



Cambodia



The Kingdom of Cambodia is located on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia. In area, it is about one and a half times the size of the state of Pennsylvania; the country's population is about one third larger than the state's. The majority of all Cambodians belong to the Khmer ethnic group and speak the Khmer language. The capital city of Cambodia is Phnom Penh. Most Cambodians are Buddhists; slightly more than 1% are Muslim, and another 0.5% of all Cambodians are Christian. Very few Cambodians identify themselves as having no religion at all.

Cambodia was first inhabited about 2,000 BC and has a long, rich history. During the 12th century, the country dominated the area both politically and in trade. As its power began to decline over the next few centuries, the country's territory was fought over by its neighbors; many Cambodians were forced into slavery in Thailand and Vietnam. Cambodia was placed under French rule and became part of French Indochina. Japan invaded and occupied the territory in World War II.

Cambodia won its independence in 1953 and tried to establish itself as a neutral country. This did not last, as combatants of what we know as the Vietnam War pushed over into the country's borders. In 1975, the Communist Khmer Rouge captured the capital city of Phnom Penh and forced people who lived in cities and towns to move into the rural farm land. Many people died during the evacuation from starvation, execution, and forced hardships under the dictator Pol Pot. At least 1.5 million Cambodians perished. The Vietnamese Army invaded and pushed the Khmer Rouge into the countryside, touching off twenty years of civil war.

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The heartland of Cambodia is devoted to wet rice farming. During the rainy season, the wetlands grow from 1,000 sq. miles to 9,500 sq. miles!

MCA in Cambodia

Cambodians would not know peace until the remains of the Khmer Rouge surrendered in 1999. Political life has remained shaky as the country attempts to regain its footing in the world. The country's economy continues to grow but most of the people who benefit live in the cities, not in the rural farmlands. This means that 25% of the population still has no access to clean drinking water and almost 58% of all people do not have sanitary facilities—like bathrooms—available to them. These conditions put many, especially the children at risk for waterborne diseases like hepatitis A and typhoid fever as well as diseases carried by insects such as dengue fever and malaria.

Many children who live in the rural, poor areas of the country have little access to education. Recently, through our Mission Family in Ireland, we heard of one missionary Sister who is making a difference with help from The Missionary Childhood Association and she is using a taxi to do it!



Sister Eulie is from the Philippines and is living on mission in Cambodia. When she first arrived, she saw that many families could not afford to send their children to school. These little ones would be left to wander the streets or be locked away in

their homes while their parents worked. From this need came the Lindalva Center which gives children, a safe place to eat, learn, and pray every day.

The center has already changed the lives of hundreds of Cambodian children but Sister Eulie realized that there were many other children who could not get to the center, Sister decided she needed to take her educational system to them.

Sister went mobile! This three wheeled vehicle is called a Tuk-tuk. In cities, it is used as a taxi and it is a very common means of transportation. Sister had an idea to use one as a school on wheels!



Sister Eulie's mobile Tuk-tuk Education Center carries all the supplies it needs—books, papers, pencils, and other materials to teach the children their language and math skills. The children are also taught how to stay safe and clean. Little ones who are too young for formal education are so happy to find that Sister's Tuk-tuk School also carries educational toys. A nutritional meal is also part of the weekly visit from the Tuk-tuk Education Center as is learning how much God loves everyone.



Sister's Mobile Tuk-tuk Education Center visits a village

By partnering with local people trained to help teach, Sister is hoping to reach more villages, but she needs more Tuk-tuks! This month, can you pray for the children of Cambodia and sacrifice so that education can reach them all?



The children of Cambodia say Thank You!

Missionary Childhood Association

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