

SiRCHESI's (Siem Reap Citizens for Health, Educational and Social Issues)



Hotel Apprenticeship Program Launch, Nov. 1, 2006

Co-Sponsored by M.A.C. AIDS Fund (2006-2008), Siem Reap Provincial AIDS Office,
and in partnership with 5 Siem Reap Hotels in 2006-7 (Cohort 1)
and 5 Siem Reap Hotels in 2007-8 (Cohort 2)

The Information meeting to launch Cohort 1 of the SiRCHESI Hotel Apprenticeship program was held on Oct. 19th, and produced interest, feedback and enthusiasm from GMs and HR managers who attended. In addition, some managers who could not attend or had not received our invitations in time have since requested more information and additional consultations this week to discuss and finalize conditions of participation. **Dr. Ian Lubek, SiRCHESI's International Advisor, (tel. 012- 520 957)** will be available for additional meetings to conclude arrangements at the following times:

Monday afternoon: 13:30-18:00,
Tuesday: 9:00-12:00; and 15:15- 18:45
Wednesday 9:00- 13:00

At these meetings, we hope to reach agreement with 5 participating hotels and 1 sponsoring hotel for Cohort 1 of the program, which starts next week. We can discuss any specific needs/requirements of each potential hotel partner, the draft of SiRCHESI contracts for the program, the participating hotel's standard employment contract, and the hotel's current evaluation instruments. A co-ordinating meeting of the HR (or General) managers of the final 5 hotels who sign a letter of commitment to the program will be held Friday afternoon, Oct. 27, to plan joint Hotel-SiRCHESI recruitment meetings beginning Monday, Oct. 30.

After reviewing the program materials below, you are invited to contact Ian Lubek (012-520- 957) to schedule an appointment at your hotel.

Below is a summary of the materials presented in the earlier illustrated presentation. To launch the program on Nov. 1st, we would like to negotiate specific arrangements with each of the 5 hotels wishing to participate in Cohort 1, each hotel taking 4 women apprentices. In addition, we are seeking 1 hotel to become a program co-sponsor through donation of classroom facilities and breakfast each morning (7:15- 11:15) . All participating/sponsoring hotels will have mention and url "reservations desk" connections listed on www.angkorwatngo.com and a future program-specific website.

Some unique features of SiRCHESI's Hotel Apprenticeship program

Although we share elements with other training programs such as Sala Bai, Paul Dubrule, Shinta Mani, and hotel internal training programs, the SiRCHESI program has been designed with local managers' input over the past 4 years, as well as advice from consultants in organizational psychology and management sciences, and contains several unique features to address local conditions, especially high turnover rates in a competitive, booming marketplace.

1) GOALS FOR THE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM:

SiCHESI will run in partnership with 5 local Siem Reap Hotels a new apprenticeship program, develop new industry-related training materials and evaluation instruments, and subsidize two cohorts of trainees to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness, the long-term performance and job-satisfaction benefits, increased loyalty and decreased turnover, and wider community health benefits of increasing the number of women employees. At the end of the 2-cohort program, it will be handed over to the Cambodian Hotel Owners Association or to individual hotels.

Our goals are to demonstrate:

1) **to the community**, the long-term health benefits of bringing women back to the hotel industry who, because of non-literacy or lack of English, might be initially rejected as job applicants and consequently end up in more dangerous, insecure or unhealthy workplaces.

2) **to the hotel industry**, the cost effectiveness of combining several training techniques to create multi-skilled, dedicated and loyal employees:

- i) fellowship-assisted compensation “front-loading” at career startup to prevent turnover for 2 years;
- ii) mentored multi-departmental training for efficient job selection/placement;
- iii) 8-month training where literacy, English and health and social skills are brought up to entrance criteria at a training cost equivalent to the hotel’s own “probationary” rate;
- iv) weekly job performance, academic progress and job satisfaction measures throughout the 2 years (with comparisons to regular employers);
- v) fellowships provided by SiRCHESI and M.A.C. to ensure minimum \$110 compensation throughout 2 year period (e.g., training fee or contracted salary, tips, service charge, promotion adjustments, bonus + supplemental “top-up” fellowship) ;
- vi) after 8 months training, with joint agreement of training hotel and SiRCHESI, apprentice graduates to starting-salary contract for 16 months, under hotel’s regular working conditions, continues to receive SiRCHESI top-up fellowship for additional evaluation activities, continuing-education experiences (these additional duties are not asked of regular salaried workers)

Below we review the NGO SiRCHESI and the details of the Hotel Apprenticeship program

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NGO SiRCHESI (Siem Reap Citizens for Health, Educational and Social Issues).

SiRCHESI is a local Cambodian NGO #704 working with international health and social science professionals, students and volunteers, concerned local citizens, medical practitioners, government and non-government organizations (NGOs) and the Siem Reap and international business communities. Since 2001, we have developed and implemented health promotion skills, behavioural monitoring, outreach and resources for HIV/AIDS prevention and alcohol reduction. ([Www.angkorwatngo.com](http://www.angkorwatngo.com))

Our workshops have targeted men, married women, beer-sellers and young persons at risk (www.fairtradebeer.com).

With the international NGO CARE, we began alcohol awareness education in 2005 for women, and in 2006, for men. Our community behavioral health monitoring has continued since 2001; we are committed to the use of systematic evidence/data indicators to guide all programs. As well, feedback to the community occurs through focus groups, workshops and annual conferences of stakeholders, in a participatory “Action Research” framework.

We have also developed a “hybrid model” of capacity building that allows our NGO SiRCHESI to co-ordinate staff and activities with the Provincial AIDS Office and Provincial Health Department, and Department of Women’s Affairs, so that all new programs and skills are transferred to the broader public health and civic sphere.

DETAILS OF THE HOTEL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

The Rationale for the program:

The program is a cross-over between professional training for one industry (hotelry) and a community health, primary prevention project. “Primary Prevention” in the field of Occupational Health and Safety may be briefly summarized as: “Fix the problem before it starts.” **M.A.C. AIDS Fund** has supported this effort for 2 years, as part of SiRCHESI’s overall program of efforts to reduce health risks to women in Siem Reap from HIV/AIDS, STIs, alcohol overuse, violence and harassment. After 2 cohorts have been completed and evaluated (2006-2008), the program will be handed over to the hotel industry.

When young, non-literate women come to Siem Reap seeking jobs, they are often first refused by the Hotels to which they apply. (This is a problem which will have major health and career consequences). Those who end up in the entertainment industry face high health risks, with about 20% becoming HIV sero-positive (1995-2003)– although the rates are steadily decreasing to 6% in 2005, thanks to much prevention education activity. Most beer-servers are forced by customers to drink on the job (1.3 litres of beer nightly), and regularly risk workplace violence and sexual exploitation. One way to fix this problem before it starts is to not turn away women candidates from hotel jobs when they do not meet entrance requirements, but rather, through training, open up more positions for women in these safe, secure hotel careers.

The major employer in Siem Reap is the **Hotel and Tourism Industry**. Whether unionized or not, the hotel industry has provided stable career pathways with upward mobility and skills training worldwide. In Siem Reap, a preliminary sample of 37 hotels (2006) suggests that only 33% of jobs are going to women. This is an improvement over 2002, when only 20% of jobs were for women. Some hotels would like to see their staff equally represented by men and women.

How can this apprenticeship program operate to benefit both Siem Reap women and Siem Reap Hotels?

SiRCHESI believes that hotels can provide safer and healthier workplaces and career pathways for women, and with our donor partner, M.A.C (Cosmetics) AIDS Fund, will partner with the hotel industry to facilitate this. We have surveyed and held conversations with various hotel managers and owners to see what needs they have concerning the addition of more women to their staff. Managers have concerns over staff loyalty, high turnover, and training costs in a competitive, booming market, as often expressed in the phrase: “I train someone for 6 months, and they go to the new hotel across the road for \$3 more a month”. Conversely, one manager was extremely proud that through incentives and fair wages, he had maintained his original, trained management staff through 8 years of working and career progression together!

Managers talk of the difficulty of finding qualified women to hire in Siem Reap, although many women from the countryside apply for jobs. But they are often refused because they do not meet the literacy or language criteria for most, or all, jobs.

The SiRCHESI Hotel Apprenticeship Program, in conjunction with PAO and M.A.C. and in partnership with Siem Reap Hotels is starting a two-year demonstration program of **Hotel Apprenticeship Training** for women who normally **do not** meet the hotel’s entry-level standards and who may be at risk for their health and safety.

In partnership with participating hotels, SiRCHESI proposes an apprenticeship period (8 months), training women to each hotel’s own entry-level criteria. SiRCHESI, PAO and M.A.C. AIDS Fund will supply a program manager, teachers for Khmer, English, literacy, health and social skills and counselling. The hotel partners would each provide mentored in-house training across departments (5- 8 different training experiences). Hotels **will not pay salaries to trainees**, to avoid potential friction with staff under full contract, with shift assignments, etc. Hotels will support

SiRCHESI's training efforts with a monthly fee equal to their probationary salary. SiRCHESI and hotel HR staff will create a common evaluation tool for measuring academic and skills learning throughout the two year period, monitoring job and program satisfaction, as well as weekly progress feed-back to students.

Although there are salary differences across the industry, e.g., according to whether 3-star, 4-star, 5-star, a hypothetical example can demonstrate an entry-level hiring: a hotel might offer a 3-month probationary salary of \$50 and then offer a full contract at \$60. Or they may choose not to hire the person after probation, and instead replace with another probationary worker for 3 months. These costs (and turnover and training) can be compared to SiRCHESI's: the 8 month apprenticeship period asks hotels for training fees equivalent to "probationary salary" leading to a complementary 16 month full-contract. Weekly, and again at the end of the program, performance indicators are taken to compare with other training programs offering different training and costing schemes. Using the above hypothetical example – a hotel with a \$50-probationary and \$60 entrance salary – trainees who might work free for three months and then work for 21 months at normal salary may cost slightly more (\$1410) , then the SiRCHESI 8 month training- 16 month salary (\$1360) program.

HOWEVER, in ADDITION, ALL SIRCHESI TRAINEES ARE BEING SUPPLEMENTED THROUGHOUT THE 24-MONTH PERIOD UP TO \$110 MONTHLY, which may ensure no turnover and additional loyalty to the training hotel.

SiRCHESI will provide fellowship support for up to 24 months to the level of \$110 monthly, the "fair wage" determined by our annual health and socio-economic surveys in Siem Reap since 2001 and three research theses (University of Guelph, Canada) . These consistently show that Siem Reap women, averaging 4.2 dependents each, require about \$110 monthly to pay all expenses, meet extended family obligations, etc.

With the hotels, SiRCHESI will weekly monitor/evaluate women's overall performance for at least 2 years; a comparison with indicators of regular staff hirings would be informative.

SiRCHESI will provide the selected candidates each morning with dynamic classes in Khmer literacy and English, with vocabulary tailored to the hotel industry and the **ongoing in-house training** (e.g., housekeeping in months 1 and 2, laundry, month 3, etc, as determined by the 5 HR managers) . SiRCHESI, PAO and M.A.C. AIDS Fund will supply a program manager, teachers for Khmer, English, health, life and social skills, and counselling. HR managers and training staff are always welcome to give guest lectures, according to their expertise and hotel's training curricula.

Apprenticeship training will involve a strong sense of loyal commitment to the training hotel, for two years and beyond, strengthened by the fellowship keeping monthly income always at \$110, as a strong deterrent to turnover.

The 5 Participating Hotels provide each of their 4 trainees with:

Daily (6 days a week) in-house, on-the-job training experiences during a regular 8-hour shift beginning after 11:30 am. This uses mentoring (buddy system) by skilled staff in 5-8 different departments (according to seasonal and current needs): e.g., housekeeping, laundry, kitchen, dining room, gardening, front office, gift shop, bar. Hotels supply one meal per day (usually lunch), and safe transport from the SiRCHESI training location to the hotel workplace. The workplace will be free from harassment, violence and other workplace health or safety risks. On-the-job illness or injury will be taken care of by the hotels in their usual way. Uniforms will be provided but Hotel Nametags may perhaps indicate the special SiRCHESI training program, to differentiate the very different daily job requirements of trainees (4 hours school, 8 hours shift,+ evaluations, etc.) compared to regular staff.

Hotels will also be asked to contribute any services in kind to the program as available/appropriate, e.g., duplication of training materials, van transport to hotels, etc. During the

regular 16 month contract period, SiRCHESE and Hotels will co-monitor and calculate total monthly Hotel income (salary +tips+ bonus+service charge+promotion...) and then top us with SiRCHESE fellowship to \$110, until the career path within the hotel moves the employee beyond \$110.

One **Sponsoring Hotel** may be able to provide classroom facilities and a simple breakfast for students at 7:15.

All participating/sponsoring hotels will be publicized at the SiRCHESE website:
www.angkorwatngo.com

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