Healing Fields

May 1, 2008 By Bob Ickes

In the past, they would leave their temples only to beg for rice. Now they deliver rice—and physical and spiritual support—to the many thousands of Cambodians living with HIV/AIDS among them. The efforts of Cambodia's Buddhist monks to help a country blighted by AIDS can be seen online, in an eight-minute video, *Cambodia: Care and Comfort* (pbs.org/frontlineworld). The documentary, which follows monks as they walk barefoot through the streets searching for the sick, was reported and produced by Matthew Ozug and Scott Elliott. The monks have themselves faced great stigma—from Cambodia's Khmer Rouge "killing fields" regime. Says Ozug: "By 1979, an estimated 95 percent of Cambodia's monks were killed or intimidated into leaving the monkhood." The country's health care system was also destroyed, leaving some 15 doctors to treat the entire nation. "This is our people," says one monk in the film. "We have to take care of them."

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Cambodian-monks-HIV-14351-3367