

# Cambodia

## Country Overview



**Language:** Khmer (official) 96%

**Religion:** Buddhist (official) 96.9%,  
Muslim 1.9%, Christian 0.4%

**Capital:** Phnom Penh

**Currency:** Cambodia riel

**Government:** Parliamentary constitu-  
tional monarchy

**Chief of State:** King Norodom Sihamoni

**Ethnic groups:** Khmer 97.6%, Cham  
1.2%, Chinese 0.1%, Vietnamese 0.1%

**Willow Partner:** Kone Kmeng

**Location:** Northwest, near border of  
Thailand

**Environment:** Rural

**Want to learn more about Cambodia?**

[www.willowcreek.org/globalinfo](http://www.willowcreek.org/globalinfo)

## Background

In the 1970's the Khmer Rouge took control of the Cambodian government with the goal of creating an agrarian socialist country and eradicating any foreign influence such as capitalism or religion. They evacuated the cities and forced millions of people into labor camps with harsh living conditions, inflicting the worst genocide since WWII in terms of the percentage of population that was killed. The lasting impacts of the Khmer Rouge have caused Cambodia to be a low-income country plagued by high levels of poverty. It also dramatically shaped the current demographics causing 50 percent of the population to be under 25 years old, and a resulting strain on the workforce. Recently, Cambodia has experienced strong economic growth but still remains one of the poorest countries in Asia.

## Human Trafficking & Vulnerable Children

- ◆ Cambodia is a source and destination for exploitation of men, women and children in all forms of modern slavery, including forced labor, debt bondage and forced marriage.
- ◆ The 2016 Global Slavery Index estimates 256,800 people or 1.65% of the total population live in conditions of modern slavery
- ◆ Children from impoverished families are highly vulnerable to forced labor
- ◆ Significant discrimination against girls and women persists, with traditional gender roles engrained in the school curriculum.

## About Willow's Partner: Kone Kmeng

Willow partners with Kone Kmeng which has a network of over 200 churches throughout Cambodia. These churches are addressing the needs of people in the communities such as clean water, mass immigration to Thailand and Vietnam, human trafficking, and low income opportunity for families. Kone Kmeng encourages churches to address the needs of at risk children and also has several entrepreneurship and microenterprise programs to empower Cambodians in need of work.