



Citoyen(ne)s de Siem Reap pour la Santé, de l'Éducation et les Questions Sociales

SiRCHESI's NEWSLETTER: JANUARY, 2013

SiRCHESI (Siem Reap **C**itizens for **H**ealth, **E**ducational and **S**ocial Issues) is a non-profit, non-religious, non-political and non-governmental organization (**NGO**) formed in Cambodia in 2000. Siem Reap, a provincial capital, is adjacent to the Angkor Wat temples, which now attract over 3,000,000 visitors annually. Tourism and textiles are Cambodia's leading industries. SiRCHESI finances its health-related activities independently through grants (2000-10), private and corporate donations, sale of fair-trade items, and paid internships for those sharing 17 days of intensive health research/intervention (see www.fairtradebeer.com/miscdocs/brochure2013.pdf). Some resources for the health system in Cambodia must still be provided by NGO or Agency partners including **SiRCHESI**, Doctors without Borders (MSF), the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the foundation-supported Angkor Childrens' Hospital and Khanta Bhopa Hospitals. Local and international NGOs continue to deal with civic and health education, human rights, gender equity, labour rights, and micro-economic development.

SiRCHESI's LOCAL HEALTH PROJECTS (2000-2013) In 2000, SiRCHESI first brought together, into one NGO, concerned citizens, business persons, and community health and medical workers to confront locally the HIV/AIDS pandemic. At the time, Siem Reap had one of the highest prevalence rates for key HIV risk groups in Cambodia, and Cambodia had the highest rates in South-East Asia. SiRCHESI forged links to local and international resources, and invited researcher/practitioner experts to help, pro bono, solve the health (and related) community challenges-- HIV/AIDS prevention, community health monitoring, rural outreach, alcohol abuse, workplace violence, trafficking, and women's literacy. From the outset, we used a multi-sectorial, multi-disciplinary approach to community health-promotion, through PAR (Participatory Action Research). Between 2006 and 2008, SiRCHESI opened a school to facilitate long-term, financially secure career paths for 26 women—former beersellers-- in the safer, healthier workplaces of large hotels. Seven years later, we continue to monitor, thrice annually, not just the career advances of these women, but also their new social, entrepreneurial and family lives. Their stories have been told by Helen Lee et al (2010) in the *Journal of Health Psychology*.

SiRCHESI helps strengthen local infra-structure, through its pioneering “**hybrid model of capacity building**”. Our NGO staff can wear two hats, retaining their full-time public service positions and salaries, and also being assured a living-wage for their part-time work, week-ends and evenings, with SiRCHESI. All skills and health materials developed by SiRCHESI become immediately transferrable to the public health service. For many years, Dr. Sarath Kros was SiRCHESI's part-time NGO Program Director (2003-2012); this year, he became the Director of the Provincial Health Department, and, since October, 2012 now devotes all his attention to running the hospitals, health centres and their large health staff, throughout the province. We thank him for his many years of service, and his ceaseless energy, in multiple roles with the Provincial AIDS Office, Provincial Health Department and SiRCHESI, as administrator and

captivating workshop educator. His leadership, skill and knowledge have all contributed towards the dramatic reduction in HIV/AIDS prevalence in Siem Reap province, now close to zero for many risk groups. We all wish him well in his new, major health leadership role. A new Director will be elected at the Annual General Meeting in June, 2013. In the interim, Mr. Hav Hou, the Financial Officer and IT/statistics specialist, continues to work with our 5 other part-time staff, 5 trained per-diem interviewers, and 23 peer-educator outreach workers; the latter have taught reproductive health, alcohol and HIV/AIDS prevention to over 10,600 persons in 2011 and about 12,000 in 2012. In 2013, it is projected that more of the financing of SiRCHESI's health outreach will come from the paid internship experiences, provided to students and interns from 6 countries. In 2012, we had 3 from Australia, and hope to see this increase to 12, annually, in the coming year. See <http://www.fairtradebeer.com/miscdocs/brochure2013.pdf>.

WHY IS THE HEALTH CRISIS STILL SO OMINOUS? While SiRCHESI focused initially on HIV/AIDS prevention programs for high-risk groups, we soon learned that many other factors increased the vulnerability of community groups, such as the women selling international beer brands in bars and restaurants. SiRCHESI continues to prod the Cambodian professional beer-selling association (BSIC) and the parent global brewers profitably doing business in Cambodia to provide living wages, health education, safe work places and HAART for their HIV+ employees (e.g., the beersellers for international beer brands have had an HIV+ prevalence rate varying about 20.5% during 1995-2003, but still not zero in 2012. The slow, incomplete response of the industry means SiRCHESI must continue to be a primary/first source of health information to beer sellers and hostesses, who are hired by restaurants to fill in for any beerseller not wishing to sit and drink with their customers (about 16%). Since 2002, we have worked with and interviewed over 1800 entertainment workers, and we have sent information about workplace risks since 2002 to corporate directors of major brands such as Stella Artois, Beck's, Bass Ale, Budweiser (AB/INBEV), Heineken, Tiger, Carlsberg, San Miguel, etc. Since 2006, SiRCHESI's data have supported ethical shareholders' groups and NGOs such as SOMO, concerned about the unsafe workplaces for sellers of Heineken, Tiger, etc. (View SiRCHESI's research/press reports, those of SOMO, and the apologetic reports of the BSIC industry at www.fairtradebeer.com, www.ethicalbeer.com or www.beergirls.org.) The plight of beersellers in 2011 and 2012 (Ennis et al, in progress), as with the report of Green & Lubek (2010) features "toxic" workplaces with more than 6 standard drinks consumed nightly by beersellers-- a hazardous/harmful amount-- and almost twice that amount for the restaurant hostesses, filling in for beersellers. The anti-trafficking law of 2009 closed all brothels, drove sex-work underground, and some now work as hostesses. SiRCHESI has now targeted these women for health workshops and peer outreach education..

SiRCHESI's 2011 NGO Annual Meeting was held in June, 2012; we reviewed our continuing health initiatives and the challenging financial situation. As an NGO, SiRCHESI remains non-political. However, former beer-seller and SiRCHESI staff interviewer Sophear Phaal, continued to wear a second hat as president of the local union for beer-sellers. They struck in 2011 and won an industry-wide settlement of \$320 (about half a year's wages--see www.beergirls.org) The industry is reorganizing: one new local brand, Kingdom, started paying women a living wage--\$160 monthly—but was then "taken over" by another company. Salaries decreased to the industry average, \$65. Heineken's distributor stopped rehiring its 220 beer-sellers when contracts expired, and by August, 2012, less than 40 remained in Phnom Penh, none in Siem Reap. Heineken then bought up Tiger Beer, with 800 beer-sellers in Cambodia.

To contact SiRCHESI:

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1,2)Breathalyzer testing/workplace interviews with Hav Hou, staff and international advisors (2012) 3) Heineken inherits 800 Tiger beersellers 4)Australian intern Vanessa captures “hands on” village peer educator

YOUR SUPPORT IS REQUESTED FOR 2013- EASY WAYS to DONATE.

A) ON_LINE DONATIONS FOR EVERYONE (EXCEPT US DONORS REQUIRING AN IRS TAX RECEIPT):

i) **MASTERCARD** or **VISA**: Go to: <http://www.thebetterplanetproject.ca/donate/> Choose “GIFTS” and press the hard-to-see blue “donate now”.

You can also Go straight to: [https://secure3.convio.net/uofg/site/Donation2?idb=\[\[S76:idb\]\]&df_id=2220&2220.donation=form1](https://secure3.convio.net/uofg/site/Donation2?idb=[[S76:idb]]&df_id=2220&2220.donation=form1)

which is the donation page for **THE BETTER PLANET Program** (Charity registration number: **10816 1829 RR001**) They process all donations for the **HIV/AIDS Cambodian Project**, issuing Canadian Tax Receipts

1) Choose **one time gift- donate** (See the template below).

2) Go TO, and CHECK THE BOX: “I would like to enter details about an area not already listed”.

3) A new small box will appear indicating : **Area of interest**

4) PLEASE write in : HIV/AIDS CAMBODIAN Project

5) Fill in the Amount of your gift (in Canadian Dollars). CHECK BOX for **ONE-TIME GIFT**

6) Fill in return mailing address; a charitable donation receipt (CANADA REVENUE AGENCY) is sent there in February; with your email address, you will receive a pdf-file receipt.

7) Your credit card donation, in Canadian dollars, will then be recorded by **the secure system** (another webpage) and a printable email receipt will follow from the **UNIVERSITY of GUELPH**, almost instantly.

ii) For CANADIAN DONORS wishing to use a CHEQUE:

B) By CHEQUE: Please make out to: "University of Guelph" with the notation **HIV/AIDS Charitable Donation /Cambodia** added in the bottom left corner of the cheque, and send to Paul Hossie, Manager, Financial Services, Alumni Affairs & Development, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1, CANADA. Include address and email for receipt.

C) FOR U.S. DONORS REQUIRING AN IRS TAX RECEIPT, please send a cheque or money order in US dollars, made out to: **FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH.** with the notation **HIV/AIDS Charitable Donation /Cambodia** added in the bottom left corner. Send to Paul Hossie, Manager, Financial Services, Alumni Affairs & Development, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1, CANADA. Include contact information and email for receipts sent in February.

For additional donation information or help, please contact: Paul Hossie, phossie@uoguelph.ca, Tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 53605, Fax: 519-822-2670

WHEN YOU HAVE MADE YOUR DONATION, please email ilubek@uoguelph.ca with the date/amount; we can verify that the funds are directed to the Project. **THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.**

The screenshot shows the 'Better Planet Project' donation form. At the top, there are navigation links: Home, Team, Impact Giving, Get Involved, and a search bar. Below the navigation, there is a message: 'Help us through investments in teaching and learning, research, scholarships and facilities: All donations to the University of Guelph support The Better Planet Project. U of G employees can donate directly using payroll deduction.' The main form area has several sections: 'Select your default' with 'Choose a Program' dropdowns; a checkbox 'I would like to enter details about an area not already listed.' which is checked; an 'Area of Interest' text field; 'Amount' and 'Frequency' dropdowns; 'Contact information' fields for email and phone; 'Gift type' radio buttons for 'One-time gift' (selected) and 'Sustaining gift'; 'Select a Gift Duration' dropdown; 'Total Gift' field; and a checkbox 'I would like to make this donation anonymously.' At the bottom, there is a 'Billing information' section with fields for 'First Name', 'Middle Name', 'Last Name', 'Street 1', 'Street 2', and 'City'.

Fill in the “AREA of Interest”, not already listed, with:
HIV/AIDS CAMBODIA PROJECT