


[Home](#)
[About Us](#)
[Advocacy](#)
[Livelihoods](#)
[Opportunities](#)
[Governance](#)
[Partnerships](#)
[Latest News](#)
[Meetings/Events](#)
[Human Stories](#)
[Contacts](#)
[Job Vacancies](#)

Teuk Phos, Human Rights Day



Constructive engagement with authorities is important to avoid misunderstanding and conflict. Members discuss with District Authority Heads lack of access to public services.

Access to information



Even poor people from remote rural communities can learn to obtain and send information within and beyond Cambodia with facilities such as the NHS Computer Centre.

Advocacy

Action by, or with, but seldom for disabled people

Advocacy means changing attitudes to influence actions and policies for the better. The best advocates are usually the beneficiaries themselves. They speak from heartfelt experience. Normally they are not given the chance to speak-up. Or they lack the confidence. Or no suitable opportunity exists. And finally few of the people who matter will listen to them or act on what they say!

NHS was the first organisation in Cambodia to work with disabled and disadvantaged people not from a welfare past. Instead its origins rest in promotion of human rights and mainstream community development. This has given our members a clear vision, the one they themselves imagine, which is set out in Articles 3 and 4 of our Charter. Its focus is undistorted by service-provision obligations, transcending all three of our programmes plus our co-operation with partner NGOs and Authorities. It is where we want to head.

Vision: A society in which disabled and disadvantaged people can lead healthy, normal, active and inclusive lives exactly like non-disabled people.

Goal: Full social inclusion of disabled and the most disadvantaged people through gradual and sustained improvement of livelihoods with incremental improvement in self-advocacy skills in order to (a) claim and receive rights, and (b) influence positively local leaderships and neighbourhoods to be sensitised to their special needs and circumstances.

Mission: Bringing about real empowerment of our members and interested groups in ways that they can help themselves to be fully integrated into mainstream society through improvements in livelihoods and self-advocacy so that they do achieve leading normal lives with full equality of opportunity and human dignity.

Approach and Impact

Poverty and disability go hand-in-hand. Very often our families living with disability endure other disadvantages of landlessness, chronic ill-health, lack of breadwinner, etc. Many are invisible and isolated in their communities, missing out on development opportunities and denied access to public services. NHS members simply ask for fairness and equality of opportunity. This we do through constructive engagement with leaders and neighbours. We use a variety of self-advocacy skills to bring changes in attitudes which in turn influence actions and policies for the better.

Successful advocacy initiatives include:

- improved access to schooling and vocational training (especially computer skills)
- greater respect for women who are disabled or family-carers
- improved entitlement to state allowances

War veterans who are injured in active service should receive state benefit, regardless of party allegiances. However, many receive no benefit. Others are persuaded to forsake their rights in return for a small lump sum payment. The persuaders are then able to collect their life-time earnings. NHS was first to work with government authorities to expose and resolve this scandal.

Although a new Disability Rights Law was passed in 2008, as with many laws, it is incomplete and good enforcement is unlikely. We will press for improvements and better implementation as well as real change to the policy that prevents disabled people from joining public sector teaching careers.

NHS was one of the first NGOs to advocate for a social work profession to be established in Cambodia, with an accredited course of training at a reputable local educational institution linked to prominent ones



The first self-advocacy campaign in 2003

"We are used to being hungry; we can see advocacy can help us do something to solve our problems."

abroad to attain best standards. Only in this way will the best interests of the client come first, and vulnerable people able to gain positions of leadership in authorities and NGOs currently now dominated by affluent people not living with pronounced disadvantage. Please see attached published [article](#).

© 2014 New Horizons Unlimited