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**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**Sharing expertise to raise mine awareness**

A worldwide event designed to highlight the atrocities caused by landmines will be used as an opportunity to improve the lives of Cambodians in the future.

Australian based aid organisation, Austcare, is bringing people and partners together tomorrow (Fri), to mark the United Nations International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

In Cambodia, Austcare and the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) will hold a Mine Risk Education workshop, landmine clearance demonstration and host a 'Free from Explosive' exhibit with its partner, ActionAid.

"This is an opportunity for Austcare to share our expertise in landmines and UXOs in Cambodia and outline the issues surrounding cleared land to our newest partners," says Rudi Kohnert, Austcare Country Representative for Cambodia.

"In the notorious K5 belt alone, there is an estimated 2 million landmines on a 600km border boundary with Thailand. In partnership with CMAC we've cleared over 130 hectares, directly helping 138 villagers re-settle in our target communities. This is combined with a five year program to address post-clearance needs."

Even decades after the end of hostilities, landmines are still indiscriminately taking lives and limbs and making access to the most basic necessities of life, like food, water and education, almost unattainable for many.

**Austcare is working with close to 2000 households in the Thma Puok and Svay Check districts of Banteay Meanchey in partnership with local organisations to meet the needs of mine-affected communities.**

**CMAC is the largest local mine/unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance operator in the Kingdom of Cambodia and is a national institution employing 2,400 staff. By the end of 2007 CMAC had cleared 25,004,707 square kms of land, destroyed 32,245 anti-personnel mines, 587 anti-tank mines and 114,755 UXOs, including cluster munitions.**

Event details:

Date: Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2008

Venue: Austcare/ActionAid Office, House #69, Street 242, Sangkat Chaktomuk, Khan Daun Penh, Phnom Penh

Time: 8.30am – 10.30am

Schedule:

- 8.30 – 9.30am Mine Risk Education Workshop
- 9.30 – 10.30 am Manual de-mining demonstration and exhibition

Vision opportunities and interview with Austcare and CMAC personnel available.

For further information, please contact:

Maryanne Kepui  
Austcare Cambodia  
Tel: +855 023 994 117

Daniel Barty  
Media Officer  
Tel: +61 2 9565 9104  
or +61 430 464 954  
[dbarty@austcare.org.au](mailto:dbarty@austcare.org.au)

email: [maryanne.kepui@austcare.org.kh](mailto:maryanne.kepui@austcare.org.kh)  
[www.austcare.org.au](http://www.austcare.org.au)