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Villager photos by Q. Sakamaki

In the Nutrition Center Orphanage, AIDS orphans with cerebral palsy, some also with congenital H.I.V. infection, nap; Kamika, 12, an AIDS orphan, and her roommate put on makeup before performing at Aspara Arts Association; learning a traditional dance hand gesture at Aspara; at the weekly public performance by Apsara Arts Association, Pich Sangva, a 15-year-old AIDS orphan, center, leads the dancers.

## AIDS, poverty and children in Cambodia

East Village photographer Q. Sakamaki traveled to Cambodia last month to document the toll that country's crushing poverty and AIDS epidemic is wreaking on its children. Most affected is the large population of orphans, most of them known as AIDS orphans. Some have congenital H.I.V. contracted from their mothers. However, many are children of parents with H.I.V./AIDS who — if they are still alive — in addition to being poor, are physically unable to care for them. It's also believed AIDS is causing a higher percentage of children being born with cerebral palsy. Many families, especially those devastated by AIDS, are so indigent they sell their young daughters into prostitution. Other families literally live in garbage dumps, scavenging daily for food to eat and recyclables to sell. In a happier story, however, AIDS orphans living at the Aspara Arts Association in Phnom Penh are learning to become dancers.



In the Nutrition Center Orphanage in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, an abandoned AIDS orphan with cerebral palsy looks out his window; a girl salvages and eats food at a garbage dump at Steung Mean Chey — although some survive this way, there's a threat of H.I.V. infection from improperly disposed of medical needles; a 12-year-old prostitute nicknamed Treng, "Little One," waits for customers in a Poipet brothel — young sex workers are at higher risk of obtaining H.I.V., since condoms are not always used, especially when customers insist against it; street children sniff glue to feel less hungry, but they can become addicted and often move on to amphetamines and intravenous drugs.



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