



©Josh Estey/CARE

# Cambodia



Reproduced with permission of Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd  
©2009 Lonely Planet Publications www.lonelyplanet.com

## Country snapshot

<b>Population:</b>	14 million
<b>Achieved Independence:</b>	1953
<b>Life expectancy at birth:</b>	58 years
<b>Adult literacy rate:</b>	73.6%
<b>Access to improved water source:</b>	41%
<b>Under five mortality rate:</b>	143 per 1000 births
<b>Maternal mortality rate:</b>	590 per 100,000 live births
<b>HIV prevalence:</b>	1.6%

Source: UN Human Development Report 2007/2008

**Program overview** CARE worked in Cambodia between 1973 and 1975, distributing food, providing medical assistance and improving education. From 1975 onwards CARE worked to support the millions of Cambodian refugees who fled the Khmer Rouge and were living in camps along the Thai-Cambodian border. In 1990, CARE returned to Cambodia, working with the United Nations to help 370,000 Cambodian refugees return to their homes. Over the years, CARE has shifted its focus in Cambodia from short term, but vital relief operations, to long-term development projects.

### Disaster management

CARE is working with communities to prepare for and reduce the effects of drought, focusing on agricultural land and water management, soil conservation, and different ways to farm and earn income. CARE is also working to reduce families' vulnerability to disasters by building the skills of people and organisations.

### De-mining and development

One in 278 Cambodians is a mine survivor and more than five million mines still cause death and injury. CARE, in collaboration with local partners, is clearing mines and unexploded ordnance so that poor communities are able to use land safely and effectively. CARE is also raising awareness of land rights and land registration procedures so that rural farmers have legal ownership of their land.

### Food and livelihood security

Cambodia is one of the poorest and least-developed countries in the Mekong Region. CARE's activities aim to increase people's access to better livelihood opportunities, establish savings and credit groups in villages and, through support and training, improve rural people's farming techniques and financial skills.

*continued on back*



©Laura McKay/CARE



©Josh Estey/CARE



©Josh Estey/CARE

## Education

Most indigenous people do not speak Cambodia's national language of Khmer, the language of instruction in government schools. Consequently, the rates of enrolment for indigenous children's, as well as retention and literacy are among the lowest in the country. CARE has established community-run schools, where students learn in both their own language and Khmer.

CARE is also providing scholarships that directly target disadvantaged girls and are teaching literacy and life skills to marginalised adolescents, including sex workers and youth from ethnic minorities.

## Health

Cambodia experiences high rates of maternal, infant and child mortality with a continued prevalence of malaria, tuberculosis and HIV. CARE encourages communities to adopt safe reproductive health and family planning practices, particularly targeting young people through adolescent-friendly services.

CARE is also making spirulina algae available to vulnerable groups to improve their health while researching the effects of solar disinfected drinking water, with the aim of using the findings to ensure safe water during emergencies.

## HIV prevention and care

Despite successes in reducing HIV prevalence, Cambodia maintains the highest percentage of adults infected with HIV in Southeast Asia. CARE is supporting HIV positive children in homes that provide treatment, training and shelter, while helping them reintegrate back into their communities. Additionally, CARE provides children affected by HIV with vocational training, medical care, counselling, and legal support. CARE is also working to strengthen government systems. In another project, CARE is working to develop a HIV prevention program with 1000 sex workers in border towns.

## Avian influenza (AI)

CARE approaches AI as a critical public health issue and a crisis that could push millions of people into extreme poverty. In Cambodia, CARE is working with communities across the Mekong Region to reduce their vulnerability to the AI epidemic by increasing awareness and ensuring that people understand the basic precautions that can prevent AI outbreaks.

## Human rights

CARE works to promote human rights in Cambodia. One project is helping survivors of rape and other acts of gender based violence access legal and protection services through a 24-hour crisis centre. CARE is providing young men with training that aims to prevent incidents of gender based violence and promote sexual responsibility. CARE is also training police in gender issues.

## Major donors

Asia Development Bank (ADB), The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Brook Family Foundation, CARE Friends Okayama, Centre for Disease Control (CDC), Conservation International, CUSA Private Donor John Peterson, CUSA-Private Donor Yim Family, Elton John Foundation, European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), European Union (EU), Global Fund, Ireland-Department of Foreign Affairs, Levis Strauss Foundation, Mike Matsushita Fund, McKnight Foundation, Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), Patsy Collins Trust Fund Initiative, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), USAID, US Embassy, West Region Pool, and various private and corporate donors.

## CARE International members supporting current programs

CARE Australia, CARE Canada, CARE USA, CARE USA's Asia Regional Management Unit (ARMU).

Last updated April 2009

## Contact information

Sharon Wilkinson, Country Director  
Email: [care.cam@care-cambodia.org](mailto:care.cam@care-cambodia.org)  
Tel: + (855) 23 215 267

## CARE Australia

Email: [info@careaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@careaustralia.org.au)  
Tel: + (61) 2 6279 0200  
[www.careaustralia.org.au](http://www.careaustralia.org.au)



Defending dignity.  
Fighting poverty.