

# **USAID in Cambodia**

## **Briefing Paper**

**January 1997**

## **Background**

USAID's current program in Cambodia traces its roots to humanitarian assistance activities in support of non-communist resistance groups in the 1980s. Known as the Cross-Border Program, the activity was administered from an Office of Khmer Affairs in Bangkok as bilateral relations with the Vietnamese-dominated government in Phnom Penh were not then yet extant. The program provided medical equipment and supplies, transportation, food, and training to support community development and health care in refugee camps along Cambodia's northwestern border with Thailand.

U.S. assistance accelerated sharply following the signing in October 1991 of the Paris Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict by the four principal Cambodian antagonists and 18 other nations, including the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. The organizational embodiment of this agreement was UNTAC--the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia--which took over essential administration and security functions in the country long enough to conduct national elections. UNTAC was the most complex--and at \$1.9 billion over two years the most expensive--peacekeeping operation in the UN's history, involving 22,000 civilian and military peacekeepers from 46 countries. Its prime mission was to create conditions for "free, fair, and open" national elections to choose a new government, and this mission was substantially fulfilled. However, national reconciliation was incomplete, and the phased cantonment, disarming, and demobilization of the parties' military forces did not take place. Nonetheless, elections were held successfully in May 1993 with wide participation by the Cambodian population, followed by a new constitution, the seating of a National Assembly, and the coronation of King Sihanouk in September 1993.

While a semblance of peace and democracy has been established,<sup>1</sup> it is difficult to underestimate the damage done to Cambodian society over the past 20 years beginning with the murderous and fanatical regime of Pol Pot from 1975-79:

After wrenching power from the U.S.-backed Lon Nol government in 1975, the Khmer Rouge surpassed the visions of the bloodiest of Maoist revolutionaries. Their rule lasted forty-two months and caused the deaths of one-fifth of Cambodia's seven million population. In order to construct a "pure" Cambodian communism, the Khmer Rouge exhibited a virulent anti-intellectual, anti-urban bias, executing or

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<sup>1</sup> Although FUNCINPEC won the election, the CPP had a powerful military, disciplined party cadres, and a residual country-wide administrative structure still in place. The CPP has been able to use these advantages to dominate the current CPP-FUNCINPEC coalition government, resulting in an uneasy and often tense partnership.

working to death civilians who were doctors, lawyers, merchants, or even who wore glasses indicating higher education.<sup>1</sup>

Cambodia's current development indicators dramatize the extent of the impact. Per capita income is still only \$280 a year. About 115 out of a thousand Cambodians born die from preventable diseases before the age of one, and 181 die before the age of five. Maternal mortality rates, at almost 500 per 100,000 live births (one out of every 42 women who reach the age of 15 and marry die of pregnancy-related causes) are among the highest in the world, and overall life expectancy is still less than 50. Only about 67 percent of the population is literate and nearly half of the population is under 15 years, creating an unsustainably high dependency ratio. This is compounded by the fact that between one fourth and a third of rural households in Cambodia are headed by women, a great many of whom are widows. On top of these problems, HIV/AIDS is spreading rapidly. At present about 100,000 Cambodians are HIV positive, and current estimates are that there will be 12,000 new AIDS cases annually by the year 2000. In many high risk areas over 50 percent of commercial sex workers are infected.

Having financed the lion's share of the UNTAC operation, the U.S. has a significant stake in preserving the fragile peace and democracy that has prevailed since 1993. Currently the U.S. has the second largest bilateral aid program after Japan. Other donors include Australia, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the World Bank.

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The present juncture is particularly delicate as preparations are made for local and national elections in 1997 and 1998, respectively. These preparations are taking place against a backdrop of large and continuing defections from the Khmer Rouge (KR)<sup>2</sup> and ongoing tension between the two parties making up the current coalition government, the royalist-leaning United Front for an Independent, Neutral, and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC) and the formerly communist Cambodia People's Party (CPP). Election planning has been delayed as the two jockey for allegiance of former KR soldiers and control of the populations in areas they once held. These areas happen to include large tracts of land in the country's three most fertile (and heavily mined) provinces, Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, and Siem Reap, historically Cambodia's "rice bowl" This time, however,

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Z. Brown, *USAID Assistance for Elections in Post-Conflict Societies: Cambodia* (Study commissioned by USAID/PPC/CDIE, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> An estimated 10,000 KR soldiers have defected to date and are presently being reintegrated into Cambodian society. About 3,000 more KR soldiers remain loyal to Pol Pot in the mountainous region surrounding the northern town of Anlong Veng.

Cambodia must keep and the peace and conduct elections without the benefit of a major UN presence.

***Program Overview***

The program initiated by USAID prior to and immediately following the 1993 elections was intended to shore up the nascent coalition government and ensure the provision of essential services nationwide. The most logical conduits for this assistance were Cambodian NGOs, many of whom had already worked with USAID. The assistance provided by USAID and other donors during this critically important transition period is widely credited as having cemented the fragile peace and sense of social stability that was established under UNTAC.

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USAID/Cambodia is now transitioning into a program focused more on sustainable growth and development for the long term.

This shift will build upon previous achievements and generally lay the foundation for a more strategically-focused, outcome-based program. Based upon careful assessment of Cambodia's long-term development needs and the activities of other donors, USAID/Cambodia has cast its program in terms of four interlocking and mutually-supporting *strategic objectives*:

1. Strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law;
2. Stabilizing population growth and protecting human health;
3. Increasing the quality of and access to primary education; and
4. Accelerating rural economic growth through increased rice production in three northwest provinces.

Complementing these four areas, USAID/Cambodia will continue to channel support to vulnerable groups in Cambodia and expand its existing activities in the environmental sector. A persistent underlying theme will be increased popular participation and continued strengthening of Cambodian civil society. The mission will also continue important work providing humanitarian support to vulnerable groups and helping protect the environment. The relationships between the four strategic objectives are presented in the chart on the next page, followed by a more detailed discussion of current and planned activities in each of the four principal program areas. The activities of individual grantees and contractors are presented in Annex 1 to this briefing paper.

USAID/Cambodia Strategic Matrix				
	Democracy and Human Rights	Primary Education	Health and Family Planning	Regional Economic Growth
Democracy and Human Rights	Instilling democracy and the effective rule of law at all levels of society	Building the base of an educated, democratic society	Instilling access to health services and family planning as a basic societal right	Strengthening the democratic underpinnings of a productive society
Primary Education	Building the base of an educated, democratic society	Strengthening the overall human resource base of the country	Reducing family size and increasing the effectiveness of health education.	Investing in Cambodia's economic future
Health and Family Planning	Instilling access to health services and family planning as a basic societal right	Reducing family size and improving health knowledge and practices	Reducing infant mortality, maternal mortality, and the spread of AIDS	Helping people to have more economically productive families
Regional Economic Growth	Strengthening the democratic underpinnings of a productive society	Investing in Cambodia's economic future	Helping people to have more economically productive families	Increasing agricultural productivity and rural incomes

**Democracy, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law**

USAID/Cambodia has long been a supporter of democracy and human rights NGOs in Cambodia, some of which are led by Cambodians who have returned from years of exile in the U.S., Australia, Canada, and other western nations. These programs began during the UNTAC period, when very young NGOs showed they could be a powerful force in assuring a transparent electoral process, getting out the vote, and letting citizens know their rights and responsibilities. USAID continues to support democracy human rights NGOs, which have conducted modest but extremely effective education and training programs for citizens, local officials, and the uniformed services to improve understanding and enforcement of the basic legal and civil rights guaranteed under the constitution. Additional assistance is channelled to strengthen the institutional capacities of such important national bodies as the National Assembly, the provincial court system, and the Cambodian Bar Association.

USAID is currently providing assistance to help Cambodia implement free and fair elections in 1997-98, emphasizing the need to put in place systems and procedures that will ensure not only a smooth electoral process but also acceptance of the election results by all Cambodian citizens and political actors. Assistance is focused on establishing an electoral framework (laws and administration) that meets international standards. On a parallel track, the mission is working with indigenous NGOs to conduct voter education and election monitoring programs. Working in concert with other donors, USAID will provide timely and appropriate support, emphasizing long-term popular participation in the democratic process

and sustainability of the election process rather than a particular political outcome.

Most of the mission's current democracy and human rights program is implemented through the Democracy Initiatives Project (FY 1992-2000), a \$50 million activity designed to support popular participation and the

establishment of sustainable democratic institutions and processes in Cambodia. Assistance is provided:

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*USAID will provide timely and appropriate elections support, emphasizing long-term popular participation and sustainability of the electoral process itself.*

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- *In the legal sector* to support the rule of law by training judges and public defenders, helping to the nascent Cambodian Bar Association, and laying the groundwork for the legal codes and practices procedures needed to sustain a modern, market-oriented economy;
- *To Cambodian NGOs* working to promote democracy and protect human rights through public education and awareness programs; and
- *To public policy and administration bodies within the government* to develop legislation and sustainable systems for periodic local and national elections.

Principal grantees under this program include *The Asia Foundation (TAF)*, the *International Human Rights Law Group (IHRIG)*, the *Asian-American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI)*, the *American Bar Association (ABA)*, the *University of San Francisco (USF)*, and the *International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)*.

### ***Health and Family Planning***

USAID assistance in this sector is geared toward improving maternal-child health, increasing knowledge of family planning and the use of modern contraceptives, and reducing HIV/AIDS transmission. Through 1996 the bulk of health and family planning assistance was channelled through the PVO Co-Financing Project, a \$50 million umbrella activity designed to meet the cross-sectoral humanitarian assistance needs of vulnerable, low-income groups in Cambodia. The program has financed important primary health, family planning, and health-related assistance grants to international PVOs and indigenous grantees. International grantees include *Action Internationale Contre La Faim/USA (AICF/USA)*, the *American Red Cross (AmCross)*, *CARE*, *Catholic Relief Services (CRS)*, *Family Planning International Assistance (FPIA)*, *Handicap International (HI)*, the *Harvard School of Public Health*, *Helen Keller International*, *Medecins San Frontiers (MSF)*, *Population Services International (PSI)*, the *Salesian Missions*, the *Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VAAF)*, *World Education*, the *World Health Organization (WHO)*, *World Relief Corporation*, *World Vision*,

and *Participating Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT)*. The mission has also launched carefully targeted HIV/AIDS surveillance activities through the centrally-managed AIDSCAP and AIDS Alliance programs.

In 1995 USAID/Cambodia embarked upon an in-depth assessment of health and family planning in Cambodia, which resulting in a "second generation" family planning activity, the \$20.0 million *Family Health and Birth Spacing Project*. Major partners under this program include SEATS (birth spacing, STD/AIDS prevention and awareness, and safe motherhood), BASICS (control of diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections), and AVSC (voluntary surgical contraception). Maternal-child health activities will also continue under the PVO Co-Financing program with some of the PVOs identified above.

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*USAID will work to reduce infant, child, and maternal mortality, increase the use of modern contraceptives, and slow the spread of HIV/AIDS in Cambodia.*

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Three specific targets have been identified to improve maternal and child health by the year 2000:<sup>1</sup>

- Increase modern method contraceptive prevalence rates from 7 percent at present to 17 percent;
- Decrease infant mortality from 115 deaths per thousand at present to 100 deaths per thousand; and
- Decrease child mortality from 181 deaths per thousand at present to 155 deaths per thousand.

Planned intermediate results include an increased leadership role for the public sector in maternal-child health care delivery, with a special focus on improved midwifery services; improved human resource capacity in the MCH sector overall; and improved access to and management of key MCH-related supplies and equipment.

### *Primary Education*

As noted previously, under the Khmer Rouge Cambodia's entire educational system was dismantled and hundreds of thousands of educated Cambodians were either executed, worked to death, or forced to flee the country. In no other country have the basic intellectual underpinnings of society been so thoroughly and systematically destroyed as under the Pol

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<sup>1</sup> HIV/AIDS targets will be established in the course of an in-depth assessment scheduled for early 1997.

Pot regime. Thus, assistance to the primary education sector is fundamental to the country's recovery and long-term development.

USAID assistance is channelled primarily through the \$30.0 million *Cambodia Assistance to Primary Education (CAPE)* project, an ambitious effort to train all of Cambodia's current primary school teachers, about 45,000 in number. Most of these teachers lack primary school diplomas themselves, not to mention basic pedagogical training. In order to attain maximum coverage and efficiency, the program works through core (or "cluster") schools that serve as training grounds for teachers from schools in surrounding areas. Another component of the project works to improve the central policy-making functions of the Ministry of Education.

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The program is implemented by a core consortium of *World Learning* (as lead institution), *World Education*, and *Save the Children/USA*. Additional partners in the consortium are the *International Rescue Committee* and *Save the Children/Australia*. The policy portion of the program is being implemented by a \$1.8 million "buy-in" to the *Advancing Basic Education and Literacy (ABEL)* project. Special attention will be focused on girls' education via assignment of a full time professional from USAID's centrally-based *Girl's and Women's Education (GWE)* project beginning in 1997.

**Regional Economic Growth**

USAID has sought to increase rural economic activity since inception of the present program during the UNTAC era. Phase I of the \$40.0 million *Emergency Roads Repair* project carried out rural roads reconstruction and demining to facilitate resettlement and humanitarian relief operations for about 370,000 refugees returning to Cambodia from camps along the Thai border. Phase II involved rehabilitation of the 211-kilometer *National Route 4* from Phnom Penh to Cambodia's principal seaport at Sihanoukville under contracts with *Fishbach International* and *Louis Berger International, Inc.* The project also financed reconstruction of the *Pursat Bridge* on the strategically important *Route 5* connecting Phnom Penh to northwestern Cambodia and Thailand.

A \$2.0 million grant to *CARE* has been used to rehabilitate about 300 kilometers of secondary roads in Banteay Meanchey and Siem Reap, including contracts with the *Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC)* for the clearing of mines along these increasingly heavily travelled routes. In the area of micro-finance, a \$1.1 million grant to *Catholic Relief Services (CRS)* is providing small loans to women in Battambang and Takeo provinces. In agriculture, a \$650,000 grant to *International Development Enterprises* is working to increase

agricultural production in six separate provinces by manufacturing, marketing, and installing nearly 10,000 small scale irrigation pumps.

Up to now security concerns in most of the countryside have prevented USAID and other donors from embarking on larger, more strategic investments in rural areas. However, with the recent KR defections, large areas of Cambodia's most

productive agricultural land in the northwest provinces of Battambang, Banteay Meanchay, and Siem Reap have been rendered secure. These three provinces surround the western half country's main body of water, the Tonle Sap, and constitute

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Cambodia's traditional "rice bowl." Presently USAID is capitalizing on this opportunity by developing a \$45.0 million *Regional Economic Growth (REG)* activity that, in concert with other donors, will increase rice production in these three provinces by 50 percent, thereby achieving sustainable increases in rural incomes. As the program takes root activities may also be extended to Pursat and Kampong Thom provinces, which also border the Tonle Sap.

Planned intermediate results include improved rural infrastructure (irrigation and rural roads); improved availability of agricultural information, inputs, technology, and financial services; and improved agricultural, environmental, and infrastructure maintenance policies. The program will be implemented under an institutional contract with a private U.S. firm and coordinated closely with activities already underway by a variety of actors, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), CARE, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP/CARERE). A significant portion of project resources will be channelled through indigenous NGOs (e.g., Buddhism for Development, Cambodian Community Development, and Anakot Khmer). Work on the policy front will be buttressed by programs already in place under World Bank and Asian Development Bank auspices.

### Conclusion

USAID's program is working in four separate but mutually-reinforcing areas, each of which is designed to strengthen Cambodian civil society and increase popular participation in the development process. In *democracy and human rights* we seek to instill democratic principles and the effective rule of law. In *health and family planning* we seek to improve health status and increase the availability and use of modern contraception. In *basic education* we seek to rehabilitate the country's primary learning system and strengthen the educated human resource base following their systematic destruction by the Khmer Rouge. And in economic growth we seek to augment rural incomes through sustained increases in rice production in three politically and economically vital provinces. USAID intends to

**capitalize fully on the synergies made possible through these interlocking objectives, with popular participation and the continued development of Cambodian civil society a common theme and underlying programmatic focus.**

**USAID Grantees and Contractors in Cambodia**

**Democracy, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law**

***The Asia Foundation (TAF)*** has an \$8.5 million grant to assist with planning and implementing legal and judicial reforms and help create the conditions for a functioning liberal democracy by strengthening Cambodian civil society. TAF acts as an umbrella organization channelling sub-grants to a variety of indigenous organizations such as the *Cambodian League for the Protection and Defense of Human Rights*, the *Cambodian Institute of Human Rights*, *Women for Prosperity*, the *Khmer Institute of Democracy*, the *Center for Social Development*, the *Khmer Women's Voice Center*, the *Project Against Domestic Violence*, the *Khmer Journalists Association*, the *Women's Media Center of Cambodia*, the *League of Cambodian Journalists*, and the *Cambodian Human Rights Coordination Committee*. TAF will be a central player working to strengthen and elevate the role of NGOs such as these before, during, and after the local and National Assembly elections in 1997 and 1998, respectively.

The ***International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)*** is presently completing activities under a modest (\$167,000) program to assist the Ministry of Interior's Bureau for Elections in planning for elections coming up in 1997 and 1998. Technical advice was provided for drafting local and national elections laws and strengthening elections administration. Assuming the Government of Cambodia moves in a timely and responsible fashion to enact the required legislation, USAID intends to continue working with both IFES and TAF to provide elections assistance.

The ***International Human Rights Law Group (IHLRG)*** operates important and very effective programs aimed at sustainable improvements in the Cambodian judicial system:

- The ***Cambodian Court Training Project*** (\$3.8 million) provides mentoring by visiting judges and other judicial experts from the West and critically needed training for members of the Cambodian judicial system; and
- The ***Cambodian Defenders Project*** (\$1.7 million) provides hands-on for training public defenders in an effort to create a countrywide public defender organization.

The ***American Bar Association (ABA)*** is working under a \$1.1 million grant to strengthen the nascent Cambodian Bar Association and help modernize the country's commercial, economic, and business codes. These tasks are central not only to the functioning of the country's civil justice system overall but more specifically to its bid to join the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1997.

The *Asian-American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI)* has a \$1.2 million grant to help the Ministry of Labor develop and commence implementation of a labor relations law that meets international standards. The project also works with nascent labor organizations to educate workers, especially women and children, about their rights.

The *University of San Francisco (USF)* has a \$3.0 million grant to provide technical, administrative, and legal education assistance to the Faculty of Business at the University of Phnom Penh. The program's primary thrust is to establish a legal program at the Faculty based on business/legal principles already operative in ASEAN countries. *Georgetown University* is also working with the Faculty of Business under a \$2.3 million grant to assist FOB staff with training and the development of a business curriculum and train small business entrepreneurs in regional provincial capitals.

The *National Democratic Institute (NDI)* is now completing a \$1.3 million grant to help support public interest NGOs that promote civic education and popular participation in emerging democratic institutions. NDI has worked closely with the two principal democracy and human rights umbrella organizations in Cambodia, the *Committee for Free and Fair Elections (COMFREL)* and the *Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (COFFEL)*, helping them develop their organizational strategies and administrative functions.

### *Health and Family Planning*

#### *Maternal-Child Health*

*Action Internationaale Contre La Faim/USA (AICF/USA)* is just completing a \$1.9 million grant to rehabilitate and restore clean water sources and provide basic health education to villagers in the northeast provinces of Kratie and Steung Treng. An additional \$2.4 million has just been awarded to continue these important and effective activities.

*Family Planning International Assistance (FPIA)* operates a large (\$4.9 million) grant to improve access to family planning information, services, and contraceptives by poor, underserved populations in Phnom Penh and the provinces of Kampong Speu, Svay Rieng, and Takeo. Continued support will be offered to the *Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia (RHAC)*, a local NGO that was established as a result of this grant. RHAC was recently granted affiliate membership in the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

*Helen Keller International* is working under a \$1.5 million grant to establish an integrated rural training program and demonstration model for nutrition and eye health.

*Medecins San Frontiers (MSF)* has been working in Thmar Pouc, Banteay Meanchey, under a \$1.7 million grant to rehabilitate hospitals and otherwise contribute to the maintenance of basic curative health care services. Under a separate \$680,000 grant, MSF is working to rehabilitate the central Stung Treng provincial hospital and to work with the Ministry of Health to institute essential health care services in this remote province..

**Population Services International (PSI)** has launched an extremely effective condom social marketing program to slow the spread of HIV/AIDS with an initial grant of \$2.5 million grant. An additional \$1.5 million has just been awarded to continue this successful program and add oral contraceptives and an information, education, and communication (IEC) program that promotes birth spacing to their portfolio.

**World Education** works under a \$2.3 million grant to provide non-formal health education to women and children in Prey Veng province.

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has a \$1.0 million grant aimed at helping to control dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) as part of a wider program to prevent the spread of communicable diseases Cambodia.

The **World Relief Corporation** conducted a "gateway" poverty lending and health education program in Phnom Penh and Kompong Chnam under a \$1.1 million grant (now completed) for a community-based small credit and savings program integrated with health education.

**World Vision** has a \$2.3 million grant to assist with renovation of the Cambodian National Pediatric Hospital and to introduce essential training to health care providers in the management of Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever, (DHF) Childhood Diarrheal Diseases (CDD) and Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI). Although this grant is ending soon, World Vision will continue receiving USAID support through the centrally-manged Child Survival Grant program.

**SEATS, AVSC, and BASICS** are collaborating under the \$20.0 million Family Health and Birth Spacing in activities relating to family planning, sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs), childhood communicable diseases, safe motherhood/child survival, acute respiratory diseases, and micronutrient deficiencies.

- **Family Planning Service Expansion and Technical Support II (SEATS)** focuses on strategic planning, program design, and management support for national family planning program; development of innovative approaches to large scale family planning and reproductive health programs, and implementation of family planning and reproductive health programs.
- **Basic Support for Institutionalizing Child Survival (BASICS)** focuses on institutionalizing and increasing effectiveness and sustainability of child survival services.
- The **Program for Voluntary and Safe Contraception (AVSC)** provides support to introduce, expand, and improve the delivery of voluntary surgical contraception services such as female sterilization and vasectomy.

**AIDSCAP** (via **Family Health International**) supports HIV sentinel surveillance, STD protocol development through research to identify prevalence and drug resistance, and the development and dissemination of HIV testing guidelines.

The *International HIV/AIDS Alliance* is conducting community-based HIV/AIDS programs and provides technical assistance to rural indigenous NGOs to strengthen their technical, institutional and financial capacity to manage external assistance.

**Other Health Programs, Including Support to Vulnerable Groups**

*Participating Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT)* acts as an umbrella grantee under an \$18.0 million cooperative agreement with USAID, channelling sub-grants to a large variety of Cambodian NGOs working in the health, vocational training, and community development sectors, with a special focus on assistance to vulnerable groups. Principal sub-grantees include the *United Cambodian Community* (vocational training for the disabled), the *Khmer Buddhist Society* (community development and social services), the *International Catholic Migration Committee* (women's skills development), *Food for the Hungry, Inc.* (water and sanitation), *CANDO* (training and skills development), *HealthNet* (hospital rehabilitation and health services extension), and *Rehab Craft* (leather handicrafts by the disabled).

The *Salesian Missions* have a \$1.1 million grant to provide technical vocational education for orphans and poor youth in Phnom Penh.

The *Harvard School of Public Health* operates a training facility in Siem Reap under an \$800,000 grant to train mental health professionals throughout Cambodia in the treatment of individuals, families, and communities that have been traumatized by three decades of war and civil disruption.

*American Red Cross (AmCross)* is providing prosthetic, surgical, and other medical assistance in Kampong Speu province under a \$3.1 million grant. A separate grant for \$600,000 is aimed at establishing a National Center for Disabled Persons and strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, and Veterans Affairs to identify and provide services for the disabled.

*Handicap International (HI)* works with the Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC) to strengthen the organization's capacity to verify the presence or absence of mines in 900 out of 2,000 reportedly mined areas. Large areas have been freed up for human settlement and resumed agricultural production as a result of HI's work under this modest (\$275,000) grant.

The *Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA)* operates a prosthetics, orthotics, and wheelchair manufacturing facility in Phnom Penh under two grants totalling about \$6.0 million. The facility also provides physical therapy services with amputees being fitted with prosthetics. Many of the employees working at the facility are themselves disabled.

***Basic Education***

Activities are carried out principally through the \$30.0 million Cambodian Assistance to Primary Education (CAPE) project. The program is implemented by a core consortium of *World Learning* (as lead institution), *World Education*, and *Save the Children/USA*. Additional partners in the consortium are the *International Rescue*

*Committee and Save the Children/Australia.* The policy portion of the program will be implemented by a \$1.8 million "buy-in" to the *Advancing Basic Education and Literacy (ABEL)* project. Special attention will be focused on girls' education via a full time professional from USAID's centrally-based *Girl's and Women's Education (GWE)* project beginning in 1997.

### ***Rural Economic Growth***

Under Phase I of the \$40.0 million Emergency Roads Repair project, reconstruction and demining of rural roads facilitated resettlement and humanitarian relief operations for about 370,000 refugees returning from refugee camps along the Thai border. Phase II involved rehabilitation of the 211-kilometer National Route 4 from Phnom Penh to Cambodia's principal seaport at Sihanoukville under contracts with *Fishbach International* and *Louis Berger International, Inc.* The project also financed reconstruction of the Pursat Bridge on the strategically important Route 5 connecting Phnom Penh to northwestern Cambodia and Thailand.

Under a \$2.0 million grant, *CARE* is rehabilitating and de-mining about 300 kilometers of secondary roads in Banteay Meanchey and siem Reap provinces in areas only recently freed from Khmer Rouge control. The activity includes sub-grants to the *Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC)* for the clearing of mines along these increasingly heavily travelled routes.

A \$1.1 million grant to *Catholic Relief Services (CRS)* finances a successful small business lending program for women in Battambang and Takeo provinces.

In agriculture, a \$650,000 grant to *International Development Enterprises* is working to increase agricultural production in six separate provinces by manufacturing, marketing, and installing nearly 10,000 small scale irrigation pumps.

Additional grants will be channelled to Cambodian NGOs and international PVOs once the \$45.0 million Regional Economic Growth (REG) project gets underway in 1997