province*



After the flood, we felt lost and didn't know how to survive, especially with many family members to care for. This support gave us safety, hope, and the strength to continue our daily lives. Thank you for standing with us when we needed it most.

*-Boualee, 41 years old
Luang Prabang Province*

The response was made possible through the collective commitment of our donors, government partners, stakeholders, and the unwavering dedication of the Save the Children International team in Laos. Stepping beyond their everyday roles, staff came together to support emergency response efforts—working tirelessly in difficult conditions to protect children and support families. Their compassion, professionalism, and solidarity embody our shared values and our promise to children, even in the most challenging times.

– Save the Children International in Laos







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Save the Children

Save the Children in Lao PDR
Rue Nerhu, Unit 25
Ban Phonxay, Xaysetha District
Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR
P.O. Box 7475

Tel: (+856-21) 454201-3

Email: communications.laos@savethechildren.org