



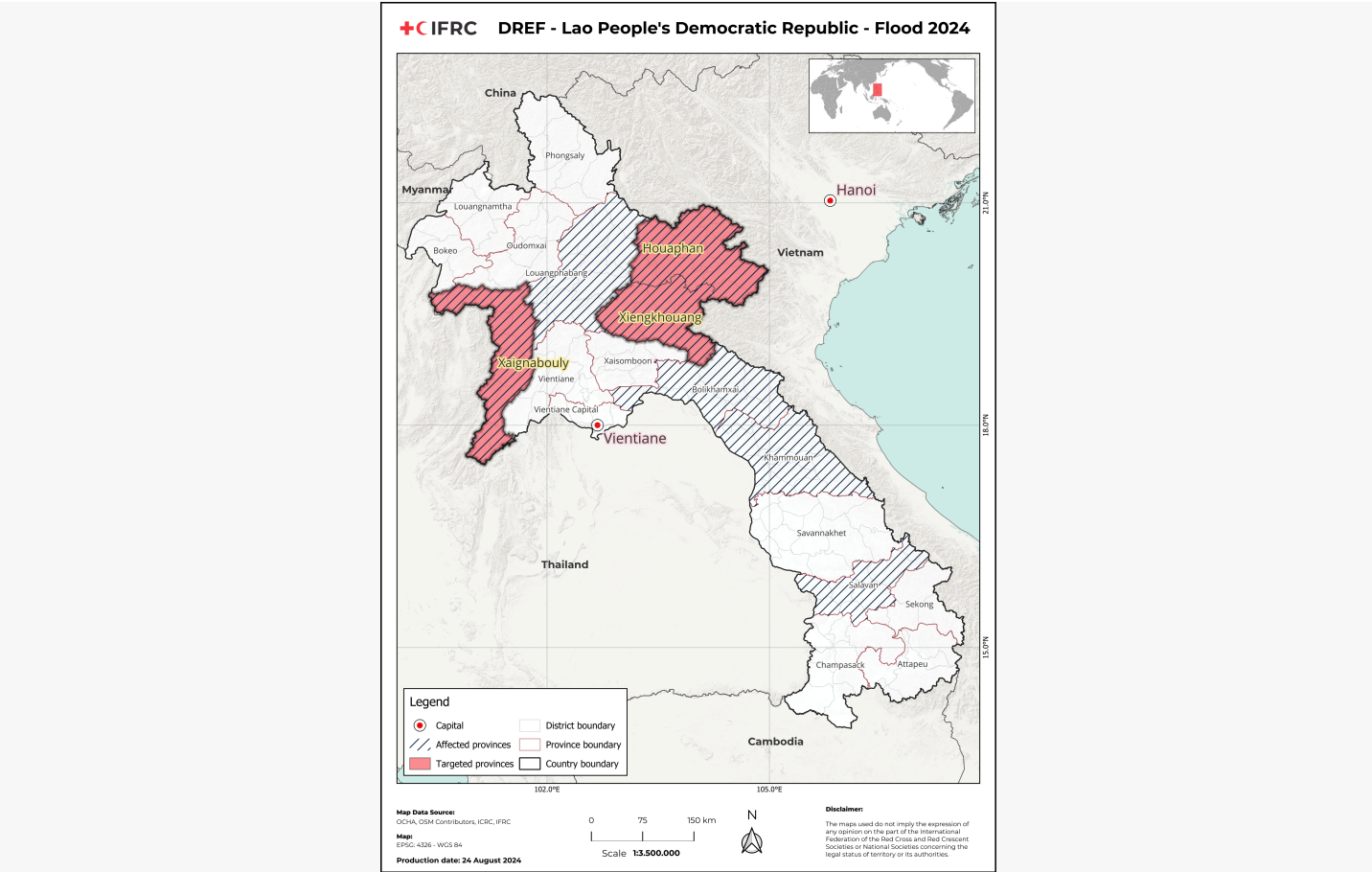
Lao Red Cross (LRC) provided humanitarian assistance through cash support to flood-affected families in Vientiane province (Photo: LRC)

Appeal: MDRLA010	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 500,000	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Flood
Glide Number: FF-2024-000156-LAO	People Affected: 185,843 people	People Targeted: 28,694 people	People Assisted: 28,694 people
Event Onset: Sudden	Operation Start Date: 25-08-2024	Operational End Date: 28-02-2025	Total Operating Timeframe: 6 months

Targeted Regions: **Phongsali, Louang-Namtha, Oudomxai, Bokeo, Houaphan, Xaignabouli, Xiangkhouang, Vientiane**

The major donors and partners of the IFRC-DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, China, Czech, Canada, Denmark, German, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Malta, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand and the Netherlands, as well as DG ECHO, Mondelez Foundation, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the National Societies, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.

Description of the Event



Map of Affected and Targeted Areas (Map: IFRC,IM)

Date of event

21-08-2024

What happened, where and when?

On 22 July 2024, the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology of Lao PDR issued flood warnings as Tropical Cyclone Prapiroon approached. From 23 to 31 July, heavy rains, a low-pressure system, and strong southwest winds triggered floods and landslides across northern and central regions, with Luang Prabang Province particularly affected.

Between 22 July and 8 August, the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) reported flooding and landslides in six provinces—Luang Prabang, Houaphan, Xiangkhouang, Borlikhamxay, Khammuane, and Salavan—with the first three most severely impacted. Adverse weather continued into early September, affecting 1,208 villages across 106 districts in 15 provinces.

Provincial authorities activated emergency response mechanisms. Temporary shelters were established, accommodating 885 people in five locations. Others took refuge with relatives. More than 300 volunteers, along with security and defence forces, supported evacuations and relief. Public and private sectors coordinated the delivery of essential supplies. Due to limited data in late August 2024, the Lao Red Cross (LRC) initially requested a DREF allocation to conduct assessments in the most affected areas. Following the assessment, which identified additional needs, LRC submitted a full DREF request to expand support. The final targeted provinces where LRC provided assistance were Phongsali, Louang Namtha, Oudomxai, Bokeo, Houaphan, Xaignabouli, Xiangkhouang, and Vientiane Province.

By the end of IFRC-DREF operation, most displaced families have returned to their homes and communities, while some reconstruction efforts are ongoing. Basic services such as water supply and health care have resumed in most affected areas, though some remote communities still face limited access to clean water. Government led interventions with support from humanitarian actors, including LRC contributed to meeting the most urgent needs during the early phase. However, challenges remain in restoring livelihoods and repairing damaged infrastructure, and further support is being mobilized through longer-term recovery efforts.





LRC verified beneficiary's document before the beneficiaries receiving cash support in Vientiane province (Photo: LRC)



Needs assessment at PangHai Village, Khob District, Xayabouly Province. (Photo: LRC)

Scope and Scale

The floods and landslides triggered by Tropical Cyclone Prapiroon and subsequent southwest monsoon rains in July–September 2024 had a widespread impact across Lao PDR. According to government data, approximately 185,843 people (76,183 families) in 1,208 villages across 106 districts in 15 provinces were affected. The disaster resulted in eight fatalities and significant damage to infrastructure and livelihoods.

Agricultural losses included over 24,600 hectares of crops, 299 fishponds, and 4,202 livestock. Infrastructure damage was extensive: 252 road sections, 77 schools, 11 health facilities, 298 houses, and at least 27 water systems were reported damaged or non-functional. The total estimated cost of damages was approximately USD 7.9 million (CHF 6.8 million).

In Houaphanh, Xiangkhoun, and Xaignabouli provinces—among the hardest hit—continued rainfall in mid-August led to further flooding, affecting shelters, farmland, and households. In Xaignabouli alone, over 380 families across 13 villages were newly affected in late August. The impact on livelihoods and access to essential services has increased the vulnerability of affected communities, particularly children under five at risk of malnutrition due to crop loss and food insecurity.

Six months after the initial flooding some families have returned home, many continue to face challenges due to damaged infrastructure, limited resources, and the need for permanent resettlement, particularly in severely affected provinces like Luang Namtha, where roads, schools, and homes remain in need of repair.

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	The IFRC Country Cluster Delegation (CCD) in Bangkok closely monitored the situation and provided technical support to LRC remotely and on the ground to process the IFRC-DREF allocation and to plan and implement the DREF operation. The IFRC Asia-Pacific Regional Office provided technical assistance to the IFRC CCD and LRC as and when needed. The secretariat support to LRC first enabled the National Society to conduct needs assessments to inform more comprehensive response measures and to develop an early recovery plan. Furthermore, the IFRC CCD Bangkok also assisted LRC in submitting a second allocation request to significantly increase the scale of its IFRC-DREF operation.
Participating National Societies	As part of the ongoing Institutional Preparedness for National Society Development (IPNSD) initiative, the Swiss Red Cross (SRC) has provided financial assistance to LRC. This support aimed at enhancing rapid response efforts including supplying relief kits and drinking water. Moreover, the financial aid also covered conducting needs assessments in two districts of the targeted province covered by the IFRC-DREF Assessment.



ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

N/A

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	In response to the flood crisis, provincial authorities coordinated emergency response efforts by assigning specific responsibilities to various departments to ensure efficient and effective interventions. They established temporary shelters for affected individuals in safe locations, including the provincial secondary school center, the provincial bus station, and the boarding school. For 885 individuals impacted, 174 sought temporary shelter at the provincial secondary school center, 650 at the indoor sports center, and 120 at the provincial public hospital. Those who did not reside in temporary shelters stayed with relatives. To support the affected populations, security forces, national defense units, and over 300 volunteers from various sectors were mobilized. Vehicles, including cars, trucks, motorcycles, and boats, were utilized for evacuations and to transport essential supplies. Reception and distribution centers were established to provide vital goods.
UN or other actors	UNICEF Lao PDR has mobilized both internal and regional funds to conduct rapid needs assessments, procure emergency supplies, and respond to urgent requests from Line Ministries for WASH supplies and learning materials. Utilizing sector assessments and an interactive map enhanced by satellite imagery and AI, UNICEF monitored the situation while awaiting detailed impact reports from the Government's rapid assessments. With an initial funding requirement of approximately USD 935,000 (CHF 804,970), UNICEF supported the government-led response and recovery efforts, with a focus on addressing the needs of children, women, and families. As part of its humanitarian assistance, UNICEF provided learning kits for early childhood and primary school students, benefiting over 1,600 children affected by the flood. In addition, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Sports, assessed the needs of flood-affected schools in Louang-Namtha province and delivered education and WASH supplies to support over 5,000 students and ensure the continuity of learning during the emergency. On 26 September 2024, LRC and the World Food Programme (WFP) distributed rice to flood-affected populations in Louang-Namtha Province. The distribution covered 20 villages and benefited 2,909 families, totaling 14,343 people, including 6,979 women. More than 100 tons of rice were provided, with an estimated allocation of 7 kilograms per person.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

At the national level, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW) played a key coordinating role in working closely with provincial authorities. LRC actively collaborated with the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) to assist in designated areas for the benefit of the affected people, following directives from the government.



Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

The flood caused extensive damage to 2,369 families, with 59 per cent of households classified as severely affected. Many homes sustained structural damage, and essential items—including personal belongings, appliances, vehicles, and livelihood equipment—were destroyed or impaired.

Assessment findings showed that 54 per cent of households experienced moderate damage, 41 per cent major damage, and 5 per cent catastrophic losses. Shelter emerged as a critical need for households that lost most or all of their property.

Due to constraints in budget, timeframe, and operational capacity, LRC was unable to implement shelter-related interventions. These needs were addressed by relevant government agencies



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The flood caused widespread devastation to agricultural land and livestock, severely impacting 71 per cent of total agricultural assets. The hardest-hit areas included rice fields, rice storage facilities, cassava farms, and rubber plantations. A significant number of livestock, such as cows, buffaloes, pigs, poultry, goats, and fish, were also lost due to the flooding.

Based on the damage assessment, only 3 per cent of agricultural areas suffered minimal damage, with 1 to 29 per cent of crops and assets affected. Moderate damage, affecting 30 to 59 per cent of agricultural land and resources, accounted for 43 per cent of the total. Similarly, another 43 per cent experienced major damage, with 60 to 79 per cent of farmland and assets damaged. Finally, 12 per cent of agricultural areas were completely devastated, losing 80 to 100 per cent of crops, livestock, and other resources. This extensive damage places a significant strain on local farmers and threatens food production and economic stability in the region.

Local government authorities spearheaded assessments and provided ongoing support to affected communities, focusing on livestock and farmland recovery. In response, LRC committed to providing multi-purpose cash assistance to affected families, enabling them to purchase essential food items and basic hygiene items.



Multi purpose cash grants

Flooding and landslides inflicted significant damage on key infrastructure, including roads, schools, health facilities, and residential and agricultural areas, with the estimated cost of damages around USD 7.9 million (CHF 6,801,347). Vulnerable groups, particularly children under five, are at heightened risk of malnutrition due to the loss of crops, rice storage, plantations, and other food sources. The assessment indicated that for the assistance to be provided in the first months, 90 per cent of the affected population preferred cash assistance, while 10 per cent favors in-kind support. The priority needs, ranked in order of importance, were food, WASH, non-food items, health, shelter, and education.

The strong preference for cash assistance suggested that cash-based interventions could be the most effective approach during the relief and early recovery phases, enabling recipients to address their immediate and early recovery multi-sectoral needs in a manner that best suits their specific circumstances.

Given the diverse range of priority needs and anticipated support from assigned government agencies in areas such as shelter, WASH, health, and livelihoods, multi-purpose cash grants could be particularly beneficial. This approach would provide flexibility for recipients to allocate funds based on their individual priorities.



Health

The majority of individuals in the flood-affected areas have access to healthcare services. Approximately 89 per cent can reach district hospitals, while 40 per cent have access to community hospitals. Access to provincial hospitals is available to 8 per cent, with 2 per cent relying on private clinics and only 1 per cent utilizing private hospitals. The assessment indicated that 72 per cent of households are located within six kilometres of the nearest hospital, while 28 per cent live more than six kilometres away from the closest healthcare



facility. Furthermore, the findings show that about 89 per cent of the population do not require psychosocial support, whereas approximately 11 per cent have some need for it.

The Ministry of Health led efforts to address the identified needs and gaps within the health sector. To enhance access to healthcare facilities, LRC incorporated coverage for essential service costs, such as communication and transportation, into the design of its multipurpose cash assistance programme. Additionally, to address potential risks to mental health and psychosocial well-being, psychological first aid was integrated into multipurpose cash intervention.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

The assessment highlighted that only a small portion of the population faced challenges accessing drinking water after the flood. Specifically, 7 per cent of the population reported some difficulties, while the majority, 93 per cent, had reliable access to drinking water. Most individuals employed safe water treatment methods, with 66 per cent purchasing treated water from local factories and 29 per cent using boiling as a method of purification. Although 24 per cent of the population consumed untreated water, this issue remains manageable, and there appears to be adequate awareness of proper water treatment practices.

Regarding sanitation and hygiene, 98 per cent of households have functioning toilets, and 84 per cent of the population regularly wash their hands with soap, particularly after using the toilet and before preparing or eating food. Hygiene issues reported by 6 per cent of the population were mainly due to a lack of soap and detergent, indicating relatively minor concerns. While the overall WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) situation is positive, further hygiene promotion activities could help maintain the current high standards.

Government agencies, such as the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE), took the lead in addressing these gaps by providing health education, technical support, and resources to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene practices. This local government approach was sufficient in addressing the identified gaps and needs. Therefore, WASH promotion interventions were not considered as a priority by LRC for its DREF operation.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

The 2,369 targeted households included vulnerable groups such as the elderly, pregnant women, children under five, and people living with disabilities. These groups faced significant challenges in accessing essential services like food, healthcare, and WASH facilities due to the flood's impact. Consequently, they were at heightened risk of malnutrition, lack of vaccinations, and limited access to clean drinking water and medical care, raising serious concerns about their safety and well-being.

To effectively address these vulnerabilities, it was crucial for LRC to plan response interventions that consider the specific needs of these groups. Utilizing Sex, Age, and Disability Disaggregated Data (SADDD) helped ensure inclusiveness and accountability in the response efforts. Additionally, refresher trainings on PGI for LRC staff was necessary to enhance their capacity to provide effective support. Furthermore, a child safeguarding analysis was conducted to ensure that children were protected from violence, abuse, and neglect, with preventive measures and accountability prioritized throughout the operation.



Community Engagement And Accountability

In the affected areas, various channels were employed to disseminate information about relief efforts, including announcements made by village heads through loudspeakers and social media. Among the 2,369 affected individuals surveyed, a notable 32 per cent preferred to receive information from village heads, 24 per cent from district authorities, and 16 per cent from fellow villagers. Other preferred channels included village notice boards (9 per cent), television (14 per cent), and social media platforms like Facebook (5 per cent). However, only 47 per cent of households were aware of how to provide feedback or inquiries to LRC, indicating a significant gap in communication, particularly among vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, ethnic minorities, and individuals with disabilities.

Effective communication from both government and non-governmental organizations is crucial. Clear information about available support and access procedures should be readily provided to affected households, with continuous monitoring of community needs to ensure targeted assistance. During disasters, two-way communication is vital—not only to share important information but also to gather feedback and understand the specific needs of the affected population. Timely and accurate information sharing plays a life-saving role, especially for households with vulnerable individuals. To enhance community engagement, integrating Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) is essential for collecting feedback and addressing concerns. This process ensures that beneficiaries' voices are heard, grievances are resolved, and future distribution programs are improved based on their input.



Regarding participation in community meetings, 89.6 per cent reported that both men and women equally attend, 1.1 per cent said only women participate, 1.8 per cent mentioned only men, 1.1 per cent said mostly men, and 6.5 per cent indicated that only women attend. When it comes to speaking during these meetings, 93.2 per cent stated that both men and women equally contribute, 0.3 per cent said only women speak, 0.8 per cent noted only men, and 5.7 per cent mentioned that only women speak.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

The overall objective of the IFRC-DREF Operation was to enable 28,694 people (5,430 families) affected by flooding to meet their immediate basic needs. Primarily through multipurpose cash assistance, this support allowed families to make autonomous decisions based on their specific needs, including in terms of food, livelihoods, household items, as well as other essential goods and services.

Additionally, the operation integrated cross-cutting elements like PGI and CEA to ensure equitable distribution and transparency, prioritizing vulnerable groups and ensuring the assistance was responsive to the needs of all affected communities across eight targeted provinces.

Operation strategy rationale

According to the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) of Lao PDR, the flooding affected 15 provinces, including Houaphanh, Xaignabouli, Luang Prabang, Bokeo, Phongsali, Louang-Namtha, Oudomxai, Savannakhet, Xiangkhoun, Khammuan, Sekong, Xaysomboun, Bolikhamxay, Vientiane, and Vientiane Capital. However, the LRC, guided by the NDMC and based on its operational capacity, provided humanitarian assistance to flood-affected individuals in eight targeted provinces: Houaphanh, Xaignabouli, Xiangkhoun, Bokeo, Phongsali, Louang-Namtha, Oudomxai, and Vientiane. Other affected provinces received assistance from the Lao government and various appointed organizations.

In line with the second IFRC-DREF allocation, LRC assisted 5,430 families impacted by floods in these eight targeted provinces. The main modality of delivery under this DREF Operation was the provision of multipurpose cash assistance (MPC) to address the immediate basic needs of flood-affected families. It was sufficient to cover the needs for food, livelihoods, household items, other essential goods, and services of a family for one month. Given that the average household size in Laos is approximately 5.3 people and recognizing that some extended families consist of up to 19 members, the cash distribution was tailored to ensure that larger households receive sufficient resources to meet their specific needs. Thus, the cash allocation value varied according to the family size.

The cash transfer values were calculated based on the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) recommended by the Lao Cash Working Group, led by the World Food Programme (WFP). The available MEB calculation was updated in the last quarter of 2022. The total MEB amount, excluding the monthly cost for WASH and health, is LAK 3,516,129 (estimated CHF133) per family. This figure includes a 26.10 per cent inflation rate reported by the Laos National Bank in July 2024. Based on such figure, the average monthly cost per person is LAK 663,421(estimated CHF25) per person per month. Additionally, taking into consideration the disaster was categorized as yellow level, the budget limitation and support from other actors, LRC decided to adjust the transfer value to cover 35 per cent of the expenditure for each level as follows:

- i)Families with 1 to 5 members received LAK 1,200,000 (estimated CHF 50) to 3,255 families).
- ii)Families with 6 to 10 members received LAK 2,000,000 (estimated CHF 82) to 2,045 families).
- iii)Families with 11 or more members will receive LAK 2,600,000 (estimated CHF 107) to130 families).

The DREF operation utilized the cash-in-envelope as the delivery mechanism. Like previous practices, LRC disaster management and finance teams prepared the cash and distributed it directly to the targeted recipients. The cash-in-envelope method was suitable for remote areas, where access to banking infrastructure and financial services is limited or unavailable. Currently, LRC continues to develop its framework agreement with a financial service provider (FSP).

Approximately 80 per cent of the total budget, equivalent to CHF 400,483 out of CHF 500,000, was allocated through Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) to support affected individuals in meeting their basic needs. This significant allocation underscores the priority given to flexible, direct financial support, aligning with the IFRC's target to deliver 50 per cent of assistance through CVA by 2025.

To address the concern around mental health and psychosocial well-being, psychological first aid (PFA) considerations were integrated into MPC interventions. As part of their responsibilities, trained staff and volunteers disseminated key messages on self-care and positive coping strategies to the affected communities during the cash distribution process. This approach aims to support the mental well-being of both staff and affected people, ensuring that essential information about emotional resilience and coping mechanisms is effectively communicated.



Cross-Cutting Areas:

The cash intervention also incorporated cross-cutting considerations such as PGI and CEA. Specific efforts prioritized vulnerable groups, including women-headed households, the elderly, and people with disabilities, in the distribution process. Community feedback mechanisms were designed to enhance transparency, and targeted communication strategies to keep communities informed about cash distribution criteria and processes, ensuring the inclusion of all affected groups.

Building on lessons learned from previous operations, LRC identified the importance of effective coordination and communication between headquarters (HQ) and branches. Past delays in communication led to inefficiencies, particularly in data collection and targeting processes. To address these challenges, LRC would implement more structured communication protocols and improve coordination mechanisms to ensure timely information flow between HQ and branches, enhancing operational efficiency during needs assessments and aid distribution.

Additionally, lessons learned from previous cash assistance operations highlighted the need for improved staff preparation and training. Ensuring staff have adequate experience in cash distribution and familiarity with data collection tools like Kobo was prioritized. LRC planned to conduct capacity-building sessions, including Kobo refresher training, to prepare staff effectively for the current operation. Incorporating these lessons aimed to facilitate smoother cash distribution execution and improved coordination throughout the operation

Targeting Strategy

Who was targeted by this operation?

With the IFRC-DREF allocation, LRC aimed to assist 5,430 families, totalling approximately 28,694 people, across the provinces of Houaphan, Xaignabouli, Xiangkhoun, Bokeo, Phongsali, Louang-Namtha, Oudomxai, and Vientiane. This target was based on the decision of the LRC DREF Committee, guided by NDMC, and the households identified in the needs assessment conducted by LRC. The primary target population included those severely affected by the floods, focusing on vulnerable groups including economically vulnerable households, households without support from other organizations, families with disabilities or serious illnesses, female-headed households, pregnant women, families with children under five years old, isolated individuals, and elderly persons aged 60 and above.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The selection criteria for the targeted population included households significantly affected by the floods as identified by the relevant authorities, focusing on vulnerable groups including economically vulnerable households, households without support from other organizations, families with disabilities or serious illnesses, female-headed households, pregnant women, families with children under five years old, isolated individuals, and elderly persons aged 60 and above.

Total Targeted Population

Women	12,601	Rural	67%
Girls (under 18)	2,224	Urban	33%
Men	12,066	People with disabilities (estimated)	1%
Boys (under 18)	1,803		
Total targeted population	28,694		

Risk and Security Considerations (including "management")

Does your National Society have anti-fraud and corruption policy?	No
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Does your National Society have prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse policy?	No
Does your National Society have child protection/child safeguarding policy?	No
Does your National Society have whistleblower protection policy?	No
Does your National Society have anti-sexual harassment policy?	No

Please analyse and indicate potential risks for this operation, its root causes and mitigation actions.

Risk	Mitigation action
Significant risk of unexploded ordnance (UXO) in some targeted provinces. Very High Risk: Xiengkhuang High Risk: Huaphan Moderate Risk: Xayabouly, Phongsaly, Udomxay, Vientiane Province Low to Moderate Risk: Luangnamtha Low Risk: Bokeo	LRC raised awareness among staff and volunteers including briefing about the risks of unexploded ordnance (UXO), identifying potential hazards, and following emergency procedures if UXO is encountered during field operations. Safety and security protocols were put in place, including the use of safe routes, marking hazardous areas, and avoiding "no-go" zones as identified by UXO experts. Furthermore, LRC coordinated with UXO clearance agencies to ensure high-risk areas are cleared before implementing DREF interventions.
While cash-in-envelope distribution is practical and preferred by the community, it presents higher institutional risks, as National Societies are responsible for managing all cash withdrawals and packaging.	LRC ensured the updating of SOPs that covers comprehensively all aspects of cash-in-envelope distribution, from fund withdrawals to post-distribution recapitulation. Emphasis should be placed on segregating duties, with different teams handling cash withdrawals, packaging, and distribution to reduce risks and enhance accountability.
Injuries or loss of life of LRC staff and volunteers due to road accidents during assessments and carry-on operation activities in remote areas and flood-prone areas.	LRC implemented several safety measures. First, a comprehensive safety briefing was conducted for all staff and volunteers before deployment, emphasizing road safety protocols, including defensive driving techniques, use of seat belts, and speed limits. LRC also ensured that only trained and licensed drivers operate vehicles during the operation, and vehicles used were inspected for roadworthiness before deployment. Furthermore, LRC prioritized travel during daylight hours to minimize risks associated with poor visibility and difficult road conditions. Emergency contact numbers and first aid kits were provided in every vehicle, and volunteers received basic first aid training to respond effectively in case of accidents. Coordination with local authorities and police was also established to ensure prompt assistance in the event of an emergency.
The flood situation could potentially worsen.	LRC applied flexible response mechanisms to scale up the relief operation if the situation worsened. LRC allocated a contingency budget within the IFRC-DREF operation plan to rapidly procure additional supplies and mobilize extra personnel or volunteers. Moreover, LRC coordinated with local and national authorities and other key stakeholders to ensure alignment and quick decision-making in case the flood situation escalates. Additionally, LRC ensured volunteers and staff received safety training and protective equipment to operate in challenging conditions.
Community tension or conflict may arise during cash distribution due to varying amounts allocated to families based on their size.	A pre-launch meeting for cash distribution was organized with district government officials, police, traders, and commercial agencies. This meeting covered the cash distribution process and selection criteria, ensuring that all stakeholders were informed

and involved as observers to prevent any security issues or conflicts among the affected population.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation:

Comprehensive measures were implemented to ensure the safety and security of all Red Cross Red Crescent personnel engaged in the operation. All Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers were strongly encouraged to complete the IFRC Stay Safe 2.0 e-learning courses, which provide essential safety and security training.

For those personnel under IFRC security management, including surge teams and deployed Participating National Societies, the IFRC country security plan was fully applied. This plan covers key protocols such as security regulations, medical emergency contingencies, relocation procedures, and critical incident management. Additionally, all field missions conducted by IFRC personnel adhered to the established IFRC travel approval processes and followed current health advisories and business continuity planning (BCP).

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

Yes

Implementation



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 403,465

Targeted Persons: 28,694

Assisted Persons: 28,694

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of families supported through multipurpose cash grants	5,430	5,430
# of refresher orientations conducted on cash distribution to LRC staff and volunteers	48	47
% of targeted families reached with PDM	20	18

Narrative description of achievements

LRC applied for an IFRC-DREF assessment allocation in late August 2024, and from the assessment results, LRC identified the unmet needs among affected individuals in the targeted areas. Subsequently, a second IFRC-DREF allocation was granted to LRC to address these needs. With the second IFRC-DREF allocation, based on its capacity and the guidance of NDMC, LRC decided to support 5,430 families, equivalent 28,694 individual impacted through multi-purpose cash assistance.

Given that LRC utilized the cash-in-envelope modality, it was essential to provide refresher training on cash distribution and KOBO data collection for staff and volunteers to ensure they were well-prepared for cash distribution. This training, conducted in early December 2024, focused on the selected cash distribution approach and methods, data collection by using KOBO, team composition, security and safety plans, and the integration of CEA and PGI. A total of 47 participants (17 female, 30 male) from both headquarters and branch levels attended this training. Following the training, LRC held a meeting with local authorities and relevant departments from the target provinces to ensure the smooth implementation of the cash distribution activities.

Between December 2024 and January 2025, LRC conducted one-off multipurpose cash distributions to 5,430 families through direct cash envelopes within the affected communities based on family size with the following allocations:

- Families with 1 to 5 members received LAK 1,200,000 (estimated 50CHF) to 3,255 families, total 10,725 people (Female: 5,577/Male:5,148).
- Families with 6 to 10 members received LAK 2,000,000 (estimated 82CHF) to 2,045 families, total 16,360 people (Female :8507/Male:7,853)
- Families with 11 or more members received LAK 2,600,000 (estimated 107CHF) to 130 families, total 1,609 people (Female:837/Male:772).



During the cash distribution, LRC also provided Psychological First Aid (PFA) to beneficiaries. However, due to limited human resources capable of leading PFA, LRC conducted an orientation for its staff and volunteers, integrating PFA into their responsibilities. Staff then disseminated key messages on self-care and positive coping strategies to the affected communities during the cash distribution process. This approach aimed to support the mental well-being of both staff and affected individuals, ensuring that essential information about emotional resilience and coping mechanisms was effectively communicated.

After completing the cash distribution, LRC conducted post-distribution monitoring (PDM) in the four provinces of Vientiane, Xaignabouli, Houaphan, and Xiangkhong to assess the progress and effectiveness of the assistance provided. The PDM covered approximately 18 per cent of the beneficiaries, equivalent to 990 families out of the 5,430 families receiving assistance. The results indicated that the majority of recipients used cash for essential needs: 49.7 per cent for nutrition and drinking water, 35 per cent for personal hygiene kits, and 29.5 per cent for other necessary household items. Overall, most respondents expressed satisfaction with the cash distribution process.

Lessons Learnt

- Several key areas were identified for improvement in this operation, including the need for more accurate and consistent data collection, better coordination and communication within teams and with beneficiaries, and improved scheduling to align with the availability of affected families.
- Delays in cash distribution, limited PGI integration, and inconsistent beneficiary management were noted as operational challenges. The importance of developing SOPs and training materials to ensure timely and coherent responses was emphasized, along with the need for LRC's formal inclusion in national and provincial disaster management committees.
- Administrative and logistical costs were often overlooked, prompting calls for dedicated budgets and cost-saving measures. Strong leadership and inter-branch support were recognized as strengths, while donor process delays highlighted the need for faster approvals and clearer communication.
- To address the challenges in cash distribution, the Lao Red Cross can consider partnering with a financial service provider to streamline payments, reduce duplication, and enhance accountability.

Challenges

- The cash distribution faced several challenges, including beneficiary duplication and instances where others came to receive cash on behalf of the beneficiaries. Additionally, affected families often did not come to register, provide information, or participate in interviews during the initial assessment.
- The reluctance of villages heads to cooperate and support the process, especially when they were not beneficiaries themselves, further complicated matters. During distribution, many beneficiaries were not available, exacerbating the situation.



Budget: CHF 2,556
Targeted Persons: 48
Assisted Persons: 67

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of LRC personnel trained on PGI	35	20
# of staff receive sensitization on PGI during cash refresher distribution training	48	47

Narrative description of achievements

In September 2024, LRC conducted a PGI sensitization session for staff in the target provinces. Total 47 participants (17 female, 30 male) attended this event. This initiative aimed to strengthen the capacity of field teams to mainstream PGI principles across all stages of the



emergency response. The training emphasized the importance of upholding the dignity, access, participation, and safety (DAPS) of all individuals, with particular attention to those most at risk, including women, children, older people, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities.

In an effort to operationalize PGI commitments, the Child Safeguarding Risk Analysis Tool was completed and applied. This tool enabled staff to systematically identify potential protection risks to children in emergency contexts and develop appropriate mitigation strategies. The proactive use of the tool contributed to reinforcing child safeguarding practices within the operation. 20 participants (9 women and 11 men) attended the PGI training and safeguarding sessions, including staff from provincial and district branches directly involved in the response.

In addition to the dedicated PGI training, LRC integrated PGI considerations into refresher training sessions on cash-based interventions and KOBO data collection. These sessions targeted both staff and volunteers and were designed to ensure that cash programming and data collection processes were inclusive, safe, and responsive to the diverse needs of affected communities. Key elements included recognizing and addressing barriers to access for marginalized groups, incorporating protection questions into data collection tools, and promoting adherence to the Minimum Standards for PGI in

Emergencies. Special emphasis was placed on identifying and prioritizing assistance for women-headed households, older persons, and individuals with disabilities, thereby contributing to a more equitable and accountable response.

Lessons Learnt

- PGI must be embedded from the outset of the operation—starting with planning and needs assessments and continuing through implementation and post-distribution monitoring. This ensures assistance is responsive to the differentiated needs, capacities, and risks experienced by diverse groups within affected communities.
- Staff and volunteers at national, branch, and community levels require dedicated and ongoing capacity building on PGI principles and their practical application. This includes understanding the Minimum Standards for PGI in Emergencies and being equipped to identify and respond to protection risks during crises.
- Adequate time, human resources, and budget allocations must be reserved for PGI-related activities. These include conducting disaggregated needs assessments, engaging with diverse groups, ensuring safe and dignified access to services, and integrating feedback mechanisms for marginalized individuals.
- PGI should not be treated as an add-on or standalone component but recognized as a foundational element of principled and effective humanitarian action. Prioritizing dignity, safety, access, and meaningful participation for all is essential to uphold the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's commitments to humanity, impartiality, and

Challenges

- The integration of PGI principles varied significantly across branches. While some teams demonstrated a solid understanding of PGI, others lacked the capacity or did not prioritize PGI considerations during key phases of the operation, such as needs assessments and distributions. This inconsistency hindered the delivery of equitable and inclusive assistance.
- The limited implementation timeframe and pressure to deliver assistance rapidly constrained field teams' ability to conduct thorough PGI risk assessments. This impacted the identification of specific protection needs and the application of appropriate mitigating measures, particularly for groups at heightened risk of exclusion or harm.
- Insufficient attention to the diversity of needs based on gender, age, disability, and other factors resulted in some vulnerable individuals being unintentionally excluded from assistance or facing barriers to access. This underscores gaps in applying the PGI Minimum Standards and inclusive targeting criteria.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 2,556

Targeted Persons: 48

Assisted Persons: 67



Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of LRC personnel trained on CEA	35	20
# of staff receive sensitization training on CEA during emergency	48	47

Narrative description of achievements

In September 2024, LRC conducted emergency training for staff in the target provinces, incorporating core CEA approaches alongside PGI sensitization. A key focus of the training was on effective and inclusive communication strategies during cash distribution, aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability, and trust between LRC and affected communities. Participants were trained to deliver key messages clearly using accessible and culturally appropriate methods, including verbal, visual, and printed formats.

The training also introduced the Child Safeguarding Risk Analysis Tool, which enabled participants to identify and mitigate potential risks to children during emergency response activities. This contributed to strengthening child protection capacities across the operation. A total of 20 staff (9 women and 11 men) participated in the sessions.

Building on this foundation, LRC integrated CEA principles into refresher trainings on cash distribution and Kobo-based data collection for both staff and volunteers. These sessions emphasized two-way communication, inclusive participation, and the importance of capturing community feedback and concerns. Participants learned how to engage with diverse groups—including those at risk of exclusion—and how to adapt service delivery to ensure accessibility and dignity for all.

To support information dissemination, CEA key messages were developed and printed to inform community members about available assistance and services provided by LRC. These materials were displayed in public spaces at cash distribution sites to ensure broad visibility and accessibility.

Aligned with IFRC's commitments to accountability, plans were made to establish community feedback mechanisms, including comment boxes and a hotline service. These channels enable affected individuals to ask questions, raise concerns, and provide input in a safe and confidential manner. Such feedback mechanisms are critical for identifying protection issues, informing programmatic adjustments, and promoting meaningful community participation in the response.

Lessons Learnt

- Establishing direct communication between LRC response teams and community members is crucial for building trust, clarifying expectations, and ensuring that people have access to timely and accurate information about the assistance they are entitled to.
- All staff and volunteers involved in community-facing activities should be trained on key messages and communication protocols to ensure consistency. They must also be equipped to actively listen, respond empathetically, and effectively address community concerns.
- Accessible and inclusive feedback channels—such as comment boxes, community help desks, and hotline numbers—should be systematically established and promoted to enable community members to express concerns, seek clarification, and influence decision-making throughout the response.
- Providing clear, honest, and culturally appropriate information at all stages of the DREF operation enhances community confidence in LRC, improves the relevance of the response, and contributes to more equitable and effective outcomes.

Challenges

- Information sharing with affected communities was often conducted through intermediaries, such as village heads, rather than through direct engagement. This indirect approach led to confusion, misunderstandings, and perceptions of reduced transparency in the delivery of assistance.
- Inconsistent messaging by different LRC team members caused confusion among community members. Without a unified communication strategy, some beneficiaries received contradictory or incomplete information regarding assistance, eligibility, or distribution processes.



- Mechanisms for community members to ask questions, share concerns, or provide feedback were underdeveloped. This limited two-way communication, undermined accountability, and hindered the ability to adapt the response based on community input.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 51,127

Targeted Persons: 0

Assisted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of monitoring visits conducted	5	3
# of IFRC surge personnel deployed	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

Following the approval of the IFRC-DREF allocation, the IFRC Programme Officer in Laos joined the LRC assessment team in the affected areas, providing technical support for Kobo training and monitoring the assessment process. He played a key role in supporting LRC throughout the operation, including participation in cash distribution activities to monitor implementation and provide feedback to the Operations Manager. Additional critical support was provided by the Disaster Preparedness and Response Senior Officer, with oversight from the Programme Coordinator and assistance from other CCD staff as needed.

A surge Operations Manager (a volunteer from the Cambodian Red Cross) was deployed for a two-month period, from November 2024 to January 2025, to support LRC in managing key relief and early recovery activities. During this time, the Operations Manager worked closely with the LRC team, providing hands-on support on a daily basis and contributing significantly to the development of the implementation plan.

In February 2025, IFRC also supported a communications field visit to enhance visibility of the operation. Several stories and updates were produced and shared across IFRC's social media platforms and website:

- <https://x.com/IFRCAsiaPacific/status/1775425463055527988>
- <https://x.com/IFRCAsiaPacific/status/1828304841430704434>
- <https://x.com/IFRCAsiaPacific/status/1843132524886974972>
- <https://x.com/IFRCAsiaPacific/status/1824286573598478615>
- <https://www.ifrc.org/article/after-storms-and-floods-lao-red-cross-and-ifrc-help-people-reclaim-their-dreams>
- <https://x.com/KClarksonIFRC/status/1897123838493909054>

IFRC PGI staff from the CCD in Bangkok also worked closely with the LRC team to review PGI materials and messaging related to cash distribution and other operational activities. This collaboration aimed to ensure that all aspects of the operation adhered to established standards and best practices.

During the Lessons Learned Workshop, two staff members from IFRC CCD Bangkok—the Communications & Reporting Officer and the Disaster Preparedness and Response Senior Officer—co-facilitated the workshop alongside LRC counterparts and the surge Operations Manager.

Lessons Learnt

- It is essential to provide comprehensive training on DREF operation to LRC at branch level to enhance their understanding and improve the overall effectiveness of future operations

Challenges

- The surge Operations Manager faced difficulties in directly communicating with LRC staff and volunteers due to language barriers. An interpreter was required to facilitate communication, which posed a limitation for the LRC.





Budget: CHF 40,296

Targeted Persons: 0

Assisted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of damage and needs assessment report developed	2	2
# of workshops conducted to consolidate and finalize assessment data	8	8
# of lessons learned/reflection workshop conducted for the assessment	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

Due to insufficient information on humanitarian needs in the affected provinces, LRC initially submitted a DREF request for assessment in late August 2024. Based on the findings from the field assessment, LRC developed an assessment report and issued Operations Update No. 1. Using the collected data, LRC subsequently applied for a second DREF allocation to provide immediate multipurpose cash assistance to 5,430 households (28,694 people, including 14,825 women).

By December 2024, provincial and branch operational teams received refresher training on cash distribution and Kobo-based data collection. This was followed by a consolidation workshop to finalize assessment data across the eight targeted provinces.

In January 2025, a Lessons Learned Workshop (LLW) was organized with participation from LRC leadership, representatives from headquarters and the eight affected provinces, the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation in Bangkok, the surge operations manager, and representatives from the Swiss Red Cross (SRC). A total of 44 participants (18 women and 26 men) attended the LLW, which reviewed key activities across the annual operational timeline, including:

- Pre-season preparedness;
- Early action and pre-disaster readiness, including the Go/No-Go decision, DREF planning, and funding;
- Assessment and beneficiary selection;
- Cash distribution and delivery modalities.

Through this reflective process, LRC identified strengths, areas for improvement, and key lessons learned from the operation. Participants actively engaged in practical exercises to develop a roadmap for process improvement, determine required resources, and assign accountability for follow-up actions. Discussions also focused on identifying operational constraints and structural challenges to be addressed in future responses.

Lessons Learnt

- LRC has consistently implemented IFRC-DREF operations over the years. However, there is currently no dedicated staff member responsible for managing these operations or for developing IFRC-DREF applications. This gap requires urgent attention and resolution.
- LRC has enhanced its needs assessment processes by increasingly utilizing Kobo Toolbox for IFRC-DREF operations and other projects.

It is recommended that LRC designate two to three dedicated staff members to receive in-depth, on-the-job training on DREF operations, facilitated by IFRC. This will help strengthen institutional knowledge and operational capacity for future emergency responses.

Challenges

- The absence of a dedicated PMER function within LRC has resulted in limited documentation of lessons learned from previous operations and challenges in following up on the established road map.
- LRC staff have limited knowledge of IFRC-DREF development. Although some refresher information on the general IFRC-DREF process



was provided during pre-distribution training sessions, additional training is recommended to enhance staff proficiency in this area.

- LRC faced challenges due to complex and lengthy payment and procurement processes, which were characterized by centralized and bureaucratic approval protocols.



Financial Report

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

MDRLA010 - Lao PDR - Flood

Operating Timeframe: 25 Aug 2024 to 28 Feb 2025

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2024/8-2025/4	Operation	MDRLA010
Budget Timeframe	2024/8-2025/2	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 26/May/2025

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	500,000
DREF Response Pillar	500,000
Expenditure	-499,500
Closing Balance	500

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			0
PO02 - Livelihoods			0
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	400,440	426,469	-26,029
PO04 - Health			0
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			0
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			0
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration			0
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	30,516	1,367	29,150
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability			0
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
Planned Operations Total	430,956	427,835	3,121
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	48,007	50,637	-2,630
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	21,037	21,028	9
Enabling Approaches Total	69,044	71,665	-2,621
Grand Total	500,000	499,500	500

[Click here for the complete financial report](#)

Please explain variances (if any)

Budget Variance Explanation:

A total of CHF 500,000 was allocated from the IFRC-DREF to support LRC in responding to the needs of approximately 28,694 people. By the end of the operation, the total expenditure recorded was CHF 499,500, representing 99.97% of the allocated budget. A balance of CHF 500 will be returned to the DREF pot.

Due to the limited experience of the staff involved in developing the budget in the ERP system, several budget lines were incorrectly



grouped under a single category.

Key Variances Include:

- Multi-purpose Cash Assistance: Overspending occurred due to an increase in the number of large households. The number of households with 6 to 10 members rose from 1,850 to 2,045, while those with 11 or more members increased from 105 to 130. This led to higher-than-anticipated cash distribution costs.
- Operational Costs: There was a notable increase in operational expenses, primarily due to revised cost norms for per diem and accommodation rates introduced by LRC in January 2025.
- Risk Reduction (P009): This budget line was not originally included in the IFRC-DREF operation budget. However, the final financial report showed an expenditure of CHF 30,516. The actual underspent amount under this line is CHF 29,150. After verification with the finance team, it was confirmed that this amount was incorrectly charged due to a system error in the ERP, which mistakenly allocated the cost to the IFRC-DREF operation.
- Land, Vehicles, and Equipment: No budget was allocated under this category. However, the budget for Computers and Telecom was included under “Unvouched for National Society” (working advance) in the ERP system. When the finance team booked an expenditure for a computer spare part, it was recorded under this category, causing a budget mismatch.
- Personnel: The budget for international staff was initially allocated under Budget Group 700, but the actual expenditure was booked under Budget Group 600.
- Workshops and Training: During budget development, workshop costs were included under the National Society working advance, rather than being itemized under the appropriate budget category.

Contact Information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[Click here for reference](#)

