

---

*Advocacy toolkit case studies*

## ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN CAMBODIA

---

**THEME:**

**Health**

**ADVOCACY APPROACHES:**

**Building relationships**  
**Church and community mobilisation**  
**Demonstrating good practice**  
**Educating community members**  
**Government officials: meeting with**  
**Working in alliances and coalitions**

---

One of the biggest issues facing poor Cambodian families is that they lack access to adequate and affordable health care. However, research by one of Tearfund's Cambodian partners revealed that the Cambodian government had set up a special scheme to enable marginalised families to receive adequate and affordable health care. Unfortunately, the research also showed that awareness was very low. Many people who qualified for help did not know the scheme existed, and those who did know about it were confused about how it worked.

The partner approached the ministry for health, but a history of tension between government and NGOs meant that contact was initially refused. Nonetheless, they wrote a letter and asked for an appointment. By using all their possible government contacts, both direct and indirect, they eventually secured a meeting. This perseverance eventually paid off: the meeting went well and government officials agreed to visit some of the partner's own health care projects. After seeing the work first-hand, and witnessing the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect shown by partner staff, the officials realised the partner's way of working was a way to make the government scheme more effective and they agreed to work with the partner to roll it out.

As part of the new initiative, the partner raised awareness and ran training days to help churches and communities identify families who might qualify and to show them how to register. They also accompanied community groups during assessment visits. As a result, many poor people were able to get free government-funded health care provision, including medical checks, treatment, surgery and hospital stays, if they were sick.

---

*Case study - ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN CAMBODIA*

Taken from *Advocacy toolkit* by Joanna Watson. Second edition, 2015  
Section E2: Research and analysis – Stakeholders, page 108