



At the age of 19, Yi Longdy is currently a double-majored student at two different universities in Cambodia. At the Institute of a Foreign Languages, Longdy enrolled as a full-time third-year student majoring in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), while at the Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia, he is a second-year business-administration student.

Before school, with ignorance, education to Longdy was totally undesirable, but after some time in school, he started to love the life in school, enjoying learning new things, competition, friendship, and many other things life as a student has to offer. His perspective about education grew even more positive when, after graduating from high school with honors, he entered IFL as one of the scholarship students. Regarding himself as a true believer of the power of education to make changes in Cambodian societies, Longdy has decided to study to be a teacher. Upon his graduation from IFL in 2010, he plans to apply and be a teacher at his school, IFL.

It was his participation in the Sunburst Youth Camp 2006 that acted as a big turning point for him to land where he is today, he says. In December 2006, Longdy, with 9 Cambodian colleagues and a youth chaperone—all appointed by the Department of Youth, for the first time in his life, left the country and took off to Singapore to join in a youth camp where more than 100 more students from 12 different countries came together in order to make friends, promote mutual understanding, and exchange knowledge and culture. According to him, “The experience unconsciously ignited in me a small flame, which some time later started to become a big fully grown fire, full of motivation, hope, longing for self-development and desire to help improve my country in some ways.” The program was so inspirational that Longdy volunteered and was selected to join the camp again as a youth facilitator in December 2007.



His third overseas experience came after being selected by the US embassy in Cambodia among 7 young Cambodian student leaders to participate in a program entitled The Study of the United States Institutes for Student Leaders for five weeks in mid-2008 in Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL, USA. The program was a million times more than just an overseas experience; it has opened doors to a much bigger world—a world full of opportunity—for him. “I made great, everlasting friendship. I have acquired a much more concrete idea about democracy, the US government and politics, and leadership. I have developed greater tolerance and understanding towards other people, especially those of other nations other than Cambodia. I have become, by miles, more matured and more open-minded. More importantly than those mentioned earlier, I have built a much wider and more concrete social networks—networks with people in other countries, such as the US, and with people of my beloved country, Cambodia, too,” he says. From the program, he has known many potential people, both young and old, who together play a really influential role in shaping the future of Cambodia. Not only does it exposed him to many valuable opportunities to experience more out of life, it has given him the courage to stand on his feet and lead his life in, to an extent, a more meaningful, prosperous life. He has learned to work by involving himself in more social activities with other youth and volunteers in Cambodia.

Besides, as an ex-participant of SYC, Longdy is nowadays also a member of the Sunburst Youth Camp Alumni Cambodia (SYCA), whose members are some of the youth who have joined in Sunburst Youth Camp in Singapore. In its most recent project in September, this group of alumni organized a youth camp in Sihanouk Ville under the theme *Together for Our Society*. The camp aimed at engaging youth at volunteer work and community service.

Now, as newly appointed OYG-Cambodia’s executive committee member, Longdy is very ready to execute what he has developed from all the experience into practical work in cooperation with, as well as in order for, other Cambodians.