

# CHARIS aids Cambodian flood victims

Caritas Humanitarian Aid & Relief Initiatives, Singapore (CHARIS) deployed a mission team of one staff and three volunteers to Kompong Thom in central Cambodia from Nov 7-13.

In September this year, heavy monsoon rains caused massive flooding in 17 of Cambodia's 23 provinces.

More than 1.7 million people were affected by the floods, including 188 people who died and 144,000 people who were displaced from their homes.

Staff from Caritas Cambodia went to the aid of some of the worst affected provinces including Battambang, Siem Reap, Kampong Thom, Kandal and Prey Veng to assess their needs.

CHARIS then responded to Caritas Cambodia's request for supplies. CHARIS volunteers packed 1,800 blankets, 25 portable latrines and 600 tarpaulin sheets worth \$40,000 and shipped these to Phnom Penh for distribution.

In Cambodia, the team helped with the distribution and planting of rice and vegetable seeds for



Distribution of rice and vegetable seeds in Kompong Thom province.

some 700 farmers and their families, as well as the repair of two houses which were damaged by the flood.

The team also trained Caritas Cambodia's staff and some villagers to make special "bottle lights" to stream sunlight into their darkened homes during the day.

Mrs Chea Vinney, programme manager of Caritas Cambodia,

said she thought that the lights were a good idea and that she would install them in the houses of the next village they assist.

Mr Simon Lim, a Singapore team member, said he was glad he went for the mission trip. "Even though we were there only for a week, I felt that we showed solidarity and brought joy to the beneficiaries," he said. □