

“Will I be able to continue my studies?” worries 10-year-old Nampeung

by Somluck Khamseen, Communications specialist, World Vision Foundation of Thailand

Mueng district, Uthai Thani province is one of the areas affected by the worst flooding in 50 years of Thailand due to the overflowing of Chao Phraya River and Sakae Krang River since September. The floods have wreaked havoc in the business district, houses in five sub-districts of Mueng district and 40,000 rai of agricultural land. The water level was two-three meters deep.

Nampeung (10), flood-affected child in Ta Lak Wai village, Koh Tae Po sub-district was worried that she might not be able to go back to school again because her grandmother lost everything and the crops were all damaged in the floods. After the waters receded, the grandmother might incur more debts to repair her home.

“I could not stop crying. Our banana orchard was totally inundated. We have nothing left anymore. I cried with great sympathy for my grandmother as she did not know what to do,” the child spoke with shaky voice. She continued, “All the household items are damaged.

The floodwaters inundated my grandmother’s two-story house.

We have nowhere to go and we sleep on the dam ridge.

No one came to help, only WVFT,” Nampeung recalled the hardships two months ago.

Tasane (52), Nampeung Sukpiem’s grandmother earned a meager income from her one rai of banana and papaya orchard.

The girl’s parents separated and went to live in other province.

She grew up under her grandmother’s sole care.

The water level rose up to the second floor of the house so that Nampeung and her grandmother had to flee and sleep on the dam ridge.

They could not bring anything with them except the dress that they had on.

The survival kit from WVFT was like a valuable gift that has greatly helped to wipe away the girl's and grandmother's tears during their difficult days. Nampeung's strength of heart was considerably restored. The activities that WVFT staff set up at Child Friendly Space (CFS) helped to reduce flood stress.

Nampeung joined in the activities every day for the last eight days.

She has made new friends, eaten food and snacks, received books and stationery as gifts that she brought back with her every time.

“I'm happy and my grandmother is also happy that I join in the activities here. I want to thank WVFT for coming in to help us.

I have fun and I get to laugh as I play games.

I have snacks to eat here.

If it is possible, I want the waters to recede quickly because I want to go back to school.”

Nampeung is studying in grade 4 at Wat Ampawan School.

She likes to study.

Besides lacking school materials, what she is most worried about is that her grandmother has no money and she will not be able to continue her education.

Nampeung told me that she wished to ask for blessings from heaven, “May the floods not submerge my home, the banana orchard be restored to my grandmother and my parents come back to live with me.”

WVFT has responded to the immediate relief needs of people living in the sub-districts of Koh Tae Po, Had Ta Nong and Ta Soong. WVFT staff, volunteers and local agencies partnering with WVFT pooled in their strength to distribute 2,150 sets of survival kits and bottled water, 6,056 boxes of food.

We also set up mobile Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) in three locations to help restore the emotional well-being of children, families and the flood-affected.

WVFT and donors sincerely hope that this aid has helped to wipe away the tears of children,

families and the flood-affected and to rise up with renewed strength and move on with their lives.

In the next phase, WVFT plans to help rehabilitate the living conditions of the flood-affected, their education, livelihood, health care for a period of 90 days.

Captions (photos on ftp)

1. 7762, 7763. Nampeung Sukpiem shows off the card that she has made to thank WVFT staff for coming in and helping her.

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