

## Annual Report 2007



January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007

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## INTRODUCTION

The CIST project, initiated in May 2005 in Phnom Penh by the NGO *Enfants du Mekong* with the support of Accenture and other major players in the computer world, is a strong and growing success.

In order to build on accumulated expertise and to extend it to new projects, *Enfants du Mekong* and its partners have created a new legal structure, *Passerelles Numériques* (Digital Bridges).

The organization aims to reduce the digital divide, particularly by providing access to education, employment opportunities, personal and professional development to the poorest people.

## THE CIST

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### ORIGINAL PROJECT DEVELOPED

The CIST is a computer training centre and has been created with ambition:

- To train **up to 240 students** yearly to IT skills answering the local business needs and certified by internationally recognized certifications. The 2-year core training will be progressively completed by a set of optional specializations, tailored to market needs.
- To give those students the **best chances to get a job**, by maintaining strong links with the local business tissue, seizing all opportunities to demonstrate the quality of its training, and individually accompanying each student in his first job research.
- To develop and test **e-learning resources**

### ACHIEVEMENTS AS OF TODAY

1. A center has been built, with a capacity of 240 students trained on site.
2. Starting October, 2005, each year a growing number of students has been enrolled:
  - **25** students in 2005,
  - **67** students in 2006,
  - **86** students in 2007.

As of January 2008,

3. **20 students (out of 25) completed CIST training**
  - All of them got a job within 2 months after the end of their final internship
  - Their monthly salary range from \$100 to \$250 with an average of \$166, to be compared to a national average income of \$50, or the salaries of our trainers (\$150 for a Teacher of English and \$250 for an IT Engineer)
  - Among the 5 students that were re-oriented at the end of year one, 1 got a job in IT, 2 are working as basic administration assistants and 2 were financed by their NGOs to continue their studies in other institutions
4. **61 students (out of 67) are at half of their training program**
  - All of them have completed their first-year 2-month internship
  - According to the partnering companies and our trainers, their technical level is higher than in our first class
  - 6 are re-oriented by partnering NGOs
5. **86 new students started their training in October 2007**

This success is the result of a focus on a very professional, high quality educational program with:

- An innovative pedagogical approach taking into account the specific needs of students from very poor social backgrounds.
- Strong links developed with the business world, enabling to bridge education with professional opportunities.

## **Extra-achievements**

### **6. CIST has reached a high level of visibility and notoriety in Cambodia**

It is now seen as a reference for IT education and has been developing strong relationships with national and international organizations as well as leading NGOs such as FAO, CISCO, JICA (Japanese cooperation), PNUD, most of the highest national institutions (Parliament, Senate), The National bank of Cambodia, OLPC project (One Laptop Per Child)...

### **7. Strong partnerships and a model of skills sponsorship have been developed**

- Thanks to the initial commitment of Accenture: HP, Microsoft, CISCO, Supinfo, Steria, ECS... are now strongly committed too and ready to follow us on new projects.
- Our innovative model of relying on volunteer missions to bring the project to a high level of professionalism has been extended to other sponsors: Steria (6 missions in 2007), ECS (4 missions), Novell (4 missions)...

## **Complementarities and cooperation with education NGOs**

### **Social follow-up**

Beyond their help in the selection process, 9 ONG with education expertise financially support CIST students (e.g. housing, food and health care, etc) and ensure the social follow-up of the students, enabling CIST to focus on its educational task.

### **Cost sharing**

The partnership agreement defines how the CIST and the NGO share the training costs of the NGO students. In principle, the NGO is committed to cover the other 50% i.e. \$1000 per year.

This cost sharing is important for the long-term financial sustainability model of CIST. It is not yet fully operational as the number of grade 12 students supported by our partner NGOs is rapidly increasing, and some NGOs need time to adapt their funding model so as to support students' fees.

## **The involvement of NGO's has proven a key success factor of the project**

## **2007 MAJOR EVENTS**

### **Moving into the new building and inauguration**

The new buildings located around street 371, Borey Sorla, Phnom Penh, were delivered by the construction company on February 16<sup>th</sup>.

The network cabling was performed by 2<sup>nd</sup> year students, under supervision of their IT teachers. 5 km of cables were laid out.

So as to move the 2 old CIST centres to the new location before the end of the month without disturbing the training schedule, the transfer was performed over two week-ends (24 February 24 and March 3), using the CIST truck (2,5 tons) that is normally used to transport students for company visits.

25 round trips were needed to transport the whole equipments.

After one year of construction, CIST new building was inaugurated on March 12 by His Excellency SENG Limnov, State Secretary of the Council of Ministers and His Excellency Yvon ROE d'ALBERT, French Ambassador.

The preparation of this inauguration was an example of teamwork: students, staff, volunteers have all participated to make it happen and be a success.

Many representatives of CIST partners honoured us with their presence for this celebration, which enabled CIST to solemnly thank all those who made this project possible with their trust and support.



**Figure 1 : Inauguration of the new CIST buildings**

## “Virtual company”

The Virtual company project was developed in partnership with ITC (Institute of Technology of Cambodia) and aims to be a major asset to CIST training approach. A laboratory has been equipped with IT materials so that students, gathered in 4 groups, could perform activities as if they were part of the IT department of a company.

Objectives are to:

- Put students in real life situations,
- Provide students with most used scenarios in companies,
- Share best practices.

After 2 months of intense work, on May 2007, SNA students first explained their systems configuration in plenary presentation, facing IT professionals. Then they showed to our guests their results in the Virtual Company laboratory. Given the high level of involvement of the students in the Virtual Company project, the enthusiasm of the training team and the positive feedback from the companies who attended this presentation, we are working on a way to maintain this project in our training curriculum with the increasing number of students of the following classes.

## CCFC Career forum

This year, CIST played a key role in the organization of the Chambre de Commerce Franco-Cambodgienne (CCFC) Career Forum that was held on the 1st and 2nd of June 2007 at the National Cultural Centre, in Phnom Penh. It was a huge success with more than 40 exhibiting companies and around 9,000 visitors, most of which were students. It is one of the biggest professional events in the country.

This year the Career Forum set a new space dedicated to promote jobs: the Careers Corner, in which CIST played a key role. After taking an ability and personality test, the students were guided to the booths introducing 4 types of careers: Industry, Finance, Sales & Marketing and Information Technology. Each booth provided descriptions of various positions and conferences with professionals.

## Selection process 2007

In order to reach a large number of potential candidates and select the most deserving students, CIST has developed a wide selection process that has been built on cooperation with 10 selected NGOs working with underprivileged students and on education issues:

In 2007 it has involved 18 examination centers in poor districts of 14 provinces. 1343 grade 12 candidates took the entrance exams for 87 students eventually selected (22 of them are girls).

In 2007, 40% of candidates were discarded based on social investigation results (improved from 52% in 2006, due to better poor districts identification).

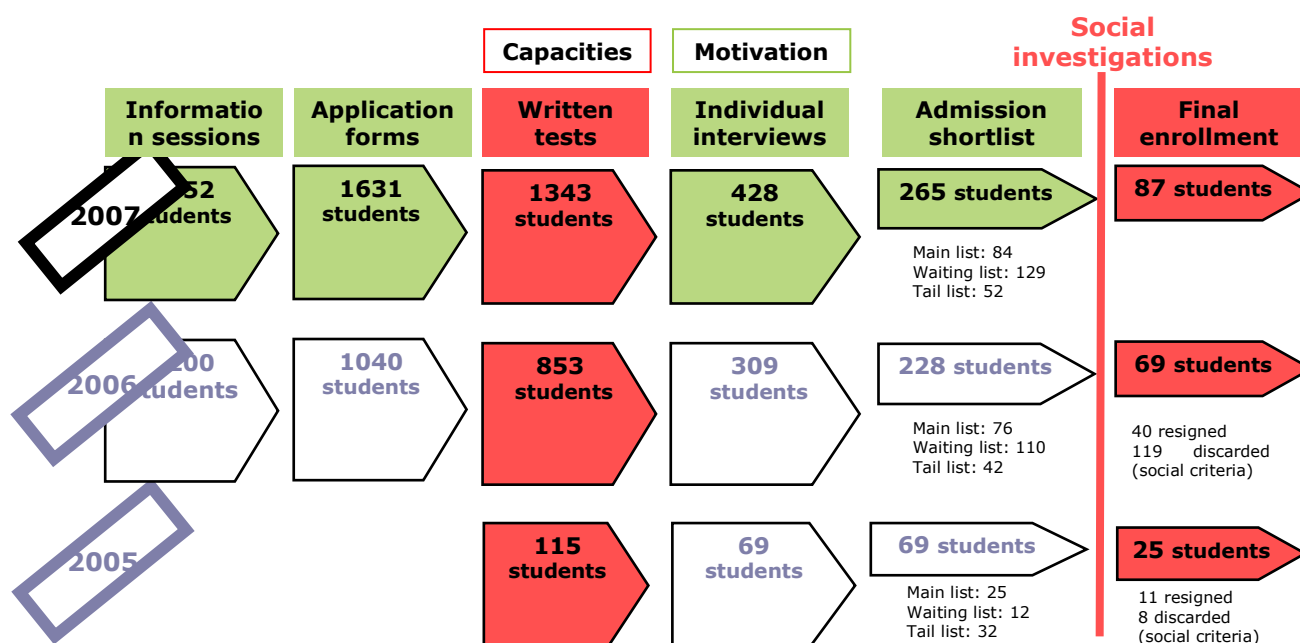


Figure 2 : CIST's selection figures

## Integration week-end

The 2009 class started the training in October. For the first time, the students went first for a 2-days "team-building" event to reinforce solidarity, respect and trust in the group. The 86 newcomers come from almost all over Cambodia and very few knew each other. This trip was the opportunity to spend some time together outside the centre. Destination: Sre Ampil, where "Agir Pour Le Cambodge" NGO warmly welcomed them.

## Equipment

During this year 2007 the equipment of CIST has been upgraded thank to donations from:

- **Société Concessionnaire de l'Aéroport (SCA)** : In 2007, Société Concessionnaire de l'Aéroport has donated 20 second-hand PC desktop computers that are helpful for students practice in the computer maintenance course.
- **HP's 3rd donation:** In November 2007, Hewlett Packard made an important donation of new and modern equipments to the CIST. Thanks to this donation, CIST could increase the number of students trained, open a 4<sup>th</sup> and a 5<sup>th</sup> computer laboratory, equip more efficiently CIST employees and update CIST core network
- **Steria's**, who has made a donation which allowed CIST to purchase two software licenses: NOD32 antivirus software and MIMOSA, the software that allows designing CIST's course timetables and provides agenda for classes, teachers and rooms.

## EVOLUTION PROSPECTS FOR 2008

### Priority: the success of ongoing training

The first priority of CIST for 2007 is the success of the ongoing training:

- that the 61 students of Class 2 find a qualified job in 2008,
- that the 86 students of Class 3 will follow the same track towards success,
- that 90 to 100 underprivileged and deserving students will be selected and enter CIST as Class 4 in October, 2008 in good conditions.

## Building sustainability for CIST

Two and a half years after the start of the project we are meeting a major crossroads. Our challenge for the next two years is to build sustainability in CIST.

### 1. Human resources capacity building

So far we have been able to demonstrate our capacity to deliver results – thanks to a management team of expatriates. We now must transfer this capacity to a local team. We thus face the challenge to recruit and train local staff in order to bring them to key positions, and make sure they will hold them in the same rigorous and demanding manner as the one which has brought the success of the project so far.

### 2. Developing job opportunities through the partnership with DDD

Digital Divide Data (DDD) is an American-based NGO providing work-and-study opportunities to disadvantaged people in data entry / labor intensive outsourcing IT services.

DDD and CIST share the same objective of using IT to build opportunities for the most disadvantaged people, and there is a perfect match between our activities: a strong partnership is under development, whereby CIST will become the recruitment and training arm of DDD and DDD will become the business arm of CIST, offering jobs to our students. **A partnership agreement has been signed between CIST and DDD** in November 2007.

As a first level of cooperation, we are developing together:

- **A "DOP" Training (programming curriculum)**, starting in early 2008 and supervised by Mr. Sylvain Guillemot, our CIST New Projets Coordinator, comprising:

- o Up to 17 trainees from the 3<sup>rd</sup> promotion of CIST students,
- o Up to 6 trainees from the current work-study staff of DDD.

- **A "DEO" Training (data entry initial training)** also starting in early 2008

This training will be open to underprivileged young people having completed grade 9 and will last 6 to 9 months. At the end of this initial training, trainees will then be hired by DDD, where they can work part-time while they carry on further studies.

### Partnership with Connected Schools and "Wireless Communications" training

Connected Schools (CS) is a NGO set up by senior professionals of wireless communications. CIST is closely collaborating with them on two major projects:

- **Setting up and demonstrating an educational network infrastructure:** A high-bandwidth wireless network will enable CIST, ITC, CS and the Ministry of Education (and later other partners) to exchange resources including through remote teaching.
- **Setting up a professional training on wireless communications:** A Wireless Communication Technicians (WCT) training is being set up by Connected Schools, to train wireless networks installation and maintenance operators. CIST and Connected Schools are considering offering this Wireless Communication Technicians (WCT) training as a second year option for CIST « SNA » students. The overall training would still last 2 years, while new job opportunities would be addressed. A pilot class for 10-15 students could start in October 2008.

## NEW PROJECTS

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We are leading studies in 3 regions in order to analyze local economical situation and identify needs and issues of the NGOs working in the field of Education just as IT programmes offered. These regions were not only identified for their strong concentrations of underprivileged populations, but also show potential for IT employment and economic development:

- Cebu's region in the Philippines
- The North-Western province of Thailand (Chiang Mai region)
- Danang's region, in central Vietnam

Those studies focus in particular on 4 main issues:

- The potential gaps between the training programmes offered and the actual needs of the market
- The accessibility of these existing training programmes to underprivileged people,
- The social and professional integration issues of skilled people, especially from underprivileged background
- The barriers to the development of a local IT society.

Between June and September 2007, preliminary data collection has been made, with field cooperation between Enfants du Mékong and 2 volunteers from Accenture. A 6-month pro bono from Accenture France, Anne Ong is performing feasibility studies in Thailand and in the Philippines that will be finalized by the end of May 2008 and will become the basis of next projects definition.

Throughout 2008 we will develop and experiment e-learning solutions in Cambodia's CIST which will hereby start developing its role as a resource center for Passerelles Numériques and its next projects.

By the end of 2008, we will have developed a proper business plan for the next three to five years and we will be ready to launch projects in several new countries.

## FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

The table below summarizes the investment expenses and running costs occurred during the year 2007:

		Type of expenses	%	2007
Projects	CIST	<b>Investments</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>\$107 229</b>
		Land and construction	16%	\$71 352
		Vehicles	0%	\$100
		IT Equipment (hardware and software)	6%	\$24 461
		Furniture	3%	\$11 315
		<b>Operation costs</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>\$277 676</b>
		Local salaries	31%	\$139 206
		Other costs (procurement, training, transports, communication..)	15%	\$65 929
		HR and partnerships coordinations	10%	\$42 938
		Electricity and water	3%	\$11 715
		Students allowance	2%	\$10 137
		Internet and telephone	2%	\$7 751
	New Projects	<b>Development costs</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>\$691</b>
		Project's lead salary	0%	
Market study costs		0%	\$691	
Head-quarter	Coordi-nation	<b>Coordination costs</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>\$58 730</b>
		Fundraising	11%	\$49 430
		Accounting and finance controlling	0%	\$1 291
		Overheads	2%	\$8 009
<b>Total expenses</b>				<b>\$444 326</b>

Figure 3 : global expenses chart for 2007