



SLEUK RITH INSTITUTE
A Permanent Documentation Center of Cambodia
66 Preah Sihanouk Blvd | Phnom Penh
+855 23 21 18 75 | www.cambodiasri.org

GENOCIDE EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA

DK HISTORY EDUCATION

REPORT

CLASSROOM FORUM ON THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING THE HISTORY OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA (1975-1979)

TUOL AMPIL HIGH SCHOOL

18 MARCH 2016

By Pheng Pong-Rasy & Min Sanas

INTRODUCTION

On March 18, 2016, Sleuk Rith Institutes (SRI) in collaboration with Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) launched its seventh classroom forum at Tuol Ampil high school, located in Dang Ko district, a suburb of Phnom Penh, with 101 grade-12 students who will formally study the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) history at the end of this academic year. The forum started at 2:25 p.m. Not a difference from others previous classroom forums, we distributed pre-survey to all students and asked them to complete the survey within 15 minutes. Next, the presentation of a history of DK and the importance of studying this history were begun along with Q&A from students. The forum took almost two hours before we started to let the student to complete post-survey. Last forum's program was focused on student's knowledge after the forum and book distribution.

The Khmer Rouge History Education's classroom forum will help the students to think critically of what happened during 1975 to 1979, to create dialogue or debate the history among the family and community, and to reflect on how the country's past informs its present-day problems and future. In addition, the forum will build on schools' pre-existing genocide education program that was established using DC-Cam/SRI's curriculum and it will provide additional opportunities for students learning as well as teacher monitoring.

The forum's process is to present the role of students in studying the DK history and highlighted student's prior knowledge of the DK history and the knowledge after attending the



forum as well as their thinking of building peace, healing, reconciliation, and preventing genocide in the future after they learned the DK history.

METHODOLOGY

The general purpose of the forum was to explore and help building deeper knowledge of students and history teachers about the genocide education which is part of each academic year's school curriculum. The forum was specifically intended to develop framework of studying of the DK history inside classroom and provided the concept of the importance of studying the DK history. The methodology that was used during the classroom forum was multiple activities set for students to gain more understanding the DK history and creating concepts of thinking of building peace, reconciliation, healing, and genocide prevention.

The forum involved one educational institution in Phnom Penh. One hundred and one grade-12 students were targeted to select to attend the forum, which its role is to act like “teacher teaches students in the actual classroom). The responsibilities of the students were to: 1) listen to the presentation of the DK history and the importance of studying the DK history, 2) discuss the history of DK, 3) express student's prior knowledge about the DK history, and 4) think critically about the events happening during the DK history.

The instruments used for the forum were pre- and post-surveys, K-W-L chart, observation and evaluation form which took place before and after the forum to measure student's knowledge on the DK history and the whole forum session. The pre- and post-surveys were distributed to students so as they can express their knowledge before and after the forum. The K-W-L chart (K = what I KNOW about the DK history, W = what I WANT to know about DK history, and L = what I LEARNED about DK history) were applied with the students as an important activities during the forum to capture the student's knowledge on the DK history. These activities involved with conversation between students and their family as well as their teacher about the history of DK. Moreover, these activities encouraged the students to think critically of what happened during the DK regime.

The book distribution was the last step of the forum. Each student received a copy of DK history textbook, a copy of DC-Cam's Searching for the Truth Magazine (Khmer version), and a copy of Khmer Rouge Timeline. These learning materials will be additional materials for them to learn about the DK history.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1) Pre- and Post-classroom forum survey:

One hundred and one (101) pre-classroom forum surveys were initially distributed to the students. All 101 pre-surveys were considered to be legitimate and useable for this forum. The pre-survey consists of 6 questions which include: 1) general understanding of Democratic Kampuchea (DK) history; 2) students' expression on the happening of DK history; 3) intergenerational dialogue between younger and older generations about DK history; 4) students' thought of the importance of studying DK history; 5) level of discrimination of students against their friends who are children of former Khmer Rouge cadre; and 6) students' opinion on the teaching of DK history in ASEAN.

Another one hundred and one (101) post-survey were distributed to students after the forum. Out of 101 participants, 88 post-surveys were collected and considered to be legitimate and useable for this forum. A length of 15 minutes was given to students to complete the post-classroom forum survey. This survey consisted of 10 questions. The first five questions are same as pre-survey, and the additional five questions were created to test student's knowledge about the purpose of studying DK history. The questions include: 1) Does the study of a history of DK encourage you to think of peace, healing, reconciliation and genocide prevention? 2) Do you feel uncomfortable learning the history of DK? And 3) what topic(s) in the DK period do you think *must* be taught in schools? The other two questions, question 4 and 5, are about to measure the forum session.

2) K-W Chart:

K Chart (what student KNOW):

Immediately after the teamwork collected the pre-surveys from the students, team members discussed students' prior knowledge on DK history with students. Table 1 below shows prior knowledge of students:

Table 1: What students KNOW about DK history?

<i>K Chart (What students KNOW)</i>
Killing people
Violence
Evacuation
Liberation day on April 17, 1975
Child abuse
Prohibition of human rights

Duration of KR time is 3 years 8 months and 20 days

Starvation

Forbidding Private Property

Equal classes

Elimination of culture and religion

W- Chart (what student WANT to know):

Students have chance to ask more questions about KR history. Those questions covered the movement of the KR, the creation of KR regime, the duration of KR regime, and the KR regime after 1979. Table 2 below shows a list of “what students want to know”:

Table 2: What students WANT to know about DK history?

W Chart (What students WANT to know)

I want to know the movement of the Khmer Rouge

Why was the Khmer Rouge regime created?

Why did the Khmer Rouge eliminate education system?

Who created the Khmer Rouge regime?

Why did Khmer Rouge force people to do overwork and offer lack of food?

Why did Khmer Rouge separate couple who just getting marriage?

Who was behind the leadership of Pol Pot?

Was the leadership of Pol Pot can bring the country to be more develop?

Why did Khmer Rouge offer people lack of food?

Why didn't Khmer Rouge pay more attention to injures and ill people?

How did the Khmer Rouge regime end?

Why this regime was called “Khmer Rouge”?

3) L Chart (What students LEARNED):

Presentation of a summary of DK history

The presentation started with “What is Khmer Rouge?” ‘Khmer Rouge’ was the name that King Norodom Sihanouk gave to his communist opponents in the 1960s. Along with the creation of this name and some events afterward, Khmer Rouge came to power in April 17, 1975. There were three important reasons of evacuation of city dwellers to the rural of the country. First reason was that the Khmer Rouge cadres asked all people to leave only three days and no need to bring along with any valuable property or heavily equipment. Second reason was that Ieng Sary, former

deputy prime minister, claimed that the evacuation came from the lack of facilities and transportation to bring food to the city, and the third reason was declared by Pol Pot at the time he visited China in 1977 by saying that the evacuation was to break up an “enemy spy organization.”

With a very brief of the DK history, the presentation was focused on few more events such as: the division of people (Old and New people), separation of family, torture, confession, enemies of Angkar (internal and external enemy), mass killing, purges, security office of KR, and the fall of DK regime in January 1979.

Presentation of “The importance of studying a history of Democratic Kampuchea

Five important reasons to study a history of Democratic Kampuchea were presented to the student after the presentation of a chapter of DK history textbook. They include: 1) study to find the origins of social behaviors which lead up to mass murder: i.e.: prejudices; stereotypes; racisms; religious hatreds; ethnic hatreds and discriminations; 2) study to understand the causes of crime which affect the economic development of the country, political and cultural traditions; 3) study to deeper understand the human rights, violations, personal responsibilities and the dangers of remaining silent; 4) study to prevent genocide which would happen again in the future and to engage development of the countries through peace-building and reconciliation from the grassroots level to the national level; and 5) learn to analyze the events of the genocide in the world through a comparative study of genocide in other countries.

Explaining the W-Chart and Q&A session

All questions from table 2 above were answered clearly. Table 3 below shows what students have learned from the forum.

Table3: What students LEARNED about DK history

<i>L Chart (What students LEARNED)</i>
Understood why the Khmer Rouge regime was created
Understood where the Khmer Rouge sold rice production
Understood why Khmer Rouge forced people to do overwork and offer lack of food
Understood why Khmer Rouge killed intellectuals
Understood the leadership of Pol Pot
Understood why Khmer Rouge separated people and couple who just getting marriage
Understood who was behind the leadership of Pol Pot
Understood why Khmer Rouge offered people lack of food

Understood why Khmer Rouge pay less attention to injures and ill people
 Understood the cause that Khmer Rouge regime collapse
 Understood why this regime was called “Khmer Rouge”

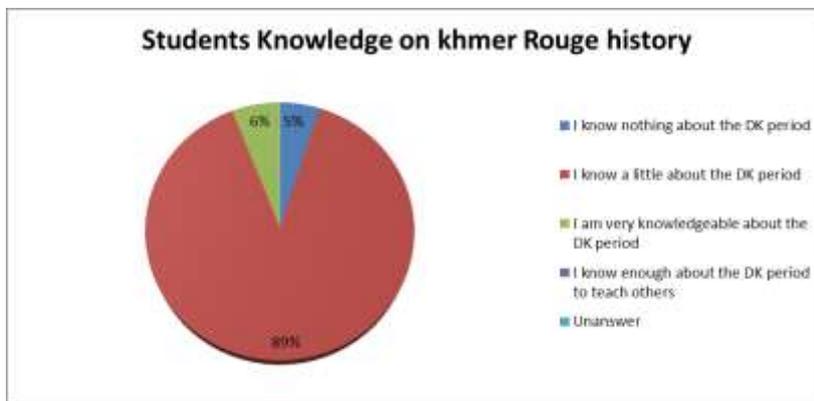
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTEPRETATION

Data Analysis

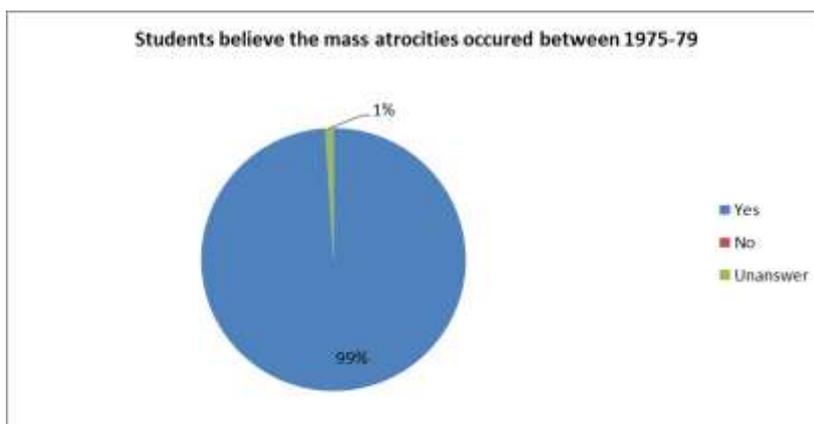
All questions in pre- and post-surveys are analyzed using Microsoft Excel to find accurate percentage of knowledge of the participants before and after the classroom forum.

Pre-survey Analysis:

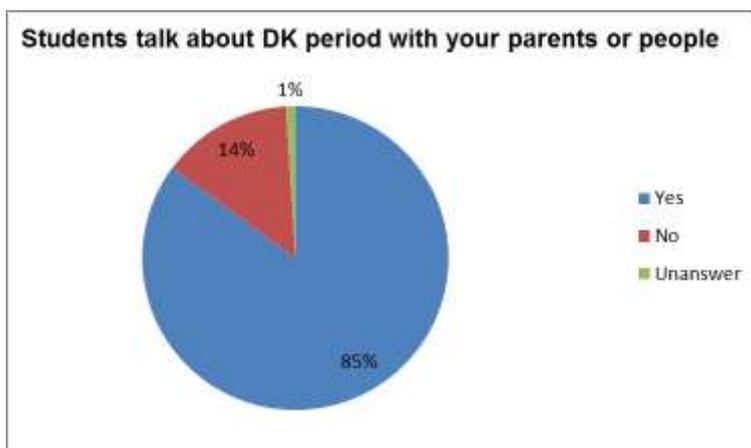
Q1. How would you describe your knowledge of the DK period?



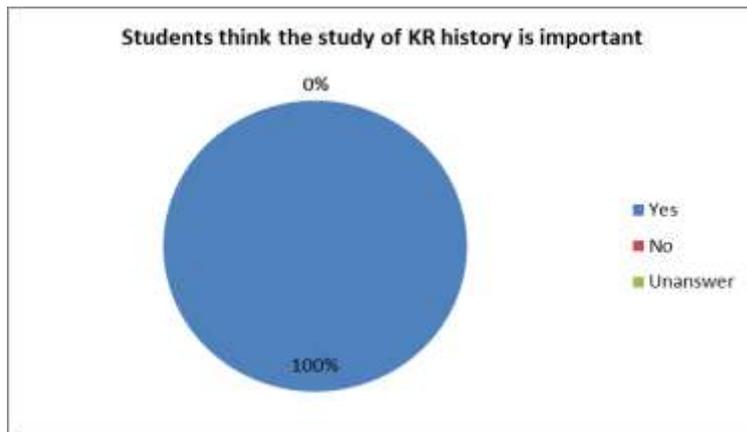
Q2. Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during the DK regime?



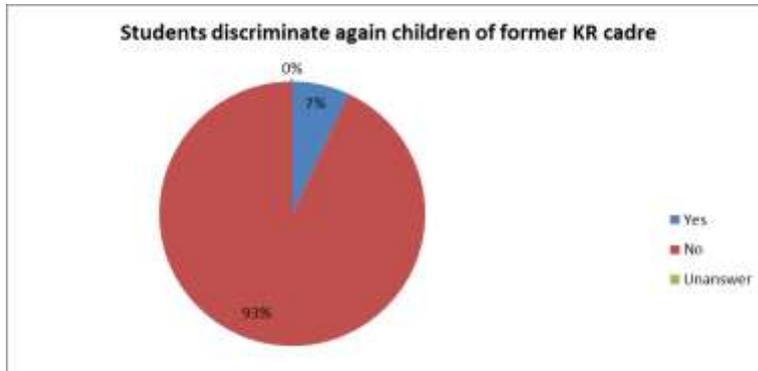
Q3. Have you ever talk about the DK period with your parents?



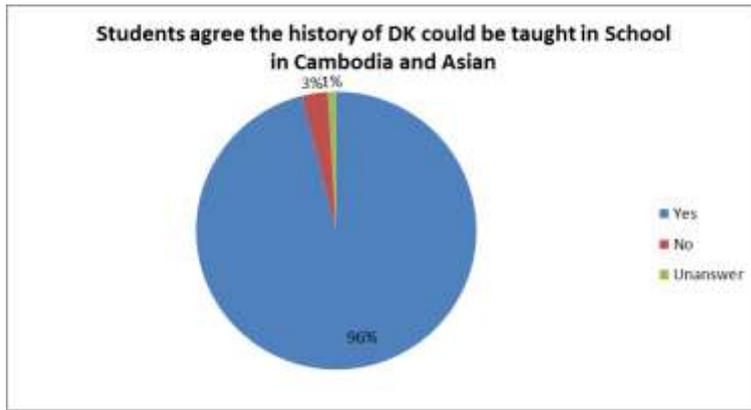
Q4. Do you think the study of a history of DK is important?



Q5. If one of your friends is a son/daughter of a perpetrator, would you discriminate against him or her?

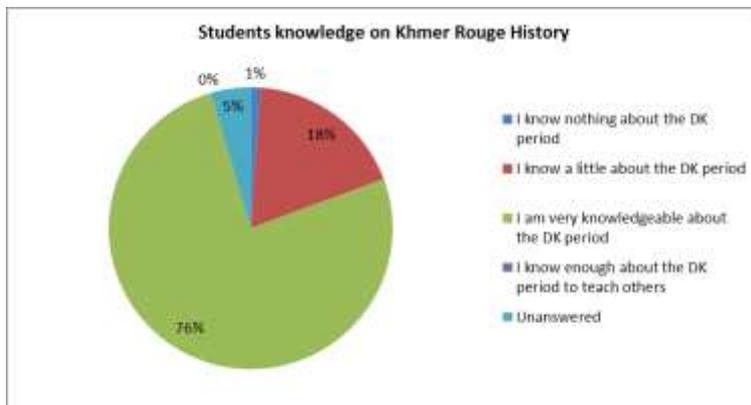


Q6. Does the history of DK could be taught in school in Cambodia and Asian?

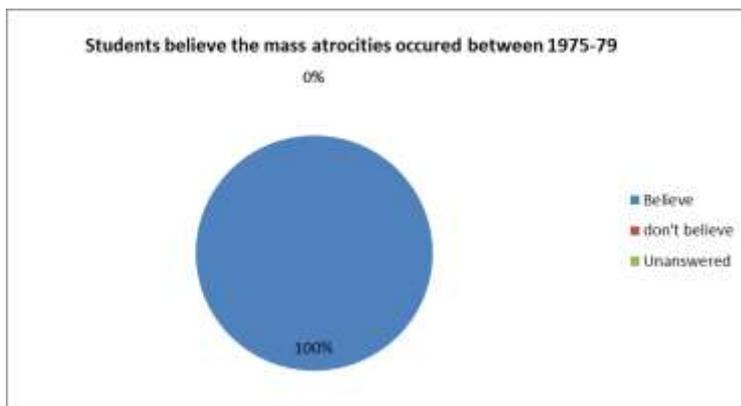


Post-survey Analysis:

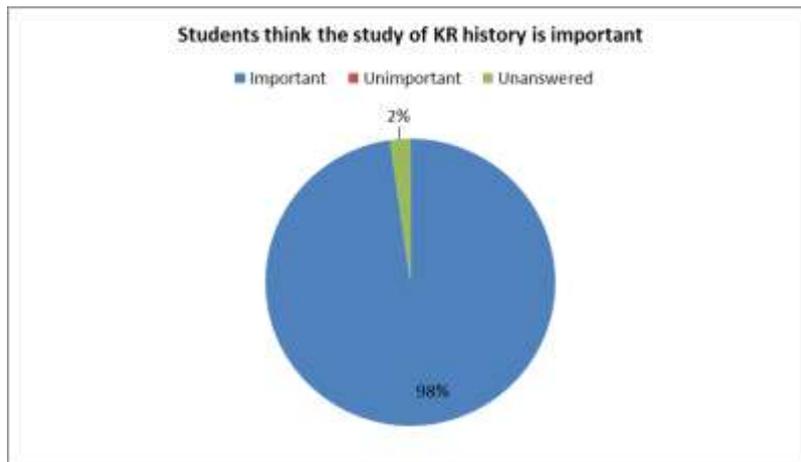
Q1. How would you describe your knowledge of the DK period?



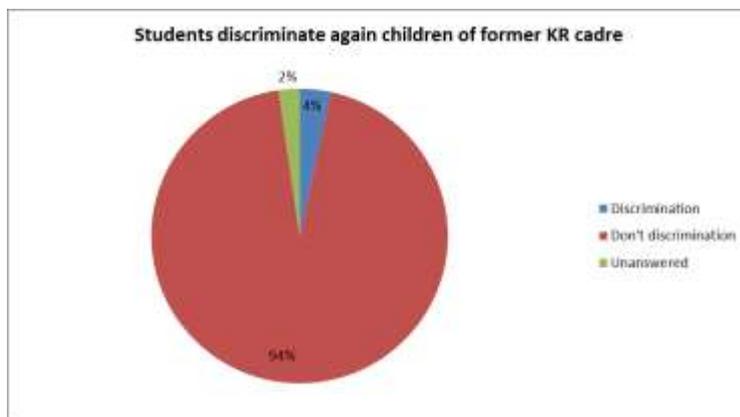
Q2. Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during the DK regime?



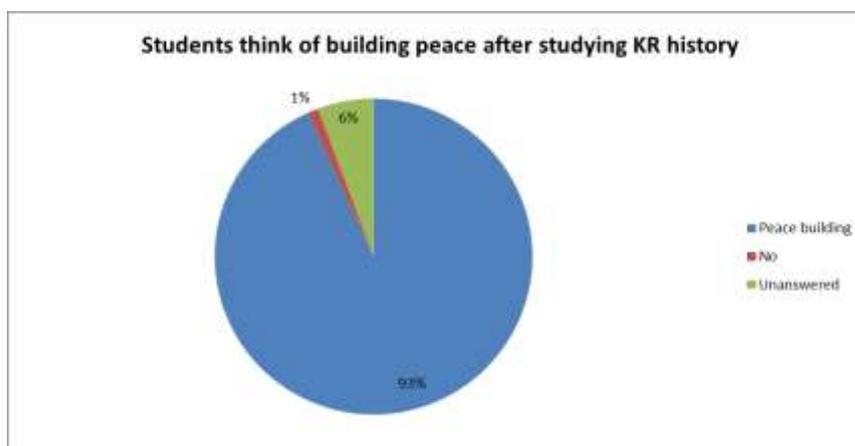
Q3. Do you think the study of a history of DK is important?



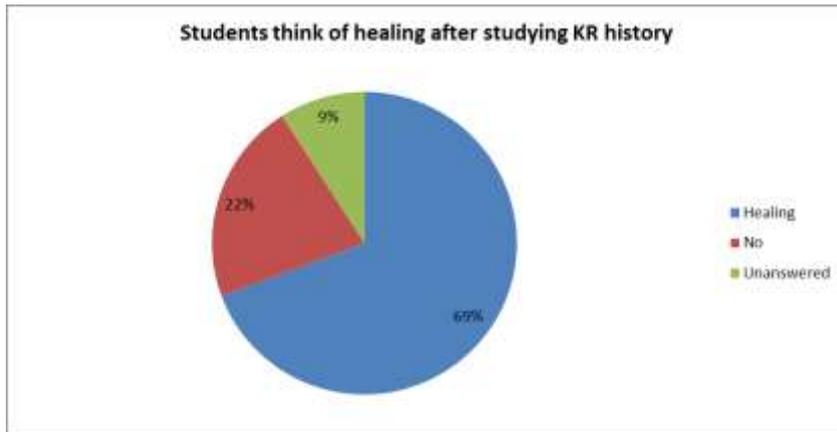
4. If one of your friends is a son/daughter of a perpetrator, would you discriminate against him or her?



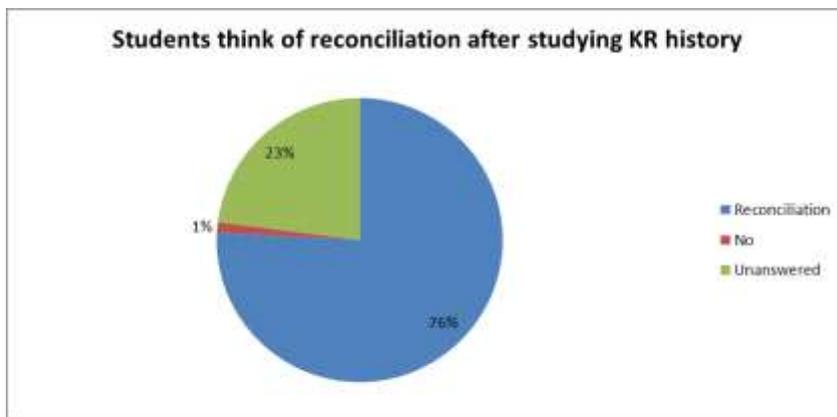
Q5. Does the study of a history of DK encourage you to think of building peace in Cambodian society?



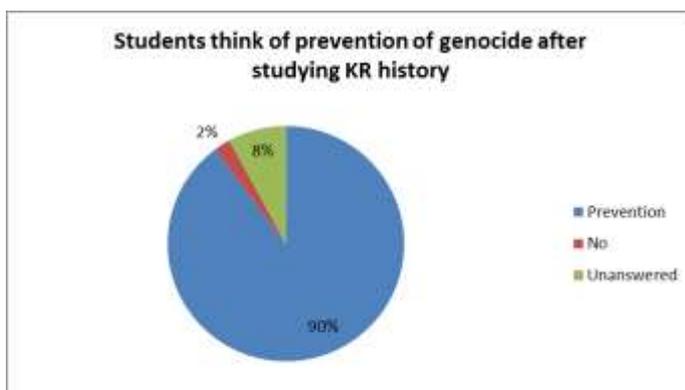
Q6. Does the study of a history of DK encourage you to think of healing?



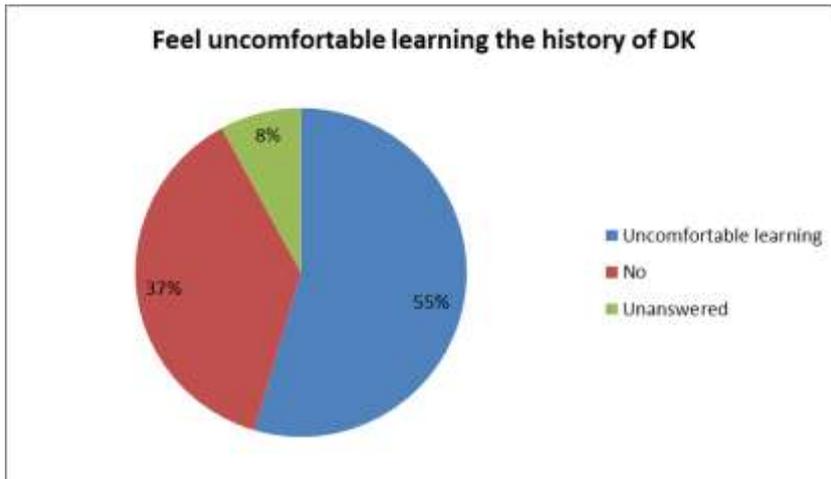
Q7. Does the study of a history of DK encourage you to think of reconciliation?



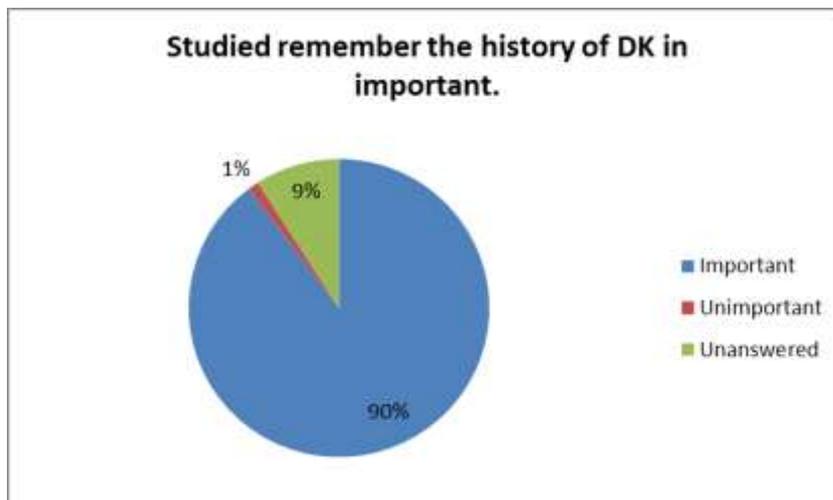
Q8. Does the study of a history of DK encourage you to think of Prevention of genocide in the future?



Q9. Do you feel uncomfortable learning the history of DK?



Q10. How to remember the history of Democratic Kampuchea is important?



Interpretation

Students decreased their knowledge of understanding the Khmer Rouge history from 89% to 18% of knowing little bit about this history after they attended the classroom forum. This shows that the students from Tuol Ampil high school were smart in studying the Khmer Rouge history.

Overall finding shows that most of the students have experienced talking the Khmer Rouge history with their parents and they feel that they don't think of any discrimination against their friends who are children of former Khmer Rouge cadres. From this feeling of students, sighs of unity and harmony were appeared in their minds. According to the finding, more than 69% of students said that the study of the Khmer Rouge history lead them to think of peace building among family and society, promoting reconciliation and preventing the genocide in Cambodia again in the future. Only small percentage (1% and 2%) of students thinks that the study of DK history could not

encourage them to think of building peace, reconciliation and genocide prevention. The medium number of the students (22%) felt that the study of DK history might not be a tool to healing people who experienced the Khmer Rouge regime. Table below presents the level of understanding of students to the study of DK history counting from before and after the classroom forum.

However, more than 50% of students feel uncomfortable learning the DK history because this learning affects their feeling. Most students said that they feel sympathy for people who live under the Khmer Rouge regime. At the same time, 37% of them feel comfortable learning this history because they thought that the learning of this history can make them feel more understanding the Khmer Rouge history.

Category	Before forum	After forum
Knowledge on DK history	89% - Know little bit about DK history. 6% - very knowledgeable about DK history. 5% - Know nothing about DK history	76% - very knowledgeable about DK history. 18% - Know little bit about DK history. 1% - know nothing 5% - no answer
Happening the mass atrocity	99% - believed the mass atrocity happened during DK. 1% - no answer	100% - believed the mass atrocity happened during DK.
Dialogue	85% - talk about KR period with parents/family 14% - did not talk 1% - no answer	
Importance of studying DK history	100% - think the study of DK history is important.	98% - think the study of DK history is important. 2% - no answer
Discrimination	93% - Don't discriminate against children of former KR cadre. 7% - discriminate against children of former KR cadre	94% - Don't discriminate against children of former KR cadre. 4% - discriminate against children of former KR cadre 2% - no answer
Peace Building		93% - KR history education help students to think of building peace. 1% - KR history education

		does not help students to think of building peace. 6% - no answer
Healing		69% - KR history education help students to think of healing. 22% - KR history education does not help students to think of healing. 9% - no answer
Reconciliation		76% - KR history education help students to think of reconciliation. 1% - KR history education does not help students to think of reconciliation. 23% - no answer
Genocide prevention		90% - KR history education help students to think of preventing genocide. 2% - KR history education does not help students to think of preventing genocide. 8% - did not answer.
Effectiveness of learning the DK history		55% - feel uncomfortable learning the DK history. 37% - feel comfortable learning the DK history. 8% - no answer

CONCLUSION

The students from Tuol Ampil high school are smart and enthusiastic about studying the Khmer Rouge history. Even though they are young (the age is under 20 years old), they know a lot about the Khmer Rouge history. Since no one force them to talk and discuss this with family, they have done this accordingly to what the society want them to create a dialogue with family about the Khmer Rouge history in order to build strongly communication between younger and older generation, to build peace and reconciliation and to prevent the genocide in Cambodia.



APPENDIX 1: PRE-CLASSROOM FORUM SURVEY FORM

GENOCIDE EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA

DK history Education

Classroom Forum for high school students

Pre-Survey

Name:	Age/Date of Birth:
Gender:	Grade:
Date:	

DIRECTIONS FOR POST-TRAINING SURVEY: Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions in this survey. Your answers are very important to the Ministry of Education and the Documentation Center of Cambodia. Your answers and any personal information you provide will be solely used for educational and research purposes of improving the genocide education project. Below you find three distinct surveys. If you are a student, you only need to answer the student survey; if you are a teacher, you only need to answer the survey for teachers; and if you are not a student or a teacher, please answer the survey for “others.” Thank you again for your participation and your help in the Genocide Education Project.

1. How would you describe your knowledge of the DK period? Choose one. a. I know nothing about the DK period. b. I know a little about the DK period. c. I know some facts about the DK period, but I am not very knowledgeable. d. I am very knowledgeable about the DK period. e. I know enough about the DK period to teach others.
2. Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during the DK regime? (Yes or No) Explain why or why not.
3. Have you ever talk about the DK period with your parents or people who lived during this time? (yes or No). What was the talking about?
4. Do you think the study of a history of DK is important? (Yes or No) Explain why or why not.
5. If one of your friends is a son/daughter of a perpetrator, would you discriminate against him or her? (Yes or No) Explain why or why not.
6. Does the history of DK could be taught in school in Cambodia and Asian? (Yes or No). Explain why or why not:

APPENDIX 2: POST-CLASSROOM FORUM SURVEY FORM

GENOCIDE EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA

DK history Education

Classroom Forum for high school students

Post-Survey

Name:	Age/Date of Birth:
Gender:	Grade:
Date:	

DIRECTIONS FOR POST-TRAINING SURVEY: Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions in this survey. Your answers are very important to the Ministry of Education and the Documentation Center of Cambodia. Your answers and any personal information you provide will be solely used for educational and research purposes of improving the genocide education project. Below you find three distinct surveys. If you are a student, you only need to answer the student survey; if you are a teacher, you only need to answer the survey for teachers; and if you are not a student or a teacher, please answer the survey for “others.” Thank you again for your participation and your help in the Genocide Education Project.

<i>After this classroom forum....</i>
<p>1. Do you satisfy this classroom forum?</p> <p>Yes or No</p>
<p>2. How would you describe your knowledge of the DK period? Choose one.</p> <p>f. I know nothing about the DK period.</p> <p>g. I know a little about the DK period.</p> <p>h. I know some facts about the DK period, but I am not very knowledgeable.</p> <p>i. I am very knowledgeable about the DK period.</p> <p>j. I know enough about the DK period to teach others.</p>
<p>3. Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during the DK regime? (Yes or No)</p> <p>Explain why or why not.</p>
<p>4. Do you think the study of a history of DK is important? (Yes or No)</p> <p>Explain why or why not.</p>
<p>5. If one of your friends is a son/daughter of a perpetrator, would you discriminate against him or her? (Yes or No)</p> <p>Explain why or why not.</p>
<p>6. Does the study of a history of DK encourage you to think of:</p> <p>a) Building peace in Cambodian society?</p> <p>Yes or No</p> <p>Describe your opinion:</p> <p>b) Healing?</p> <p>Yes or No</p> <p>Describe your opinion:</p> <p>c) Reconciliation?</p>

Yes or No

Describe your opinion:

d) Prevention of genocide in the future?

Yes or No

Describe your opinion:

7. Do you feel uncomfortable learning the history of DK? (Yes or No)
Explain why or why not.

8. What topic(s) in the DK period do you think *must* be taught in schools?

9. What does this classroom forum could help you?

10. Do you have comments on this classroom forum?