

**Classroom Forum on “The Important of Studying the History of Democratic Kampuchea
1975-1979”**

At Pea Reang High School

22 Mar, 2019

Photo:

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Supported by: USAID

Introduction

On 22 Mar, 2018, Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) in collaboration with Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) supported by United State Agency for International Development (USAID) conducted Classroom Forum on The Important of Studying the History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) with 82 grade 12 students (59 female) of Pea Reang high school¹, Pea Reang district, Prey Veng province.

The purpose of this classroom forum was to educate student’s grade 12 on history of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979), provided opportunities to ask question and discuss, to think critically about what happen in the past atrocities, and consider its impacts on present society.

School principle addressed to students that it is a good opportunity for students to learn, to understand about KR history. He encouraged students to pay attention and focus on this lecture because it will benefit them in the exam, especially grade 12 national exam. All students should taking note, listen, and ask questions.

Mr. Pheng Pong-Rasy, Director of Genocide Research and Education Program in Cambodia of DC-Cam, introduced himself and responsibilities, team to students one by one. He also mentioned the important of this forum as well as goal of genocide and violence prevention in Cambodia. The team included: Mr. Rasy as mentioned above; Min Sanas and Phat Sela.

Pre- and Post-forum Survey

Before the starting the presentation, DC-Cam team gave Pre-forum survey sheets to each student. The survey aims to exposed knowledge of students about KR history before the forum started. The questionnaire included questions of basic knowledge of KR history, the perception of students toward the important events during KR regime, their opinion toward Human Rights violations during KR regime, and the Human Rights promoting. Each student had 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

¹ <https://photos.app.goo.gl/zJhHZCNon5Z6fV7WA>

After the presentation on history content finished, DC-Cam team began to distribute the post-survey sheets to each participants. This survey is similar to the previous one. There are few questions added to explore the understanding of students on human Rights violations which occurred during the KR regime.

Presentation on History of Democratic Kampuchea

Mr. Rasy asked students “who were the KR?” he showed KR leaders and briefed about their biographies to students one by one. Mr. Rasy presented based on Khmer Rouge timeline and chronology. Finally, he explained about KR eight policies. Next, Mr. Rasy started Q&A session. There were four questions asked by students.

1. What was the KR regime creating for?
2. How did the regime fall?
3. Who named Khmer Rouge?

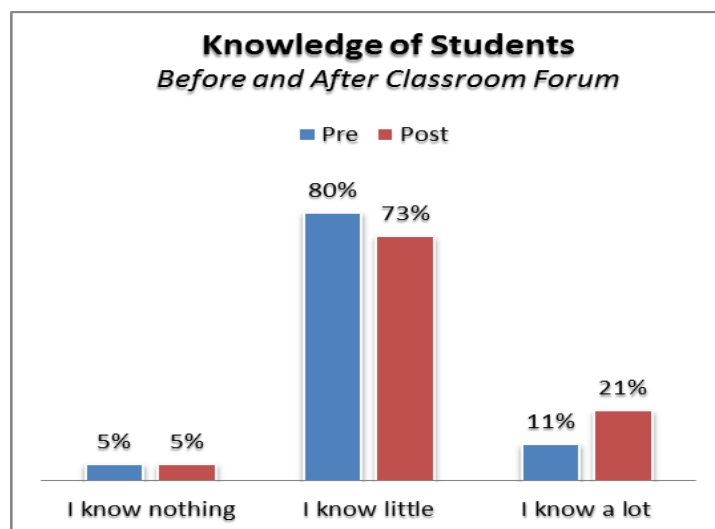
Finally, he introduced the Khmer Rouge History website: khmerrougehistory.org and Facebook Page: *Genocide Education in Cambodia* to students.

History of Democratic Kampuchea 1975-1979 Textbook Distribution

During the post-survey, DC-Cam team also started to distribute the History of Democratic Kampuchea 1975-1979 textbook to each student. These textbooks are English version one and were given to students as additional learning material on both history content and English language. By given these textbooks, students will about to understand and know more about KR history as well as encourage them to improve their English language through reading the textbook.

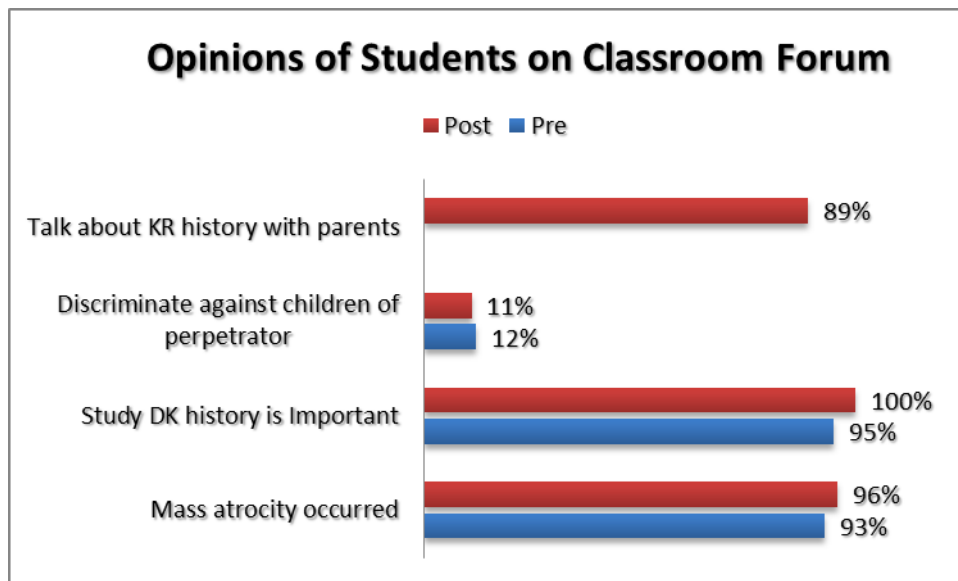
Data Analysis and Results

The questionnaires from both pre and post-survey were checked carefully and transferred into analyze program IBM SPSS version 22. Descriptive analyze was used to identify the

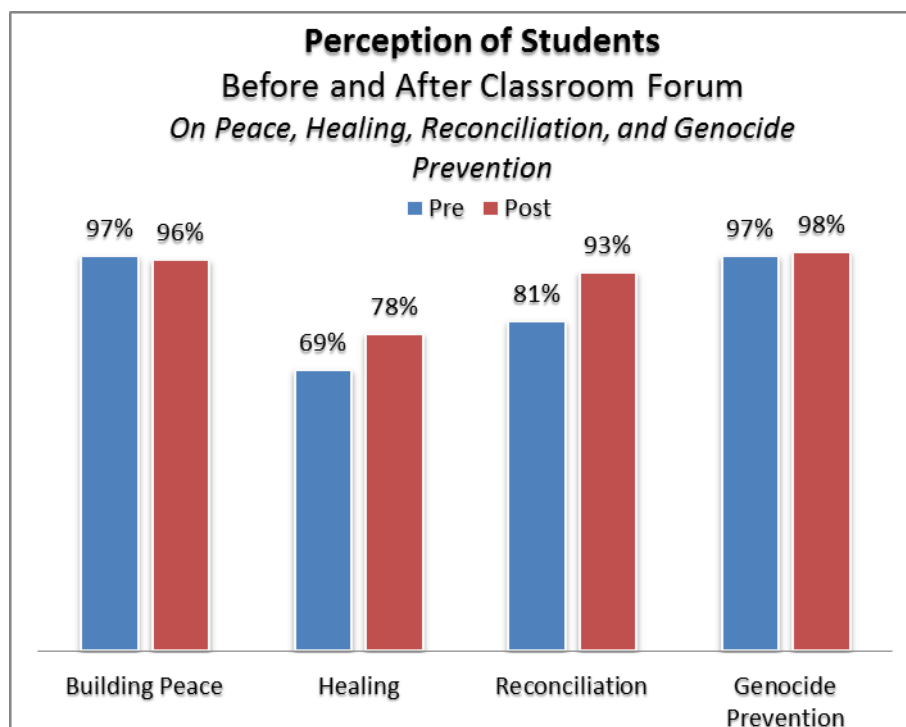


percentage of students who answered the questions.

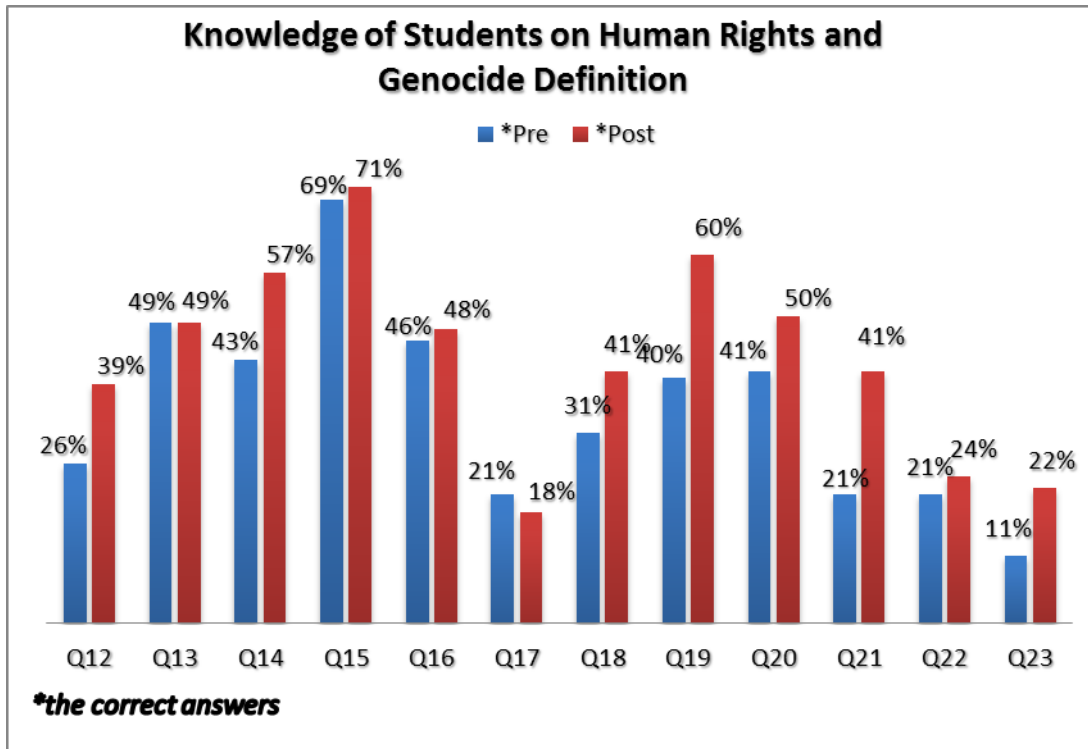
After participated in classroom forum for two hours, students are able to understand a lot about DK history. 80% of students know little about DK history before joined the forum decrease to 73% at the post-forum survey, however, percentage of students who very knowledge about DK history moderately increase from 11% to 21% at post-forum survey.



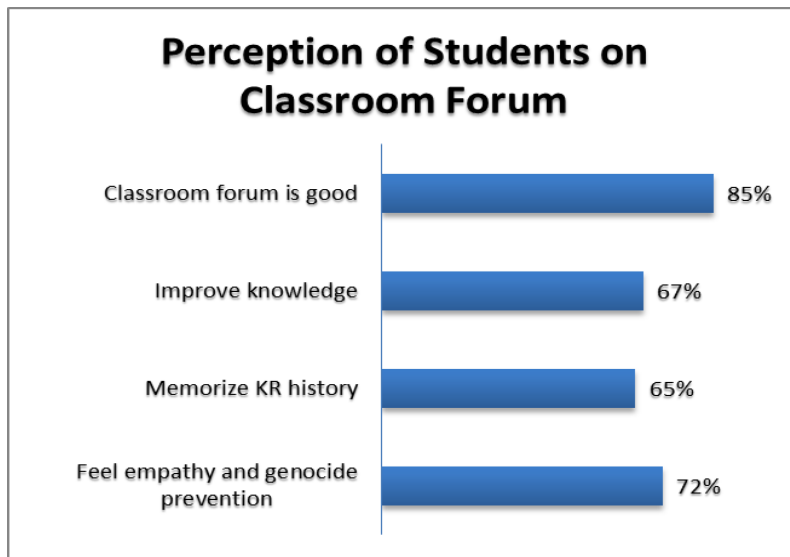
The discrimination against children of perpetrator still occur in society, however, there 89% of total students who joined classroom forum disagree against the idea of discrimination against children of perpetrator while other (11%) still have negative feeling toward those children. This can illustrate that genocide education is needed in Cambodia society to education people from every level. After classroom forum, all of student believes that study DK history is important.



After two hours lectured, most students (96%) think that study DK history could encourage them to think of building peace in Cambodia society, 98% believe that it could encourage them to think of genocide prevention in the future, 93% agree that it could encourage them to think of reconciliation while only 78% of students think that the study of DK history could help them to think of healing.



Human rights and genocide knowledge also include in the pre-and post-survey in the multiple choices from. Figure above illustrate the percentage of correct answers. The average percentage of correct answer in pre-survey is 34.91% and its increase to 43.33% in post-survey.



85% of student agrees that this classroom forum is good. 67% of students in classroom forum believe that this forum help them to develop their knowledge on DK history, help them to remember (65%), and encourage them to feel empathy, tolerance, and prevent the genocide reoccur (72%).

Conclusion

Classroom forum at Pea Reang high school was successful conducted with the effort of DC-Cam team, cooperation with host school, and enthusiastic participated of students. There are issues about student's opinions pre and post survey (see the appendix). These are the reason which we should continue to 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.

Team : Pheng Pong-Rasy, Min Sanas, and Phat Sela

Support : USAID and MoEYS

Photo Link : <https://photos.app.goo.gl/zJhHZCNon5Z6fV7WA>

Appendix

N	Questions	F	%	F	%
		Pre		Post	
	Age: 18				
	Male	23	(27%)	23	(28%)
	Female	62	(73%)	59	(72%)
History of Democratic Kampuchea Knowledge					
1	<i>Would you describe your know ledge of DK period?</i>				
	I know nothing	4	5	4	5
	I know a little	68	80	60	73
	I know a lot	9	11	17	21
	I know enough to teach other	0	0	0	0
2	<i>Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during DK period?</i>				
	Yes	79	93	79	96
	No	3	4	2	2
	N/A	3	4	1	1
3	<i>Have you ever talk about DK period with your parents or people who experience that period?</i>				
	Yes	68	80	73	89
	No	10	12	9	11
	N/A	7	8	0	0
4	<i>Do you think the studying of DK history is important?</i>				
	Yes	81	95	82	100
	No	3	4	0	0
	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	3	4	2	2
	No	78	92	80	98
	N/A	4	4	0	0
6	<i>Which school level that DK history should be taught in?</i>				
	Primary school	6	7	6	7
	Junior school	43	51	40	49
	High school	27	32	30	37
	University	1	1	1	1
	N/A	8	9	5	6
7	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of peace building in Cambodia?</i>				
	Yes	82	97	79	96
	No	2	2	3	4
	N/A	1	1	0	0
8	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of healing?</i>				
	Yes	59	69	64	78

	No	20	23	16	19
	N/A	6	7	2	2
9	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of reconciliation?</i>				
	Yes	69	81	76	93
	No	7	8	5	6
	N/A	9	11	1	1
10	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of genocide prevention?</i>				
	Yes	82	97	80	98
	No	1	1	1	1
	N/A	2	2	1	1
11	<i>How do you feel about the studying of DK history?</i>				
	Want to know and understand about this history	57	67	54	66
	Do not want to know	0	0	1	1
	Feel empathy to victims	23	27	22	27
	Boring	0	0	0	0
	N/A	5	6	5	6
<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	10	12	14	17
	Arresting leaders of a religious group with the intent to undermine the practice of religion	23	27	27	33
	<u>Deliberately starving an ethnic group with the intent to destroy the people</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>39</u>
	Killing enemy soldiers who are shooting at your soldiers during war	7	8	4	5
	N/A	19	22	5	6
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	12	14	17	21
	<u>Local leaders requirement to force members of a religious group to live separate from the rest of the community</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>49</u>
	Police arresting persons who trespass on government property	1	1	3	4
	Immigrants from another country seeking to settle in a community	9	11	12	15
	N/A	21	25	10	12
14	<i>Which response below reflects circumstances that support violence and possibly future</i>				

	<i>genocide in a country?</i>				
	<u>Religious leaders who describe members of another religion as “sub-human” and “worthy of death.”</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>57</u>
	Religious leaders who encourage their members to pray for members of another religion.	5	6	9	11
	Political leaders who encourage everyone to vote.	13	15	11	13
	Individuals who petition their government leaders to adopt a policy.	2	2	3	4
	N/A	28	33	12	15
15	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on <u>individuals</u>?</i>				
	Individuals suffer as a result of lower wages and job growth.	6	7	6	7
	<u>Individuals mourn the loss of family and friends who were tortured and/or killed.</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>71</u>
	Individuals are not impacted by genocide. Genocide only affects groups of people.	4	5	2	2
	Only children are impacted by genocide by the loss of parents.	4	5	10	12
	N/A	12	14	6	7
16	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on <u>families and communities</u>?</i>				
	Individuals suffer during genocide but generally families and communities are unharmed.	5	6	2	2
	Only poor families ever suffer during genocide. Rich families never suffer during genocide.	3	3	9	11
	<u>Genocide can impact families and communities in many ways for generations.</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>48</u>
	Genocide impacts communities but families can always escape by fleeing to another country.	23	27	24	29
	N/A	15	18	7	8
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.	3	3	3	4
	Countries can be impacted by genocide but the world is too big to be impacted.	15	18	30	37
	Countries suffer from genocide only when it is occurring. They can rebuild quickly	34	40	28	34
	<u>Countries can be impacted by genocide for generations.</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>18</u>
	N/A	15	18	6	7
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</i>				

	<i>genocide?</i>				
	Individuals can ignore violence when it occurs because there is nothing they can do	6	7	4	5
	Individuals can prevent violence by attacking their enemies before they are attacked	5	6	12	15
	Individuals can prevent violence by staying quiet and not criticizing violence	25	29	23	28
	<u>Individuals can prevent violence by speaking against such violence</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>41</u>
	N/A	23	27	9	11
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	3	3	5	6
	Individuals can encourage victims to be silent because speaking out against violence will only encourage more violence	16	19	15	18
	<u>Individuals can denounce violence and encourage peaceful solutions to conflicts</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>60</u>
	Individuals can encourage perpetrators to commit their violence without public attention, which only aggravates the situation	1	1	1	2
	N/A	31	36	12	15
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>	<u>35</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>50</u>
	Communities can protect the individual rights of the majority group at the expense of minorities in order to preserve peace, order and stability	12	14	14	17
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights; rather, they must always seek to maintain peace, order and stability	3	3	7	8
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights because this is always a state responsibility	3	3	4	5
	N/A	32	38	16	19
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.	3	3	6	7
	<u>Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate human diversity through education about different cultures, religions, and communities.</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>41</u>
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate their own culture and identify ways to protect it from outside influence.	20	23	20	24
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth how to protect themselves and their communities through self-defense training	5	6	8	10
	N/A	39	46	14	17
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.	9	11	18	22
	Countries can prevent violence by attacking enemies before they are attacked	3	3	5	6
	Countries can never prevent violence but they can assist in peaceful resolution.	15	18	27	32
	<u>Countries can prevent violence through education and diplomacy</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>24</u>
	N/A	40	47	12	15
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>9</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>22</u>
	Countries should never denounce other countries because it will weaken future diplomacy.	2	2	7	8
	Countries should only denounce enemies that support violence or genocide. Countries should never denounce allies involved in genocide because they are allies.	7	8	19	23
	Countries should only help people who deserve to be helped. Some genocide is necessary to preserve peace and order.	17	20	22	27
	N/A	50	59	16	19
<u>Opinion on the Forum</u>					
24	What do you think about this classroom forum?				

	Good and help develop my knowledge	70	85
	Not good, did not help anything at all	2	2
	N/A	10	12
25	What done this classroom forum help you?		
	Improve my knowledge on KR history	11	12
	Help to memorize the KR history	4	5
	Encourage to feel empathy and genocide prevention	6	7
	All above	49	60
	N/A	12	15