

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

**PREY VENG DOCUMENTATION CENTER
KHMER ROUGE'S EASTERN ZONE ARCHIVE
Genocide Research and Education in Cambodia**

**Classroom Forum at
Chamroeun Vichea Highschool**

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

May 29th, 2019



Introduction

On May 29th, 2019, 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 150 students (70% are female) at Chamroeun Vichea High school, Prey Province.

Aim of Classroom forum was to illustrate to High School students about the important of studying History of Democratic Kampuchea (KR regime) and as the way to promote

Documentation Center of Cambodia (constituted in 1995) *ស្វែងរកការពិត ដើម្បីការបដិសេធវិវត្តិជាតិ*
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66 Preah Sihanouk Blvd. • P.O.Box 1110 • Phnom Penh @ Cambodia
t (855-23) 211-875 • dccam@online.com.kh • www.dccam.org

building peace, healing, reconciliation, tolerance and genocide prevention. The objectives included: 1) Increase the awareness of students on DK history, (2) Give opportunities to students to ask questions, and (3) Encourage discussion and critical thinking on this history.

Methodology

The classroom forum consist 5 elements in order to transfer knowledge about the important of studying History of Democratic Kampuchea.

1. Pre- and Post-forum survey
2. Presentation on History content
3. Documentary film screening
 - a. Phnom Penh Ghost City
 - b. Children of Cambodia
 - c. Khmer Rouge Liberation Zone in 1973
 - d. Duch Forgiveness in ECCC
4. Q&A session
5. History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) textbook distribution

Pre- and post-survey aimed to explore students' knowledge about DK history before and after the Classroom forum. The questionnaire included the questions of students' opinion of DK history; the discrimination; peace, reconciliation, healing and preventing the genocide; human rights knowledge; and students' opinion on classroom forum (see in the appendix).

Questionnaires of both pre and post survey were collected and checked carefully to identify the invalid one. Next, the answers were interring the analysis program SPSS version 21. Descriptive statistic and frequency analysis were used to identify the percentage of student on each answered questions. Microsoft Excel was used to create and design chart (column, bar, line). 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.

Forum

Before the forum start, Mr. Thorn Theng, school principle gave remarks to his students which focused on the Khmer Rouge tribunal and a history of Democratic Kampuchea. He mentioned about his visit with the students to the ECCC where ECCC's officials explained ECCC's proceedings. He also shared with the students his experiences during the Lon Nol regime. It is noted that all of his students have prior knowledge about Khmer Rouge history. At the end of his speech, Mr. Thorn Theng encouraged his students to pay attention to the presentation and ask questions to the presenter. Following Mr. Thorn Theng's remarks, Mr. Pheng Pong-Rasy began his speech by thanking the school principal for providing the opportunities to the DC-Cam's team to

discuss Khmer Rouge history with the students. After that, he provided a brief summary of DC-Cam's work which is to collect and preserve Khmer Rouge documents. After the opening remarks, pre-forum surveys were distributed to the students.

Rasy began his presentation on Democratic Kampuchea history which focused on the creation of communist movement in Cambodia to the Khmer Rouge regime and eight policies of Democratic Kampuchea. During the presentation, Mr. Rasy also included four documentary films screening to the students. This session took about 90 minutes before which Q & A session began.

Q & A Session

No	Questions	Answers
1	Why did the KR kill people?	They just killed the enemy accused by the KR.
2	By so doing, how could the act of the KR develop the country?	Well ..., In order to develop Cambodia into a country with economics based on agriculture, the KR forced people into hard labor. For example, when you pass the final examination at high school, you get a certificate, but during the Khmer Rouge regime, if you want a degree, you need to obtain it in the field, by labor work.
3	Can the prosecution of the Khmer Rouge leaders relieve the suffering of Cambodian survivors?	The tribunal intends to serve justice to all people. It also provides collective reparations, not individual ones, such as KR education, just like what we are doing today, to all students.
4	How were religious practices like under the KR regime?	Religions were not allowed to practice during the Khmer Rouge regime. Pol Pot did not value any kind of religious practices because he thought that the practice would consume time and slow down the country's progress. The abolishment of religion was one of eight policies of the Khmer Rouge.

Perception of Studnets on Classroom forum



Maerl Thy (F), Phnornng Ethnic Grade 10th at Chamroeun Vichea High School said "I have gained a lot of knowledge and learned from experiences during the KR period from this forum. The presentation on the KR History was very important because it enables us to understand what took place during the

regime and helped to remind us not to repeat the same mistake. I suggest to the team to give more such presentations to students, devoting more time to discussion and questions. I would also suggest inviting a survivor to share his/ her life story at the presentation."

Chet Chariya (F), Phnornng Ethnic Grade 10th at Chamroeun Vichea High School said "After attending the lecture and the film screening, I feel empathy for the survivors who suffered from the unjust treatment of the KR. It is sympathetic that they had to go through family separation, lack of food and lack of clothes. For me, teaching KR History is so important as it helps preserve memory of the KR for younger generations, help people understand what happened, as well as maintain peace for all humanity."

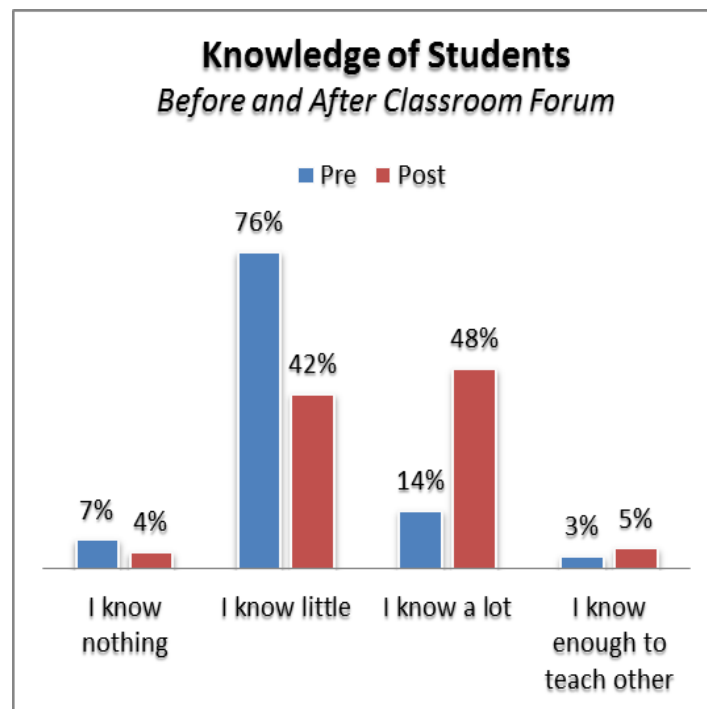




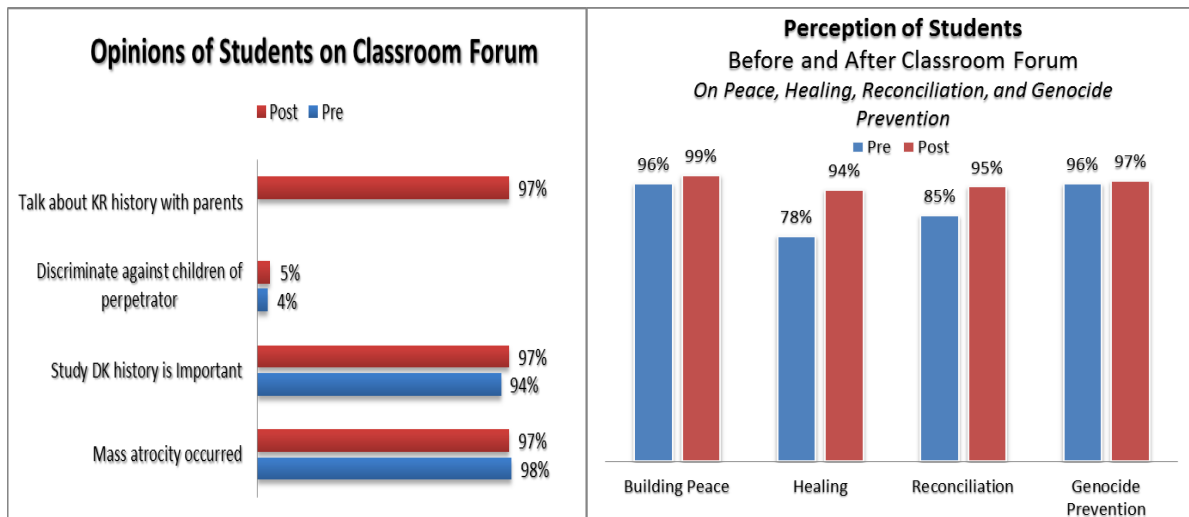
Keat Kong (M), Phnornng Ethnic Grade 10th at Chamroeun Vichea High School said "I feel that I have gained so much knowledge on what happened under the KR period from the forum today. Also, it is the privilege that I could attend the lecture conducted by DC-Cam's team. I am very happy that DC-Cam's team

gave a presentation on the KR history, which is important for me and younger generations, to have a better understanding on what happened. I would like to know what happened under the regime, the suffering of people and biographies of the KR leaders."

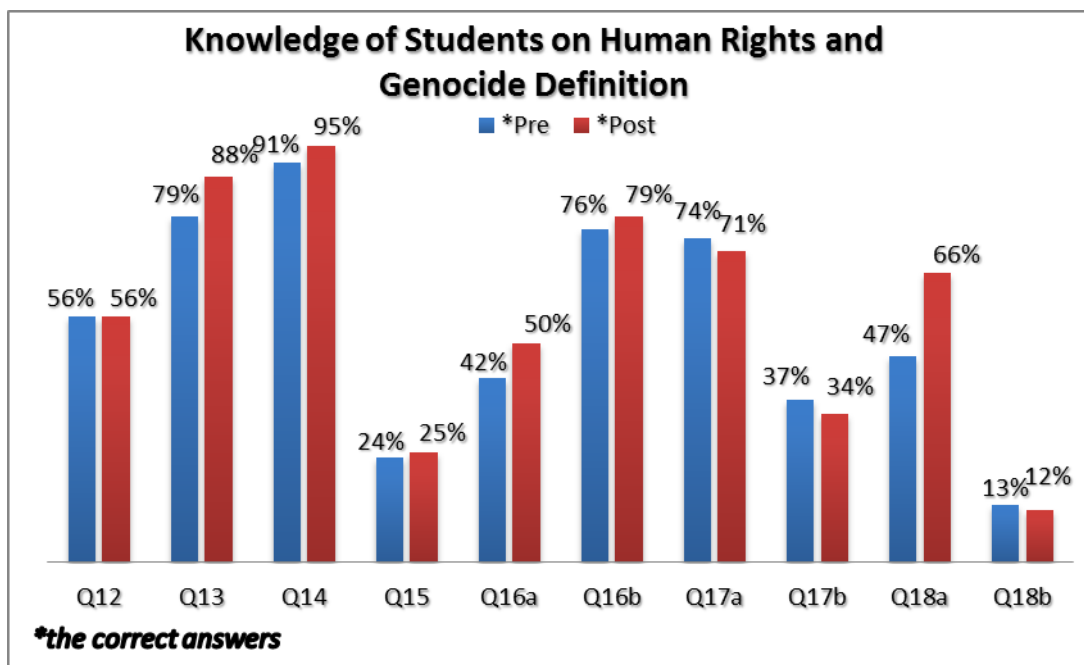
Results from Pre- and Post-Survey



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 by 34%.



After attending the forum, 97% of students believe that studying DK history is important. The majority of students (95%) disagree with the discrimination against children of perpetrators, while 5% are still uncertain on this issue and select the discriminate point. By attending the classroom forum, students also agree that the study of DK history helps them think of building peace (99%), healing (94%), reconciliation (95%), and preventing genocide (97%).



Percentage in the figure above indicated the correct answers of students. Question numbers 16 to 18 have two answers which divide into *a* and *b* (please see the questions and answers in Appendix).

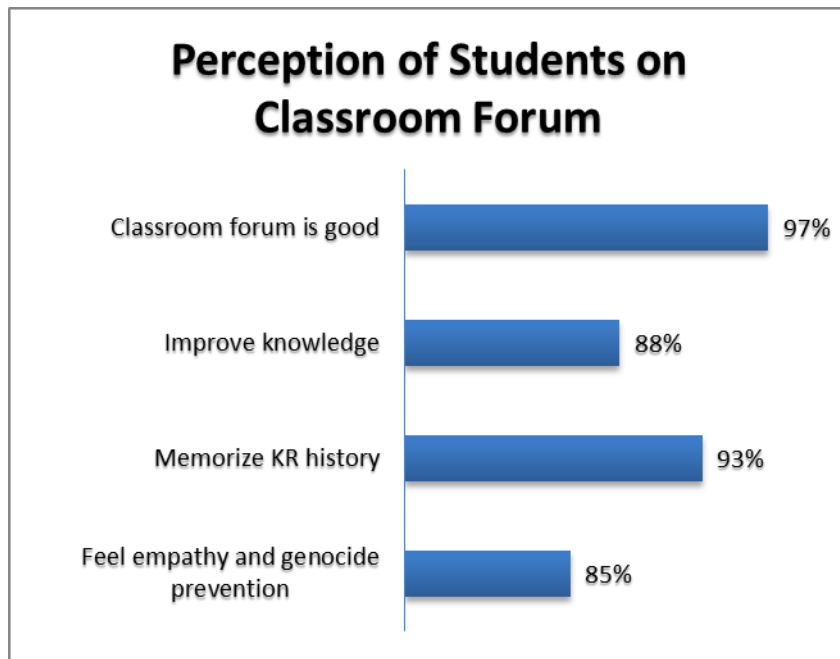


Figure above indicate that 97% of student believe that the classroom forum is good, 88% think that it help to improve their knowledge, 93% address that the classroom forum can help them to memorize KR history, and 85% felt empathy and think of genocide prevention after join 2 hours classroom forum.

Conclusion

Classroom forum at Chamroeun Vichea high school was successful conducted with the effort of DC-Cam team, cooperation with host school, and enthusiastic participation of students. These are the reasons 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.

Team : Pheng Pong-Rasy, Min Sanas, Phat Sela, and Kit Man
Report : Phat Sela and Kit Man
Support : USAID
Photo : <https://photos.app.goo.gl/bKa6FaA725VY2hai6>

Appendix

N	Questions	F	%	F	%
		Pre		Post	
	Age: 18				
	Male	52	42	50	39
	Female	73	58	80	62
<u>History of Democratic Kampuchea Knowledge</u>					
1	<i>Would you describe your know ledge of DK period?</i>	<i>Pre= Mean=2.12, St.D=0.56 Post= Mean=2.54, St.D=0.66</i>			
	I know nothing	9	7	5	4
	I know a little	95	76	54	42
	I know a lot	17	14	62	48
	I know enough to teach other	4	3	7	5
2	<i>Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during DK period?</i>				
	Yes	123	98	126	97
	No	2	2	1	1
	N/A	0	0	3	2
3	<i>Have you ever talk about DK period with your parents or people who experience that period?</i>				
	Yes	107	86	108	83
	No	17	14	19	15
	N/A	1	1	3	2
4	<i>Do you think the studying of DK history is important?</i>				
	Yes	117	94	126	97
	No	8	6	4	3
	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	5	4	7	5
	No	114	91	121	93
	N/A	6	5	2	2
6	<i>Which school level that DK history should be taught in?</i>				
	Primary school	16	13	10	8
	Junior school	55	44	68	52
	High school	46	37	46	35
	University	7	6	6	5
	N/A	1	1	0	0
7	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of peace building in Cambodia?</i>				
	Yes	120	96	128	99
	No	4	3	1	1
	N/A	1	1	1	1
8	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of healing?</i>				
	Yes	97	78	109	84

	No	24	19	19	15
	N/A	4	3	2	2
9	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of reconciliation?</i>				
	Yes	106	85	124	95
	No	10	8	6	5
	N/A	9	7	0	0
10	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of genocide prevention?</i>				
	Yes	120	96	126	97
	No	2	2	0	0
	N/A	2	2	4	3
11	<i>How do you feel about the studying of DK history?</i>				
	Want to know and understand about this history	107	86	104	80
	Do not want to know	1	1	2	2
	Feel empathy to victims	16	13	24	19
	Boring	0	0	0	0
	N/A	1	1	0	0
<i>Human Rights Knowledge</i>		<i>Average percentage: Pre=54%, Post=58%</i>			
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	31	25	27	21
	Arresting leaders of a religious group with the intent to undermine the practice of religion	8	6	9	7
	<u>Deliberately starving an ethnic group with the intent to destroy the people</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>56</u>
	Killing enemy soldiers who are shooting at your soldiers during war	8	6	20	15
	N/A	8	6	1	1
13	<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.	5	4	4	3
	<u>Individuals mourn the loss of family and friends who were tortured and/or killed.</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>88</u>
	Individuals are not impacted by genocide. Genocide only affects groups of people.	11	9	6	5
	Only children are impacted by genocide by the loss of parents.	6	5	4	3
	N/A	4	3	2	2
14	<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.	1	1	0	0
	Only poor families ever suffer during genocide. Rich families never suffer during genocide.	3	2	3	2
	<u>Genocide can impact families and communities in many ways for generations.</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>95</u>
	Genocide impacts communities but families can always escape by fleeing to another country.	5	4	3	2
	N/A	2	2	0	0
15	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on countries?</i>				
	Countries are not impacted by genocide.	0	0	0	0
	Countries can be impacted by genocide but the world is too big to be impacted.	17	14	20	15
	Countries suffer from genocide only when it is occurring. They can rebuild quickly	75	60	75	58
	<u>Countries can be impacted by genocide for generations.</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>25</u>
	N/A	3	2	2	2
16	<i>Which response below is the best description of two important strategies that individuals 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	3	2	6	5
	Individuals can prevent violence by attacking their enemies before they are attacked	13	10	6	5
	Individuals can prevent violence by staying quiet and not criticizing violence	36	29	35	27
	<u>Individuals can prevent violence by speaking against such violence</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>50</u>
	Individuals can encourage violence against their enemies	1	1	1	1
	Individuals can encourage victims to be silent because speaking out against violence will only encourage more violence	28	22	27	21
	<u>Individuals can denounce violence and encourage peaceful solutions to conflicts</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>79</u>
	Individuals can encourage perpetrators to commit their violence without public attention, which only aggravates the situation	2	2	2	2
17	<i>Which response below is the best description of two important strategies that communities 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>93</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>71</u>

	Communities can protect the individual rights of the majority group at the expense of minorities in order to preserve peace, order and stability	4	3	4	3
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights; rather, they must always seek to maintain peace, order and stability	3	2	6	5
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights because this is always a state responsibility	0	0	3	2
	Communities can prevent violence by identifying minorities and requiring them to live separate from the rest of the community.	1	1	5	4
	<u>Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate human diversity through education about different cultures, religions, and communities.</u>	46	37	44	34
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate their own culture and identify ways to protect it from outside influence.	46	37	50	39
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth how to protect themselves and their communities through self-defense training	30	24	44	35
18	<i>Which response below reflects two important strategies 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.	39	31	39	30
	Countries can prevent violence by attacking enemies before they are attacked	3	2	1	1
	Countries can never prevent violence but they can assist in peaceful resolution.	35	28	26	20
	<u>Countries can prevent violence through education and diplomacy</u>	48	47	85	66
	<u>Countries can identify and publicly denounce circumstances that support genocide.</u>	11	9	16	12
	Countries should never denounce other countries because it will weaken future diplomacy.	21	17	15	12
	Countries should only denounce enemies that support violence or genocide. Countries should never denounce allies involved in genocide because they are allies.	16	13	16	12
	Countries should only help people who deserve to be helped. Some genocide is necessary to preserve peace and order.	33	26	47	36
<u>Opinion on the Forum</u>					
19	Do you have strategy to prevent Genocide or Mass Killing in Cambodia in the				

	future?			
	Yes	112	90	
	No	6	5	
	N/A	7	6	
24	What do you think about this classroom forum?			
	Good and help develop my knowledge		126	97
	Not good, did not help anything at all		1	1
	N/A		3	2
25	What this classroom forum can help you?			
	Improve my knowledge on KR history		6	5
	Help to memorize the KR history		13	10
	Encourage to feel empathy and genocide prevention		2	2
	All above		108	83
	N/A		1	1