

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឧកសាស្ត្រកម្ពុជា

Genocide Research and Education in Cambodia

Classroom Forum at

Samdach Hun Sen Phnom Penh Thmey Highschool

The Important of Study the History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)

5 June, 2018

Introduction

On 5 June 2108, Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) in collaboration with Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS), funded by United State Agency for International Development (USAID), conducted classroom forum on “*the important of study the History of Democratic Kampuchea*” with 60 students at Samdach Hun Sen Phnom Penh Thmey High school. There were approximately 46 students (45% were female), included 10 disability students, participated in this classroom forum.



Figure 1: Mr. Pheng Pong-Rasy Explain Students the Objective of Forum

The project was launched to provide a holistic, balanced and detailed analysis of the Khmer Rouge period to high school students. By providing this analysis to Cambodia’s youth, the objective is to ensure this history is not lost before it is reconciled and that lessons have been learnt from it. The objectives of the forum are – 1) To demonstrate the importance of learning about Cambodia’s difficult past as a way to promote peace, reconciliation, healing and, ultimately, prevention of genocide in the future. 2) To show the value of studying history as an effective medium of change going forward. 3) To inspire a generation more conducive to collaboration and peace. The structure of the forum encourages students to take ownership of their history; to recognize its proximity to their own lives and to their families. And 4) To create long-lasting dialogue that bears the fruit of peace, healing and genocide prevention for future generations.

Documentation Center of Cambodia (constituted in 1995)

Searching for the Truth: Memory & Justice

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As an overarching goal, the Genocide Education Program aspires to lead the development of a sufficient framework and curriculum for studying Democratic Kampuchea history within schools across Cambodia. These high school forums intend to be a catalyst for the establishment of a formal curriculum.

N	Forum Activities
1	<i>Opening Brief</i>
2	<i>Pre-Forum Survey</i>
3	<i>Documentary Film Screening: Children of Cambodia</i>
4	<i>Introduce the K-W-L Charts</i>
5	<i>Presentation on History Content</i>
6	<i>Q&A Session</i>
7	<i>Post-Forum Survey</i>
8	<i>Wrap Up</i>

Forum Activities

The classroom conducted at 2 PM in the afternoon at school hall. First, Deputy Director of high school was briefed about the school background and students statistics. He also encouraged students to stay focus on lecture today and mentioned that “it is important for us to remember and aware on our country is history, especially the upcoming grade 12 national exam”. Followed by Mr. Pheng Pong-Rasy, Director of Program of Genocide Research and Education in Cambodia of DC-Cam started to introduce the team member one by one. After that DC-Cam team began to distribute pre-forum survey sheet to each student. The questionnaire divided into two main sections – first, basic knowledge and students’ opinions on DK history, and the knowledge on genocide and human rights violations. Students had 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Then, Mr. Rasy started screening the documentary film which made right after the KR regime collapsed, entitled: The Children of Cambodia. Then documentary film demonstrated the situation and fate of Children after KR regime. After the film ended, Mr. Rasy asked students about their opinions on this film. There was one student rise his hand to share the opinion on the film. He is disability student (blink). He shared his opinion based on what his friend describe for him. He said “I feel very sad and pity to those children”. There were other students mentioned the same.

Next, Mr. Rasy introduced the K-W-L chart to students. Due to the time limit, Mr. Rasy decided to skip K (of K-W-L charts) and asked students to write what they want to know about DK history on W (of K-W-L charts). Students had 10 minutes to write their questions on the W chart.

Questions

- *What was the origin of Khmer Rouge Regime?*
- *Why did Khmer Rouge ban the protest?*
- *Why KR leaders did say that they did not know anything about the crimes commit by low cadres?*
- *What were the objectives of KR?*
- *What were the factors that make people cannot resistant?*
- *What happened in the tribunal?*
- *Why did KR kill people?*
- *What is the genocide definition?*

○ What are the effects of Khmer Rouge regime on Cambodia society?



Figure 2 Student write questions in W chart

Mr. Rasy began his presentation on DK history contents based on the eight policies of Democratic Kampuchea. First, he showed the photos of KR leaders and brief about their biographies. He also addressed the trial and situation of those perpetrators. All students were focused on Mr. Rasy presentation.

Results from Survey

After participated in two hours classroom forum, students were significantly gained knowledge on DK history. Based on figure below, majority of students already have basic knowledge about DK history. After joined the forum, the percentage of students who gain a lot of knowledge about DK history moderately increase 60%.

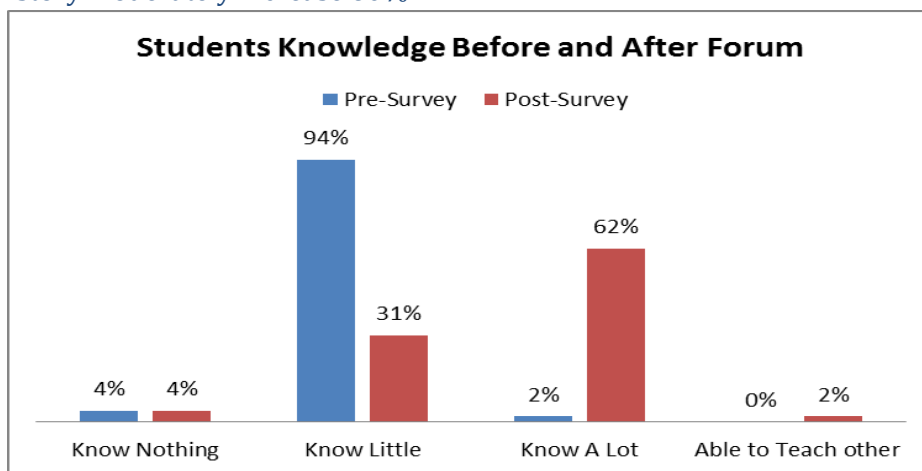


Figure 3: Students Knowledge Before and After Classroom Forum

After attended the forum, 98% of students believe that study DK history is important. The majority of students (85%) disagree with the discrimination against children of perpetrator

while 25% other still uncertain in this issue and select the discriminate point. By attended the classroom forum, students also agree that the study of DK history help them to think of building peace (91%), healing (55%), reconciliation (87%), and preventing the genocide (100%).

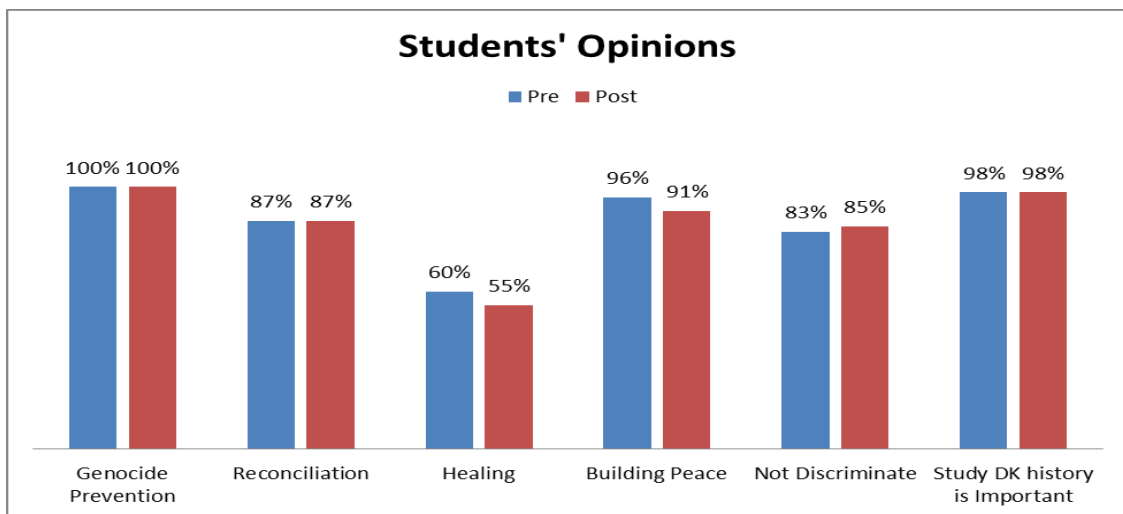


Figure 4: Students' Opinion on Study DK history, Discrimination, Building Peace, Healing, Reconciliation, and Genocide Prevention

In order to promote human rights and genocide prevention, team also integrated twelve questions (appendix) that related to human rights and genocide knowledge in the survey. The questions were in form of multiple choice questions. There were approximately 51% (average) of students able to get the right answers.

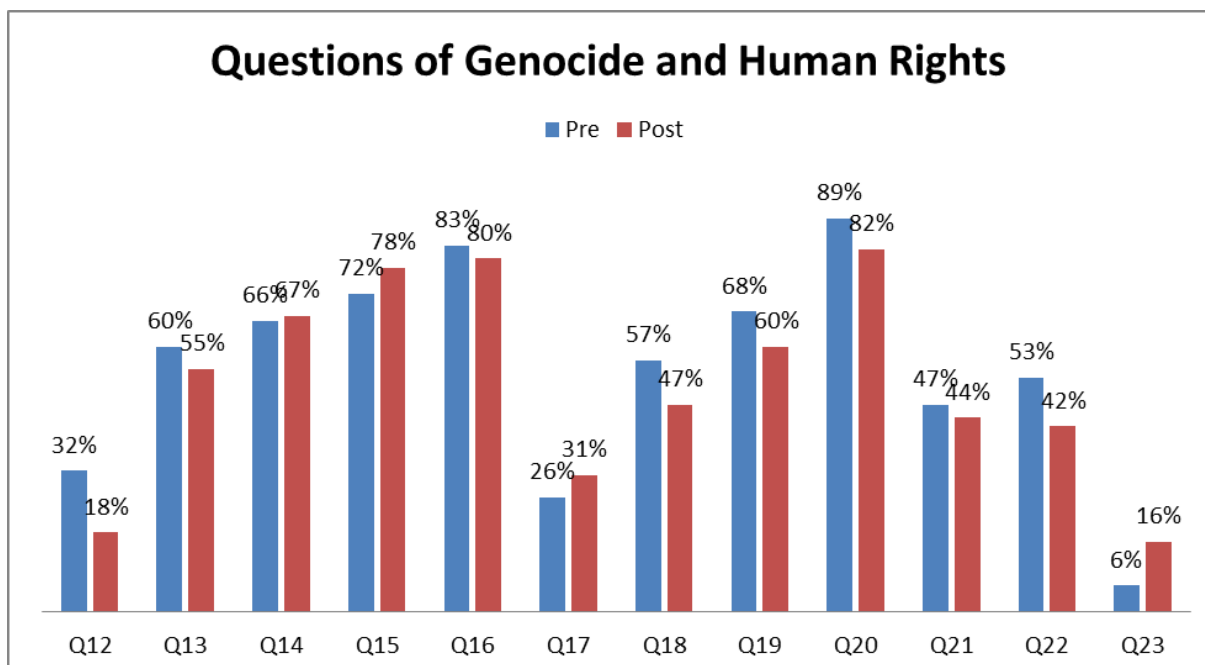


Figure 5: Answers of Genocide and Human Rights Questions

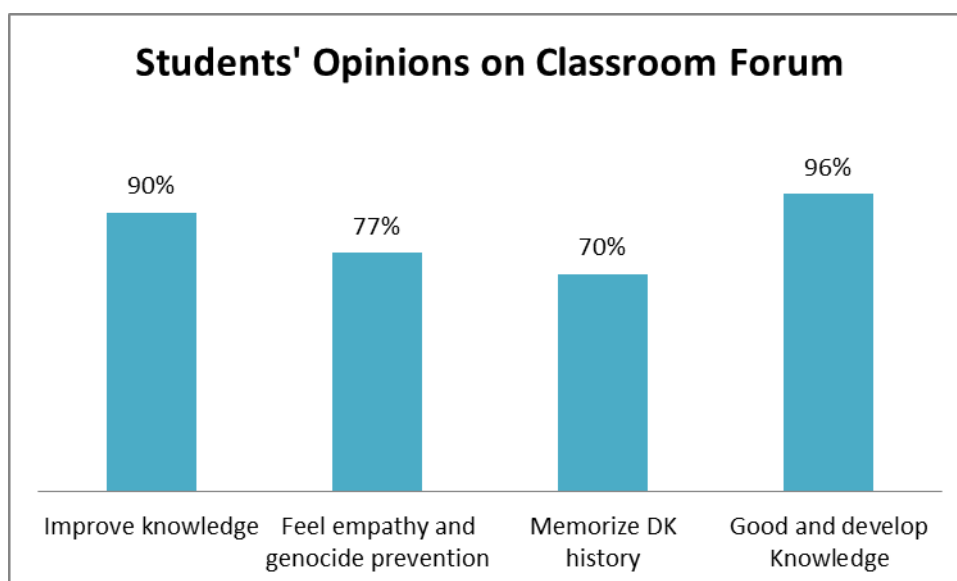


Figure 6: Students' Opinion on Classroom Forum

Conclusion

Classroom forum at Hun Sen Samrong high school was successful conducted with the effort of DC-Cam team, cooperation with host school, and enthusiastic participation of students. These are the reason which Genocide Education should continue educate young people about the genocide in our country to people understand and to increase their awareness. Base on observation, students were focus on the lecture and showed the appreciation after the forum finished.

Appendix

Table 1: Pre- and Post-Forum Results

<i>N</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
		<i>Pre</i>		<i>Post</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	26	(55%)	24	(53%)
	<i>Female</i>	21	(45%)	21	(47%)
<i>History of Democratic Kampuchea Knowledge</i>					
1	<i>Would you describe your know ledge of DK period?</i>				
	I know nothing	2	4	2	4
	I know a little	44	94	14	31
	I know a lot	1	2	28	62
	I know enough to teach other	0	0	1	2
2	<i>Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during DK period?</i>				
	Yes	47	100	43	95
	No	0	0	0	0
	N/A	0	0	2	5
3	<i>Have you ever talk about DK period with your parents or people who experience that period?</i>				
	Yes	36	77	39	87
	No	11	23	6	13
	N/A	0	0	0	0

4	<i>Do you think the studying of DK history is important?</i>				
	Yes	46	98	44	98
	No	1	2	1	2
	N/A	0	0	0	0
5	<i>If one of your friends is s son/daughter of perpetrator, would you discriminate against his/her?</i>				
	Yes	8	17	7	15
	No	39	83	38	85
	N/A	0	0	0	0
6	<i>Which school level that DK history should be taught in?</i>				
	Primary school	4	8	3	7
	Junior school	15	32	18	40
	High school	25	53	19	42
	University	3	6	5	11
	N/A	0	0	0	0
7	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of peace building in Cambodia?</i>				
	Yes	45	96	41	91
	No	2	4	3	7
	N/A	0	0	0	0
8	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of healing?</i>				
	Yes	28	60	25	55
	No	19	13	20	45
	N/A	0	0	0	0
9	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of reconciliation?</i>				
	Yes	41	87	39	87
	No	6	13	6	13
	N/A	0	0	0	0
10	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of genocide prevention?</i>				
	Yes	47	100	45	100
	No	0	0	0	0
	N/A	0	0	0	0
11	<i>How do you feel about the studying of DK history?</i>				
	Want to know and understand about this history	39	83	31	69
	Do not want to know	1	2	0	0
	Feel empathy to victims	7	15	14	31
	Boring	0	0	0	0
	N/A	0	0	0	0
<u>Human Rights Knowledge</u>					
12	<i>Which response below is the best definition of genocide as stated in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide?</i>				
	Killing members of a political group with the intent to destroy the entire group because of their political agenda	13	27	16	36
	Arresting leaders of a religious group with the intent to undermine the practice of religion	14	30	20	44

	<u>Deliberately starving an ethnic group with the intent to destroy the people</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>18</u>
	Killing enemy soldiers who are shooting at your soldiers during war	5	11	1	2
	N/A				
13	<i>Which response below reflects circumstances that support violence and possibly future genocide in community?</i>				
	Students engaged in peaceful protest against a school policy	9	19	9	20
	<u>Local leaders requirement to force members of a religious group to live separate from the rest of the community</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>55</u>
	Police arresting persons who trespass on government property	1	2	2	4
	Immigrants from another country seeking to settle in a community	9	19	9	20
	N/A	0	0	0	0
14	<i>Which response below reflects circumstances that support violence and possibly future genocide in a country?</i>				
	<u>Religious leaders who describe members of another religion as “sub-human” and “worthy of death.”</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>67</u>
	Religious leaders who encourage their members to pray for members of another religion.	3	6	5	11
	Political leaders who encourage everyone to vote.	10	21	6	13
	Individuals who petition their government leaders to adopt a policy.	3	6	2	4
	N/A	0	0	2	4
15	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on individuals?</i>				
	Individuals suffer as a result of lower wages and job growth.	1	2	2	4
	<u>Individuals mourn the loss of family and friends who were tortured and/or killed.</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>78</u>
	Individuals are not impacted by genocide. Genocide only affects groups of people.	2	4	2	4
	Only children are impacted by genocide by the loss of parents.	10	21	5	11
	N/A	0	0	1	2
16	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on families and communities?</i>				
	Individuals suffer during genocide but generally families and communities are unharmed.	1	2	0	0
	Only poor families ever suffer during genocide. Rich families never suffer during genocide.	3	6	4	9
	<u>Genocide can impact families and communities in many ways for generations.</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>80</u>

	Genocide impacts communities but families can always escape by fleeing to another country.	4	8	4	9
	N/A	0	0	0	0
17	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on <u>countries</u>?</i>				
	Countries are not impacted by genocide.	1	2	0	0
	Countries can be impacted by genocide but the world is too big to be impacted.	14	30	18	40
	Countries suffer from genocide only when it is occurring. They can rebuild quickly	20	43	13	29
	<u>Countries can be impacted by genocide for generations.</u>	12	26	14	31
	N/A	0	0	0	0
18	<i>Which response below is the best description of an important strategy that <u>individuals</u> can do to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Individuals can ignore violence when it occurs because there is nothing they can do	1	2	3	7
	Individuals can prevent violence by attacking their enemies before they are attacked	7	15	7	16
	Individuals can prevent violence by staying quiet and not criticizing violence	12	25	14	31
	<u>Individuals can prevent violence by speaking against such violence</u>	27	57	21	47
	N/A	0	0	0	0
19	<i>Which response below is the best description of <u>another</u> important strategy that <u>individuals</u> can do to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Individuals can encourage violence against their enemies	2	4	3	7
	Individuals can encourage victims to be silent because speaking out against violence will only encourage more violence	12	25	12	27
	<u>Individuals can denounce violence and encourage peaceful solutions to conflicts</u>	32	68	27	60
	Individuals can encourage perpetrators to commit their violence without public attention, which only aggravates the situation	1	2	3	7
	N/A	0	0	0	0
20	<i>Which response below is the best description of an important strategy that <u>communities</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	<u>Communities can protect the individual rights of all community members, regardless of religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, political opinion or other characteristics</u>	42	89	37	82
	Communities can protect the individual rights of the	2	4	3	7

	majority group at the expense of minorities in order to preserve peace, order and stability				
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights; rather, they must always seek to maintain peace, order and stability	2	4	4	9
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights because this is always a state responsibility	1	2	1	2
	N/A	0	0	0	0
21	<i>Which response below is the best description of <u>another</u> important strategy that <u>communities</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Communities can prevent violence by identifying minorities and requiring them to live separate from the rest of the community.	5	11	7	16
	<u>Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate human diversity through education about different cultures, religions, and communities.</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>44</u>
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate their own culture and identify ways to protect it from outside influence.	18	38	10	22
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth how to protect themselves and their communities through self-defense training	2	4	8	18
	N/A	0	0	0	0
22	<i>Which response below reflects an important strategy that <u>countries</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Countries can prevent violence by censoring information and news.	8	17	8	18
	Countries can prevent violence by attacking enemies before they are attacked	0	0	1	2
	Countries can never prevent violence but they can assist in peaceful resolution.	14	30	17	38
	<u>Countries can prevent violence through education and diplomacy</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>42</u>
	N/A	0	0	0	0
23	<i>Which response below reflects <u>another</u> important strategy that <u>countries</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	<u>Countries can identify and publicly denounce circumstances that support genocide.</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>16</u>
	Countries should never denounce other countries because it will weaken future diplomacy.	9	19	5	11
	Countries should only denounce enemies that support violence or genocide. Countries should	3	6	8	18

	never denounce allies involved in genocide because they are allies.				
	Countries should only help people who deserve to be helped. Some genocide is necessary to preserve peace and order.	31	66	25	55
	N/A	0	0	0	0
<u>Opinion on the Forum</u>					
24	What do you think about this classroom forum?				
	Good and help develop my knowledge			43	96
	Not good, did not help anything at all			1	2
	N/A			1	2
25	What this classroom forum can help you?				
	Improve my knowledge on KR history			10	22
	Help to memorize the KR history			1	2
	Encourage to feel empathy and genocide prevention			4	9
	All above			30	68
	N/A			0	0

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