

Alert note

Cambodia–Thailand Border Conflict, 19 December 2025

Completed by: Lutheran Hope Cambodia Organization (LHCO)

Date completed: 19 December 2025

Forum: Cambodia ACT Forum

Type of emergency: Armed conflict / border conflict with mass displacement

Date of emergency (if rapid onset): Stated from 7 December 2025 and remains active

1. The nature of the emergency

On 7 December 2025, long-standing tensions along the Cambodia-Thailand disputed border escalated into renewed conflict, including artillery exchanges, air strikes, and heavy fighting in multiple frontier areas. The crisis follows an earlier flare-up in July 2025 (24–28 July), when hostilities ceased following an unconditional ceasefire that took effect from midnight on 28 July 2025. On 7 August 2025, the ASEAN Monitoring Team (AMT) was established to monitor the compliance by land and air, with technical and logistical support provided by the United States. On 26 October 2025, the Kuala Lumpur Peace Accord was signed as a step towards normalization. The number of displaced people from the current hostilities is already 2.5 times compared to those displaced during the July conflict.

2. The impact and scale of the emergency

As of 18 December around 498,242 people have been displaced of whom 260,417 are women and 158,323 are children . The numbers are likely to increase as there has not been any cessation of hostilities agreed by the two countries at the time of this appeal.

Displacement has been reported across six border-affected provinces: Banteay Meanchey, Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear, Battambang, Pursat, and Koh Kong. Siem Reap Province does not share a border with Thailand and has not reported displacement; however, it is significantly impacted as a key host area for people fleeing from Banteay Meanchey, Oddar Meanchey and Preah Vihear (133,300 people hosted as of 18 December 2025). Other seven provinces have received some displaced population by hosting them with their relatives.

According to government figures 322,545 people have moved to 196 sites established by government while the remaining 175,697 people staying with relatives

Due to conflict 17 civilian died and 77 injured (MoI, 16 Dec 2025). 883 schools have been closed, affecting 208,985 students and 7,278 teachers (HRF, 12 Dec 2025). Access to health services disrupted: 51 health facilities closed in six affected provinces due to shelling/insecurity (HRF, 12 Dec 2025)

Sources:

- Cambodia Humanitarian Response Forum (HRF) Situation Report (covering from 07 to 12 Dec 2025)
- Figures from National Committee for Disaster Management – NCDM (covering from 07 to 18 Dec 2025)
- Ministry of Interior – MoI (16 Dec 2025)

3. Local and national capacity

People have moved to government-established displacement sites and to relatives' homes. As of 18 December, out of 498,242 displaced people, 64% (322,545 people) moved into the 196 'safe centres' established by the local authorities in pagodas, schools and other public space. The remaining 36% (175,697 people) have been hosted by their relatives and friends.

The camps were not organised to receive large numbers. While a needs assessment has not taken place, it is clear from those who have visited camps that they significantly lack in basic facilities. Shelter is seen

as a major need. Plastic sheet, ropes, blankets, mats and mosquito nets have been identified. The second major gap is the provision of WASH facilities; for instance, the provision of safe drinking water and latrine facilities that are disaggregated and provide privacy and safety is limited. While the government is providing rice and other dry rations, these lack critical nutrients and fresh foods. Rations need to be supplemented with vegetables and proteins, and special foods for infants and young children are also lacking.

Local response is led by the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) through provincial, district, and commune disaster management committees. Evacuation sites/shelters are being managed by local authorities with support from line departments. Site managers and local authorities are potential resources to implement the Complaint and Response Mechanisms (CRM) and the coordinate the response plan with other government agencies, NGOs and private sector to provide an effective and transparent emergency response. The Cambodian Red Cross, local NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies, private sector and charities are providing relief assistance, while humanitarian coordination platforms support information-sharing and response planning.

Government (NCDM and provincial authorities) is leading coordination and has established displacement sites.

The local authorities have facilitated the hosting of displaced people in over 196 'safe centres', which are pagodas, school premises and other public properties. They have appointed 'camp managers' in all locations who, along with their team have been registering the incoming displaced persons, facilitating space for them, coordinating responses coming from private sources including from NGOs and UN. As part of camp management, they are also providing policing.

The national authorities have released food from the 'national food reserve system' and distributed among displaced households.

At sub-national and line ministry levels, the authorities have reached out to local and International NGOs seeking support, and have managed the distribution of the assistance. However, significant gaps persist between needs and responses.

Under the HRF, sector working groups (food security, livelihoods and nutrition, shelter, health, education, WASH, protection, etc.) collate sector-specific information and coordinate response. In response to the current crisis, the HRF has been meeting regularly and OCHA Bangkok is providing technical support, including a 5Ws to consolidate information on assessments and responses. In the Cambodian context, 'sectors' function similarly to clusters, and the HRF plays a role comparable to an inter-cluster coordination group.

4. Key needs and gaps

- Shelter/NFIs: Shelter is described as a critical challenge. Needs include blankets/clothes and temporary shelter support. Lack of electricity reported in camps.
- WASH: Lack of sanitation facilities, safe drinking water/containers, hygiene supplies, and community awareness.
- Health: Medical supplies/drugs, hygiene materials/facilities are needed. Closed health facilities limited the access to health services. Priority for infection prevention, diarrhea management supplies (ORS/Zinc), Maternal and Child Health (MCH)/immunization, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) have been observed.
- Protection/Psychosocial Support (PSS): Need for safe spaces and psychosocial support, including child-friendly spaces and Gender Based Violence (GBV)-related support. Complain
- Education: Temporary learning space and learning materials needed due to school closures.
- Food and nutrition: While the government is able to provide rice to the affected population, the rations lack critical nutrients and fresh foods. The food provided is not

balanced and needs to be supplemented with fresh foods, such as vegetables and protein. Special foods for infants and young children are also lacking.

Existing gaps in information (current):

- A single, consolidated site-by-site overview across all affected provinces (where individuals are located, site capacity, service coverage).
- Consistent disaggregated figures at site level (sex/age, disability, pregnant/lactating, elderly).
- Clear severity ranking of sites by sector (WASH, shelter/NFIs, food, health, protection) and what partners are already covering.
- Updated details on access constraints and security that affect assessments and deliveries.

When these might be addressed:

Rapid assessments are already happening in some provinces/sites, but coverage is still partial. This information should improve over the coming days and weeks as more agencies complete rapid multi-sector assessments and consolidate results into coordination updates.

Please indicate whether you are considering:

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund (<i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i>)	
Appeal (<i>intended for large scale emergencies</i>)	X

If you indicate an intention to launch an appeal, the secretariat will activate an Emergency Steering Committee meeting within two working days on receipt of this alert.

Capacity details of forum members with the intention to respond are given below.

ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise	Support required	Estimated Budget range
Dann Church Aid (DCA) through its local partners	Banteay Meanchey, Preah Vihear, Siem Reap, Battambang	Food Security & Nutrition; multipurpose cash; NFIs/shelter support	Funding + cash transfer delivery set-up; logistics/transport; surge staff	To be confirmed
LHCO	Border-affected provinces, specifically Battambang	NFIs/shelter support & Food Security & Nutrition	Funding; access to sites; relief procurement	To be confirmed
HEKS/EPER	Border-affected provinces (presence)	Unrestricted cash support (via cash on hand/Wing/TrueMoney)	Funding; cash delivery mechanism; field access	To be confirmed
Church World Service (CWS)	Border-affected provinces (presence)	Logistics support (vehicles/field offices/storage); response support	Funding; transport/fuel; warehousing	To be confirmed
FELM through its local partners	Siem Reap, Battambang, Pursat	Food security, NFI, Safeguarding capacity building	To be confirmed	To be confirmed

World Renew through its local partners	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
5. Potential responses				
<p>Forum members and local partners with presence in the impacted provinces include DCA, LHCO, CWS, and HEKS/EPER. They have capacity for cash assistance (MPC/unrestricted), field coordination, and logistics support. FELM has partners presence in the affected areas and through them, skills for safeguarding and child-protection support and assessments are the existing expertise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCA: multipurpose cash assistance and food security/nutrition support across Banteay Meanchey, Preah Vihear, Siem Reap, Battambang province. • LHCO/HEKS/CWS: assessments and distribution of prioritized NFIs (blankets, mosquito nets, sleeping mats, hygiene items, cooking sets) and basic solar lighting, depending on access and gaps. • FELM: scaling up existing project with its partner Mlup Russey in Pursat, Battambang, Siem Reap. The project is planned to support potential joint response of the Forum. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quick funding decisions and flexibility for scale-up. - Access approvals and security updates for safe field movement. - Logistics support (transport, storage, procurement) and surge staff for project implementation. 				