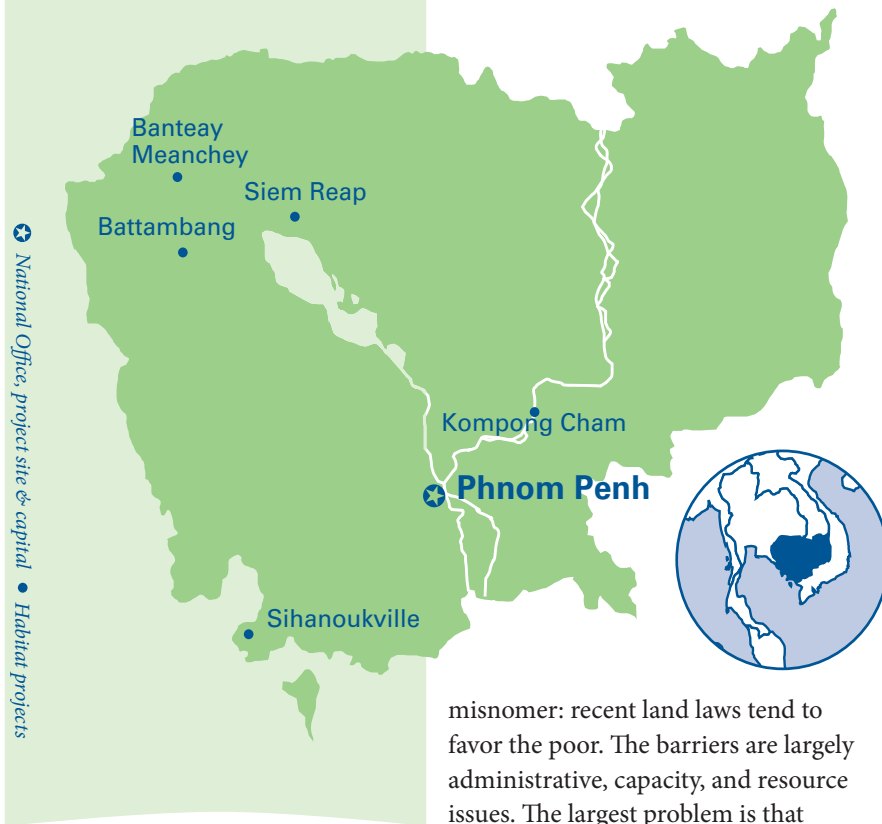


Habitat for Humanity in

# CAMBODIA



**T**HE KINGDOM of Cambodia, located in the heart of Southeast Asia, is an ancient land with a young population. The median age of its people is 21 years. Regardless of their age, Cambodians are often poor.

According to the 2006 Human Development Report published by the United Nations, about 34 percent of Cambodia's population lives on less than US\$1 a day in 2004.

After the fall of the communist Khmer Rouge regime in 1979, there was an influx of migrants from the rural areas to the capital Phnom Penh. About 250,000 people, or 20 percent of the city's population, live in squatter settlements, slums and other poor urban communities. They lack secure tenure or basic services as they settle in every conceivable empty space, from courtyards and rooftops, to the sides of railway tracks, river banks and swamps.

The oft-claimed "uncertain legal status" of settlements is actually a

misnomer: recent land laws tend to favor the poor. The barriers are largely administrative, capacity, and resource issues. The largest problem is that powerful private and local interests routinely circumvent or flaunt the law and evict families from choice sites, often using violence meted out by local thugs.

Habitat for Humanity International registered a branch office in January 2004. Habitat's program aims to reduce poverty by empowering

*Home partners repay mortgage loans pro-rated to their incomes, enabling even very poor families to benefit.*

communities to improve their access to affordable basic services and better living conditions.

The initial project was to assist poor families around the capital with micro-loans to provide a way to escape from the "jaws" of proliferating loan sharks and allow them to save for shelter improvements.

By 2011, Habitat aims to have

assisted more than 6,000 families in six provinces with a range of shelter solutions. The provinces are: Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap, Battambang, Kampong Cham, Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville. In addition, there are plans to engage a wider range of partners, volunteer groups, donors, sponsors, churches, non-government organizations, local authorities and government officials.

Habitat is closely involved in a major government initiative to improve land rights for squatter families through a World Bank-supported project in Battambang, Cambodia's second city.

Habitat is also developing new partnerships with local authorities, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, corporate donors and sponsors, churches and volunteers.

A Habitat house is usually 31.5 sq. m. in size. The walls are made from fired brick with a reinforced concrete post. The layout comprises a living room, bedroom, and kitchen with a toilet.

Habitat home partners repay mortgage loans pro-rated to their in-

## Habitat FACTS

Houses built to date  
**387**

Cost of one house\*  
**US\$3,000**

*\* International sponsorship cost*

Families served\*\*  
**133**

*\*\*New houses, rehabilitations, repairs, technical, finance and other services in the financial year to June 30, 2009*

— As of December 2008 —

# COUNTRY FACTS

**Population:** 14.2 million (est. July 2008)

**Capital:** Phnom Penh

**Land Area:** 181,035 sq. km.

**Ethnic groups:** Khmer 90%,  
Vietnamese 5%, Chinese 1%, others 4%

**Languages:** Khmer (official) 95%,  
French, English

**Religions:** Theravada Buddhist  
95%, others 5%



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comes, enabling even very poor families to benefit. The average repayment is approximately US\$22 per month over a period of about five years.

HFH Cambodia welcomed its first Global Village volunteer team from Australia in July 2006. Since then, it has also hosted volunteers from the USA, Australia and elsewhere.

HFH Cambodia is expected to host part of the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project in November 2009. The build will involve 350 local and international volunteers building alongside 21 families who will be moved from a dumpsite about 40 km., west of Phnom Penh. 🏠



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## HFH Cambodia Highlights

- ▶ HFH Cambodia coordinated its first MoneyGram-supported project in July 2008. The project involved repairing four houses in Phnom Penh, and one house repair and one new build in Siem Reap province.
- ▶ Habitat for Humanity International's chief executive Jonathan Reckford witnessed the dedication of the 339th Habitat house, built in Trapeang Anchanh community, Phnom Penh, during a visit in mid-June 2008.
- ▶ HFH Cambodia hosted its first Global Village team from Singapore in May 2008. The team built houses and community water systems in Habitat's first rural project in the district of Angkor Chum, 60 km from Siem Reap town.
- ▶ In June 2008, Habitat signed an agreement with World Bank and local officials that enables hundreds of squatter families living in a public park in Battambang to gain land rights. The US\$436,000 project also involves training, and microfinance schemes to build core homes and upgrade services.
- ▶ In 2007, HFH Cambodia began a home-improvement scheme based on building core houses and upgrades for 150 families in Siem Reap, known as an historic tourist destination because of Angkor Wat and other temple complexes, but also the second poorest province in the country. Partners include Credit MFI, a locally registered micro-finance organization affiliated with World Relief.
- ▶ The Phnom Penh Urban Housing Development Initiative started in partnership with Khmer Kampuchea Krom Community, and funded by The Charitable Foundation Australia and Habitat for Humanity International has built about 350 homes in four areas, directly benefiting 1,870 people since 2004.



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