



# QUARTERLY IMPACT REPORT

1 OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

This quarter was heavily impacted by the escalation of the Cambodia-Thailand border conflict, causing large-scale displacement, school closures in border provinces, and heightened security risks for communities and our team. The Crisis Management Team was activated between 16/12/2025 to 05/01/2026, to monitor, adjust program activities, and safeguard team members, girls, and families.

Despite these challenges, core activities continued: social work support for girls and families, distribution of school materials and bikes, strengthened collaboration with local authorities, and new partnerships for improved service quality and sustainability.

\*Names of all girls in this report have been changed to protect their privacy.



Goal of the quarter

**EDUCATED  
GIRLS**



**191**  
Safety Visits



**109**  
Social Work  
Interventions



**3**  
Nets for Vegetable  
Gardens



**14**  
Water Filters  
Provided



**131**  
Girls Received  
School Supplies  
and Uniforms



**2**  
Emergency Food  
Packages



**7**  
Bikes  
Delivered

**THE NUMBERS THIS QUARTER**



## ABOUT FREE TO SHINE

**Free To Shine is a child protection organisation that prevents the sex trafficking and exploitation of school-aged girls in Cambodia. We strengthen community and family systems to prioritise children's safety and education.**

## PROGRAM REACH THIS QUARTER

**152**

Girls and their families supported

**109**

Social work visits and interventions

**191**

Safety visits conducted across 24 villages

**10**

Exits to safety\*

**4**

Intakes

\*An exit to safety is a planned transition out of the program when a girl and her family are no longer at risk of trafficking, with the knowledge, support, and stability in place to keep her safe independently.

## CONFLICT AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

The Thailand-Cambodia border conflict intensified during this quarter, displacing over 500,000 people across provinces; many sought shelter in formal sites, with relatives, or host communities<sup>1</sup>. In Cambodia, over 1,000 schools closed, disrupting education for more than 300,000 students<sup>2</sup>.

Displaced families moved into our operating communities, where supported families showed resilience by hosting relatives and sharing resources amid stress, trauma, and intergenerational issues. Due to risks near program areas, we suspended in person visits for two weeks, maintaining contact via phone check-ins.

## HIGHLIGHTS THIS QUARTER

- 01 Strengthening and Safeguarding Access to Government Support
- 02 100 Women and the SE Asia Foundation Grant
- 03 Case study: Chanthou's Courage
- 04 Educational Support for New School Year



01

## STRENGTHENING AND SAFEGUARDING ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

IDPoor is Cambodia's national system for identifying vulnerable households and those living in poverty, managed by the Ministry of Planning. It assesses families' socioeconomic conditions and issues IDPoor cards, which enable eligible households to access government social protection programs such as health care, education support and other financial assistance.

During this quarter, our social workers conducted an audit of households holding IDPoor cards and identified discrepancies between families' actual socioeconomic status and the information recorded in our online case management system (OSCaR). Records for families with existing IDPoor cards are currently being updated, and social workers have supported these households to access available government financial assistance. For families without an IDPoor card, our social workers collaborated with commune authorities to initiate the assessment process so those households can be considered for eligibility.

In one case, a family was found to have misused their IDPoor card by pawning it to borrow money from another household. Through joint intervention with the Commune Council for Women and Children, the family was informed of the risks and consequences of this practice. The family agreed to discontinue the misuse and successfully recovered the IDPoor card. Following this intervention, our social workers provided follow-up support to ensure the child and family accessed government education assistance to help keep the children in school.



02

## 100 WOMEN AND THE SE ASIA FOUNDATION GRANT

A grant from 100 Women and the SE Asia Foundation has allowed us to work with an extra 14 girls as active beneficiaries and has received strong engagement from local authorities, Commune Councils for Women and Children, and families in target communities. Each girl receives at least two home visits per month, covering key topics including child rights, child labour and trafficking, gender-based violence, unsafe migration, healthy relationships, child well-being, health and development, financial security, and child protection.

So far, six girls have been identified as no longer being engaged in harmful child labour: one has returned to Grade 8, one has enrolled in vocational training, and four continue working under safer conditions with improved awareness of labour rights and workplace safety, monitored by their families and local authorities.



**Chanthou's journey stands as a testament to her courage and determination, demonstrating how support, perseverance, and belief in oneself can transform a difficult situation into a hopeful future.**

03

## CASE STUDY

# CHANTHOU'S COURAGE: A JOURNEY BACK TO SCHOOL AND HOPE

**Chanthou's journey back to school is a powerful story of resilience and determination. Living in a small rural home with her mother, grandmother, younger sister, and extended family, Chanthou faced many challenges. After her parents divorced, her mother became the main income earner, working as a cleaner to support the family. Despite the financial aid Chanthou received through government support, life was difficult.**

Earlier this year, Chanthou discontinued school in Grade 8 due to an issue with her friend and conflict at home. Her relationship with her mother was strained; her mother struggled with alcohol and often expressed disappointment in Chanthou for discontinuing her education. Feeling lost and wanting to find work far from home at just 14 years old, Chanthou was unsure about her future.

Through the dedicated support of one of our social workers, Chanthou began to rebuild her confidence. Our Social Worker provided psycho-social education, ongoing counseling about safety, child labor, healthy relationships,

and opportunities for her future. They carefully explored solutions together, helping Chanthou understand her rights and options.

With support from Free To Shine and encouragement from her family, Chanthou bravely decided to return to study at a different school where she felt comfortable. Despite the challenge of repeating Grade 8, she committed herself fully to her studies. Chanthou's father also began contributing support, strengthening her network around her.

Since returning, Chanthou has missed only one day of school due to illness and has shown remarkable dedication and hard work. Equipped with new school supplies, uniforms, and financial support for additional curriculum classes, she is now confidently pursuing her education and her dreams.

Chanthou's journey stands as a testament to her courage and determination, demonstrating how support, perseverance, and belief in oneself can transform a difficult situation into a hopeful future.

04

## EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Out of 152 girls enrolled in our program, 131 are currently attending school. During this reporting period, 76 girls received financial support for additional curriculum classes.

To ensure girls had uniforms and essential learning materials, our team conducted the annual distribution of school supplies and uniforms for 131 girls across rural communities in the target districts. All distribution events were attended by Commune Leaders, members of the Commune Councils for Women and Children, and girls' parents or caregivers. Feedback from these events was highly positive, reflecting both the value of the support provided and the strong collaboration with local authorities and families.



### WORDS FROM A COMMUNE LEADER

“

**I hope Free To Shine's support can help motivate parents and caregivers to keep supporting their children to get an education.**

### WORDS FROM COMMUNE COUNCIL FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

“

**I want to continue helping students in isolated areas to keep them in school. I hope all the students sitting here today will not discontinue from school, or at least will finish high school. If you are facing obstacles, know that authorities are like your parents supporting you. I want to thank Free To Shine for providing school supplies, uniforms, vegetable seeds, and bikes.**

### WORDS FROM A PARENT

“

**Thank you Free To Shine for supporting these girls. I am happy that Free To Shine helped me reduce the financial burden for school supplies, uniforms and vegetable seeds. I hope Free To Shine will continue supporting girls and families. I wish Free To Shine growth and success.**

### WORDS FROM A GIRL ON OUR PROGRAM

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**I would like to express my deepest gratitude for Free To Shine's support which helps ease the burden of expenses such as financial support for additional curriculum classes, vegetable seeds, and school supplies which are necessary for our education and growth. Because of this support, I am determined to study diligently with sincerity and perseverance.**



**Our operating environment continues to be volatile. Heavy environmental challenges (seasonal rainfall and flooding) and ongoing regional border conflicts have disrupted schooling and made home visits more challenging. We have adapted by providing emergency food packages and leveraging community networks to ensure essential needs are still met, reinforcing our role as a trusted anchor in the community.**

Through these efforts, Free To Shine reaffirms its commitment to creating a safer, more educated, and empowered community for all.

If you would like to contribute towards this work you can do so here: [www.freetoshine.org/donate](http://www.freetoshine.org/donate)

## SOURCES

1. The National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM), quoted in the Humanitarian Response Forum (HRF) - Situation Report 12: Cambodia-Thailand Border Situation (27 December 2025).
2. Humanitarian Response Forum (HRF) - Situation Report 12: Cambodia-Thailand Border Situation (27 December 2025).