

CAMBODIA

In Cambodia, over a quarter of its 15 million people live below the poverty line. Habitat for Humanity seeks to break the cycle of poverty through affordable housing solutions. Habitat also works with partners to help families gain access to livelihood opportunities, clean water and sanitation, housing finance services, and secure land tenure. Since 2003, Habitat Cambodia has served more than 10,000 families.

Habitat for Humanity Cambodia

Habitat for Humanity Cambodia takes a holistic approach to housing that includes securing land tenure and developing thriving communities with access to clean and affordable water and electricity. Working in six major provinces, Habitat and its partners train families in financial literacy, livelihood development, and training enabling informal settlers to have secure land tenure. Habitat Cambodia also provides microloans and construction technical assistance to enable families to build wells and latrines. Habitat programs feature the use of environmentally-friendly soil blocks, solar powered lights, and rainwater catchment systems.

Project Context

Cambodia is endowed with abundant natural resources. Arable land per capita is among the highest in Asia. Yet the distribution of these resources has become increasingly unequal in recent years. Economic and Social Land Concessions (ELCs and SLCs) make it possible for individuals, groups and corporations to apply for occupation and use of state land. However, since no systematic land registration has been carried out to date in several regions, many settlers do not have any formal land certificates. While the process of granting large quantities of land in a single ELC deal are processed within a matter of months, the process of granting relatively small pieces of land through SLCs to those who have little or no access has been very slow. Habitat Cambodia is working to remove the barriers to these SLCs for families in the northwestern province of Battambang.



Country Facts

Capital	Phnom Penh
Population	15.7 million (July 2015 est.)
Urbanization	20.7% live in cities (2015)
Life expectancy	64.5 years (2016)
Unemployment rate	0.3% (2013)
Population living below the poverty line	17.7% (2012)
Access to improved water sources	75.5% (2015)
Access to improved sanitation facilities	42.4% (2015)

Source: World Factbook



Country Map



SAFE AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES IN CAMBODIA

The Habitat Cambodia SECURE (Safe and Empowered Communities for Urban Reintegration) Project is unique in making centrally located, urban land available for housing the poor. Through this project, Habitat Cambodia supports families and local authorities in applying for the government's Social Land Concession scheme. The work involves converting state-owned land in urban areas of Battambang into privately owned plots with secure tenure granted to families who are informal settlers. In addition, Habitat Cambodia is working with local partners to provide 40 new, adequate, and safe homes for low income families in Battambang.

Habitat Cambodia aims to provide adequate housing for over 90,000 low-income families by 2018 and to inspire the involvement of individuals, officials, groups, organizations and government agencies to champion innovative housing solutions for families who do not have decent shelter. This goal will be achieved by creating shelter, inspiration, capital and capacity.



Building Awareness and Promoting Land Rights

The SECURE project empowers informal settlement families by partnering with other community organizations and government agencies to improve local knowledge on Social Land Concessions (SLCs) through workshops and training sessions in order to improve access to secure land tenure. Participants also receive best practice brochures, watch videos that demonstrate the steps of acquiring land through the Social Land Concession scheme, and build their capacity on land rights and housing.

Providing Housing Solutions and Support Services

Through the SECURE project, Habitat Cambodia is providing 40 new homes with water and sanitation support. This will provide families in Battambang with improved living and health conditions and 120 children better conditions for living and studying. Providing technical housing support services to 300 informal settlement families, sharing basic construction techniques, providing advice on quality construction materials, and home maintenance. These training sessions empower participants to maintain their home and check the quality of construction materials to build their own affordable house.

Meet Pho

In 1992, Pho (pictured right) and his family purchased a piece of land in the city of Battambang and prepared to build a simple house. He was dumbfounded when the local authorities told him that the land was actually state-owned and he could not build there.

"I was not ready to give up on hope," says Pho. He rallied together local organizations to address land rights issues in his community and inspired others to participate. Pho's fight took 21 years before he received an official certificate for his land. Habitat Cambodia is working to ensure that access to land is a reality for other families in the city of Battambang.

