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**DOCUMENTATION CENTER OF CAMBODIA
GENOCIDE EDUCATION IS GENOCIDE PREVENTION**

Report of

Classroom Forum on

**“The Important of Studying History of Democratic Kampuchea 1975-
1979”**

At Hun Sen Samrong High School

11 July, 2018

By:

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Supported by: USAID

Photo Link: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/MVHWPV63HFLLPqhh6>

Table of Contents

I. Introduction.....	3
II. Aim and Objectives	3
III. Participants.....	3
IV. Methodology.....	3
4.1. Pre- and Post-Forum Survey	4
4.2. Data Entry and Analysis.....	4
V. Forum.....	4
VI. Results and Discussion.....	6
VII. Conclusion	9
Appendix.....	10
Pre-Forum Survey	
Post-Forum Survey	

I. Introduction

On 11 July, 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) have conducted Classroom Forum on the Important of Studying History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) with students at Hun Sen Samrong high school. This forum aim was to increase of the awareness of students about the important of studying DK history as well as encourage them to discuss and think critically about our past history. There were 43 students (32=74% female).

II. Aim and Objectives

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 building peace, healing, reconciliation, tolerance and genocide prevention.

The objectives included:

- Increase the awareness of students on DK history
- Give opportunities to students to ask questions and
- Encourage the discuss and critical thinking on this history

III. Participants

There were 43 students (32=74% female) participated in this classroom forum. All these students were from grade 12 of Hun Sen Samrong High School. The classroom forum was well attended.

School Principle gave open speech about this important of this forum. Mr. Pheng Pong-Rasy, Director of Genocide Education Program in Cambodia of DC-Cam was a presenter on History of Democratic Kampuchea contents.

IV. Methodology

The classroom forum consist six different methods 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. Students' participation through K-W-L (chart) teaching methodology
4. Q&A session
5. Documentary film screening
6. History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) textbook distribution
7. Forced Transfer exhibitions in School compound

4.1. Pre- and Post-Forum Survey

These survey was aim 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).

4.2. Data Entry and Analysis

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).

V. Forum

The forum began with surveys being handed out by DC-Cam staff to the classroom brimming with 12th-grade students. The survey's purpose was to find out what the students knew about Democratic Kampuchea. The forum followed the KWL teaching method (Know, Want to Know, and Learned). Once students had finished the preliminary survey they were instructed to go up to the whiteboard and write a question they had regarding the Khmer Rouge. Some of the questions the students wrote on the board included: Why did people not have any rights under the Khmer Rouge? How many Khmer Rouge leaders were there? And who were they? What are the economic effects of the Khmer Rouge on the country? And so on.

Once the students were finished writing down their questions, the lecture section of the forum began. Topics covered include the origin of the name *Khmer Rouge*, and the events leading up to the 17th of April. A significant amount of time was spent going over

the main policies of Democratic Kampuchea, including, among other things, the forced evacuation of the cities, the banning of capitalist practices, closing of educational institutions and murder of educated persons, targeted exterminations, and purges, the war with the Vietnamese. Additionally, various DC-Cam archival pictures from the period were shown to the students to aid in their comprehension of the subject matter.

After the lecture was completed, the questions students had written on the board were answered. Students were also prompted to ask any additional questions they had. Once the forum was complete students were each gifted the book, *A History of Democratic Kampuchea*, to complement their studies. Two online sources were also provided to the students, KhmerRougeHistory.org, and the DC-Cam's Facebook page. Finally, another survey that will be compared to the first was handed out to the students to gauge how much they had absorbed from the forum.

While observing the forum I noticed that the students were all paying undivided attention to the lecture. They seemed to be very interested in the subject matter, be it to fill a nationalistic space, or because of their upcoming exams. Two girls, and later three additional boys, even made sure to record the forum on their phones for later review. The classroom was very hot, and while this would usually lead students' mind to wander, I believe that the water bottles handed out by the team before the forum began aided in keeping the students focused.

Two things I noticed that could possibly be improved are in relation to the surveys and questions. Regarding the first, I observed that when students were completing the surveys some of them were talking amongst themselves and perhaps helping each other with answers. Since I lack proficiency, or even a rudimentary, understanding of Khmer I am unsure as to what instructions the students were given prior to beginning the surveys or what they were talking about, however, perhaps, if not done so already, the students should either be separated, if possible, or instructed to remain silent during the duration of the survey. This would help in validating the survey's results. In terms of my second point, I know that students can often feel shy about going to the front of classrooms and speaking in class, so maybe students can also be given the option of writing their questions down on paper, and passing them to the front, in a bowl, or something similar. This may also aid in garnering questions that the students may be

afraid to ask publicly. For example, if a student has a sensitive question regarding former cadres they may feel more able to do so in a state of anonymity.

Otherwise, I think the forum was very well organized and executed. I was astonished to see the level of attention paid by the students, and the interest they seemed to have in the subject matter. The lecture, from what was translated to me, was very fascinating and provided the student with a detailed history of the regime without overwhelming them. Particularly, the pictures were very beneficial for the student's attainment of information. I managed to interview one student after the forum and she informed me that the photographs were her favorite part, that they particularly helped her in understanding the lecture. She also stated that she was unsure about the Khmer Rouge history before, but now believes that she is more prepared and that the information will be very beneficial for her final exams. In general, from just attending this one classroom forum, my opinion of the Genocide Education Project is that it is a creative and helpful way of keeping the memory of Democratic Kampuchea alive in the minds of the youth.

VI. Results and Discussion

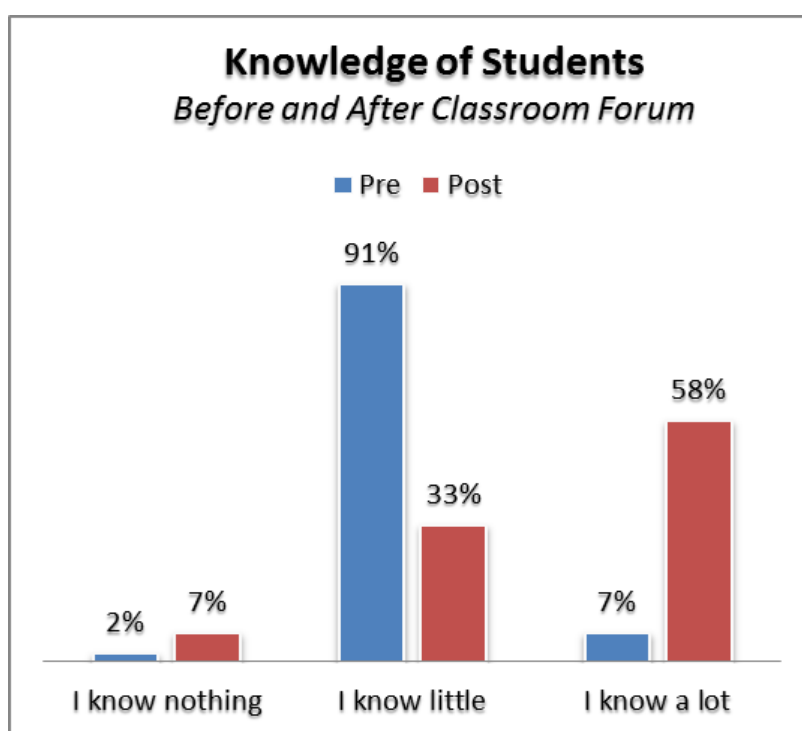


Figure 1: Knowledge of Students before and after classroom forum

After two hours classroom forum, students were able to understand more about History of Democratic Kampuchea (DK), also known as Khmer Rouge (KR). Before started the presentation of DK history, DC-Cam team was distribute the Pre-Forum Survey in order to measure their level of understanding on DK history. As we can see in the figure, 2% of students know nothing about DK history. Due to the changed number of students in post-survey, its increase to 7% after participated in this forum. Students who know little about this darkest history decrease 58% in the post-forum while students who gain a lot of Knowledge of DK history are significantly increase from 7% to 51% in the post-forum survey.

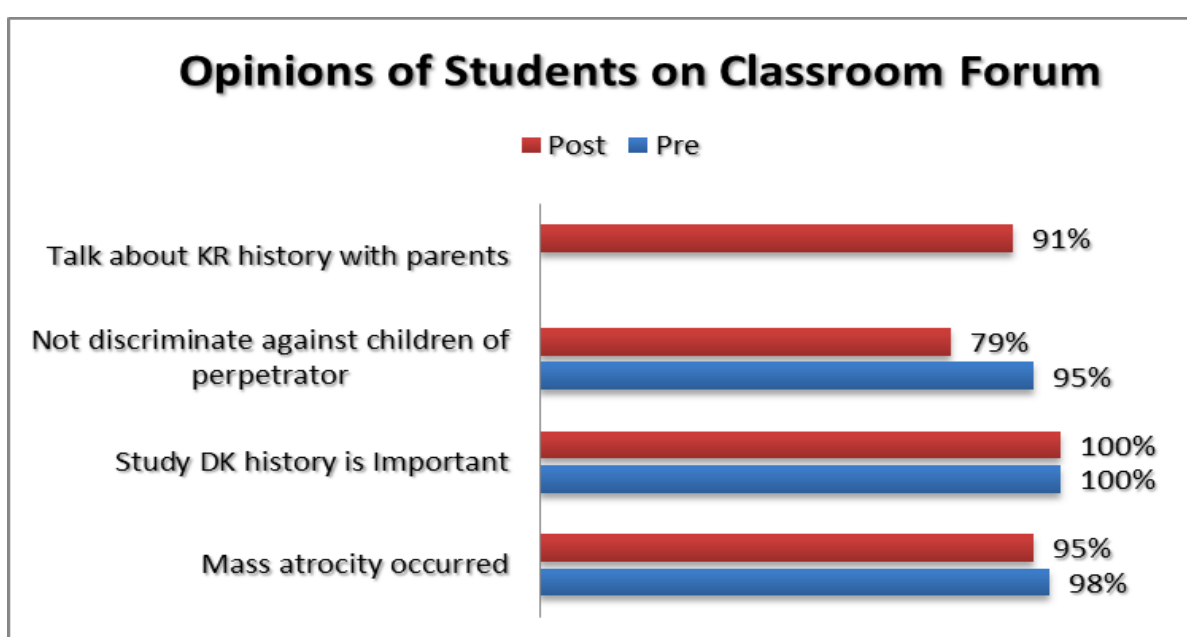


Figure 2: Opinion of Students on Classroom Forum

After participated in this forum, majority of students believe that the mass atrocities really happened during the KR regime. All of them believe the study of this history is essential in Cambodia society while other (3%) did not answer. The discrimination against children of perpetrators (21%) still happened, however, the level of discrimination decrease to 5% after two hours lecture. This is the reason that Genocide Education needed in Cambodia Education context.

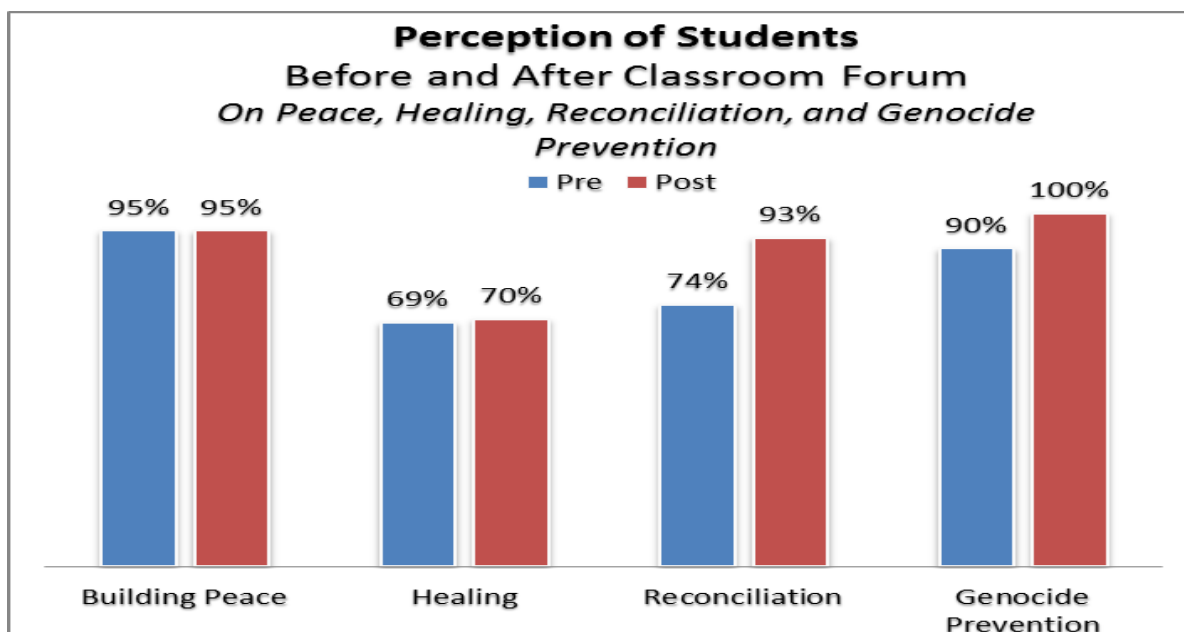


Figure 3: Perception of Students on Peace, Healing, Reconciliation, and Genocide Prevention

Figure 3 illustrate that after attended two hours classroom forum, the majorities of student believe that study of DK history could help them to think of Building Peace (95%), Genocide Prevention (100%), Reconciliation (93%), and Healing (70%).

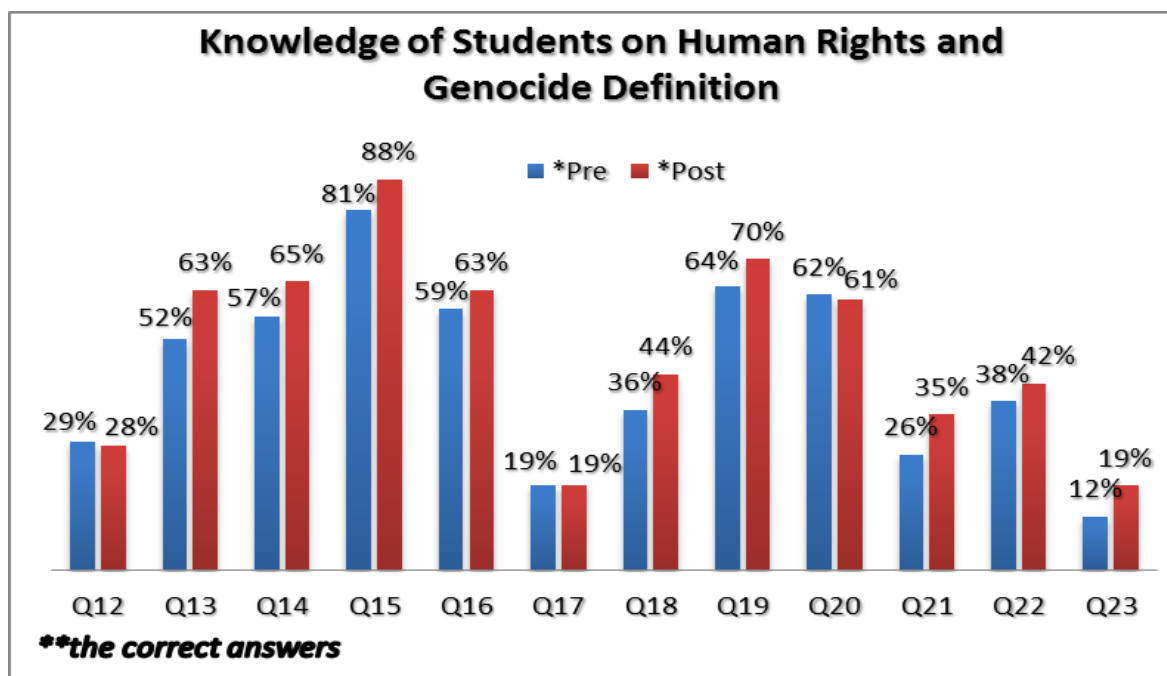


Figure 4: Knowledge of Students on Human Rights and Genocide Definition

Human Rights and genocide knowledge were included in the forum through the presentation about the violations that KR regime abuse to Cambodian in different

scenarios. Figure 4 show the 12 questions about Human Rights and Genocide Definition in form of multiple choices (appendix). The percentage in figure above represented percentage of students who answered correctly in pre and post survey. The average percentage of students who answered correctly is 44.58% in pre-survey. It is increase by 5.17% in post-survey.

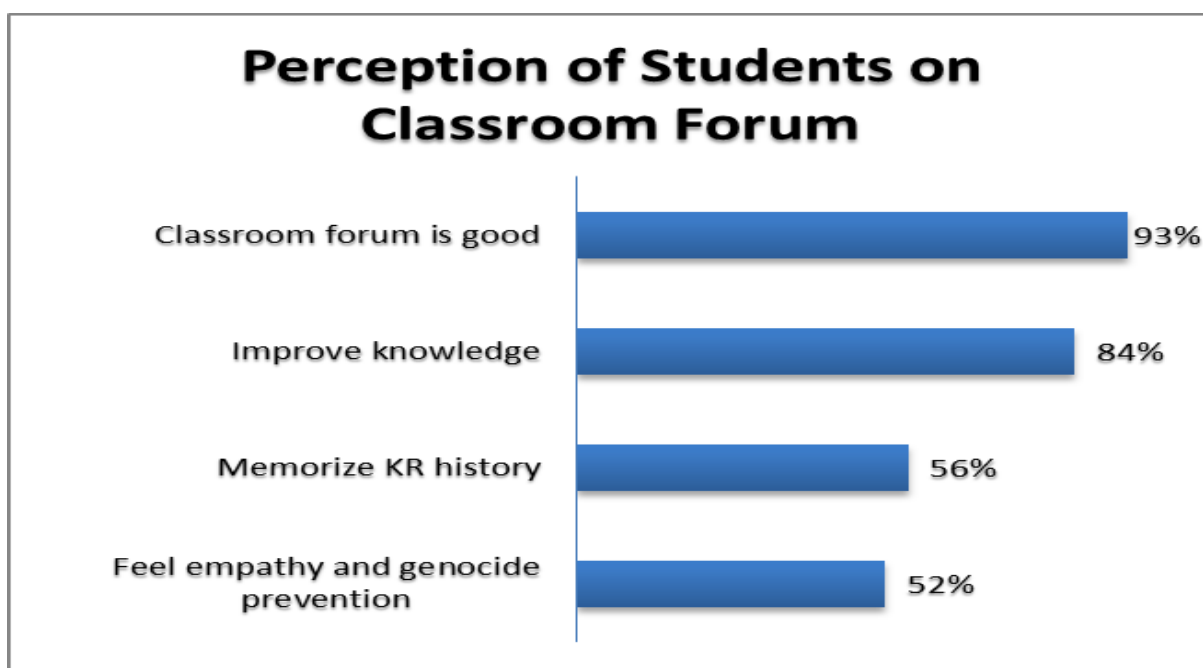


Figure 5: Perception of Students on Classroom Forum

Figure 5 illustrated the perception of students on classroom forum. 93% of students believe this forum is really good. 84% of them believe that this classroom forum has improved their knowledge, memorize KR history (56%), and encourage them to feel empathy and think of genocide prevention (52%).

VII. 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.

Supported by: USAID and MoEYS

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Appendix

<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>	11 (26%)		11 (26%)	
	<i>Female</i>	31 (74%)		32 (74%)	
<i>History of Democratic Kampuchea Knowledge</i>					
1	<i>Would you describe your know ledge of DK period?</i>				
	I know nothing	1	2	3	7
	I know a little	38	91	14	33
	I know a lot	3	7	25	58
	I know enough to teach other	0	0	0	0
2	<i>Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during DK period?</i>				
	Yes	41	98	41	95
	No	1	2	1	2
	N/A	0	0	1	2
3	<i>Have you ever talk about DK period with your parents or people who experience that period?</i>				
	Yes	37	88	39	91
	No	4	10	4	9
	N/A	1	2	0	0
4	<i>Do you think the studying of DK history is important?</i>				
	Yes	42	100	43	100
	No	0	0	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	2	5	8	19
	No	40	95	34	79
	N/A	0	0	1	2
6	<i>Which school level that DK history should be taught in?</i>				
	Primary school	3	7	6	14
	Junior school	18	43	19	44
	High school	20	48	18	42
	University	0	0	0	0
	N/A	1	2	0	0

7	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of peace building in Cambodia?</i>				
	Yes	40	95	41	95
	No	2	5	2	5
	N/A	0	0	0	0
8	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of healing?</i>				
	Yes	29	69	30	70
	No	12	29	12	28
	N/A	1	2	1	2
9	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of reconciliation?</i>				
	Yes	31	74	40	93
	No	8	19	3	7
	N/A	3	7	0	0
10	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of genocide prevention?</i>				
	Yes	38	90	43	100
	No	2	5	0	0
	N/A	2	5	0	0
11	<i>How do you feel about the studying of DK history?</i>				
	Want to know and understand about this history	33	79	22	51
	Do not want to know	0	0	1	2
	Feel empathy to victims	9	21	20	47
	Boring	0	0	0	0
	N/A	0	0	0	0
<i>Human Rights Knowledge</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	17	41	16	37
	Arresting leaders of a religious group with the intent to undermine the practice of religion	7	17	11	26
	<i><u>Deliberately starving an ethnic group with the intent to destroy the people</u></i>	<u>12</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>28</u>
	Killing enemy soldiers who are shooting at your soldiers during war	4	9	4	9
	N/A	2	5	0	0
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	14	33	13	30
	<i><u>Local leaders requirement to force members of a religious group to live separate from the</u></i>	<u>22</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>63</u>

	<u>rest of the community</u>				
	Police arresting persons who trespass on government property	1	2	2	5
	Immigrants from another country seeking to settle in a community	3	7	1	2
	N/A	2	5	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>24</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>65</u>
	Religious leaders who encourage their members to pray for members of another religion.	9	21	9	21
	Political leaders who encourage everyone to vote.	5	12	4	9
	Individuals who petition their government leaders to adopt a policy.	1	2	2	5
	N/A	3	7	0	0
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	1	2
	<u>Individuals mourn the loss of family and friends who were tortured and/or killed.</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>88</u>
	Individuals are not impacted by genocide. Genocide only affects groups of people.	1	2	1	2
	Only children are impacted by genocide by the loss of parents.	5	12	3	7
	N/A	1	2	0	0
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.	3	7	3	7
	Only poor families ever suffer during genocide. Rich families never suffer during genocide.	4	9	4	9
	<u>Genocide can impact families and communities in many ways for generations.</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>63</u>
	Genocide impacts communities but families can always escape by fleeing to another country.	10	24	9	21
	N/A	0	0	0	0
17	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on countries?</i>				
	Countries are not impacted by genocide.	0	0	1	2
	Countries can be impacted by genocide but the world is too big to be impacted.	11	26	21	49

	Countries suffer from genocide only when it is occurring. They can rebuild quickly	23	55	13	30
	<u>Countries can be impacted by genocide for generations.</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>19</u>
	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	6	14	8	19
	Individuals can prevent violence by attacking their enemies before they are attacked	7	17	8	19
	Individuals can prevent violence by staying quiet and not criticizing violence	12	29	8	19
	<u>Individuals can prevent violence by speaking against such violence</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>44</u>
	N/A	1	2	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	5	4	9
	Individuals can encourage victims to be silent because speaking out against violence will only encourage more violence	10	24	8	19
	<u>Individuals can denounce violence and encourage peaceful solutions to conflicts</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>70</u>
	Individuals can encourage perpetrators to commit their violence without public attention, which only aggravates the situation	1	2	1	2
	N/A	2	5	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>	<u>26</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>61</u>
	Communities can protect the individual rights of the majority group at the expense of minorities in order to preserve peace, order and stability	5	12	5	12
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights; rather, they must always seek to maintain peace, order and stability	8	19	10	23
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights because this is always a state	1	2	1	2

	responsibility				
	N/A	2	5	1	2
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.	1	2	4	9
	<u>Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate human diversity through education about different cultures, religions, and communities.</u>	11	26	15	35
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate their own culture and identify ways to protect it from outside influence.	17	41	14	33
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth how to protect themselves and their communities through self-defense training	10	24	10	23
	N/A	3	7	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.	6	14	5	12
	Countries can prevent violence by attacking enemies before they are attacked	6	14	8	19
	Countries can never prevent violence but they can assist in peaceful resolution.	12	29	12	28
	<u>Countries can prevent violence through education and diplomacy</u>	16	38	18	42
	N/A	2	5	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>	5	12	8	19
	Countries should never denounce other countries because it will weaken future diplomacy.	2	5	6	14
	Countries should only denounce enemies that support violence or genocide. Countries should never denounce allies involved in genocide because they are allies.	8	19	9	21
	Countries should only help people who deserve to be helped. Some genocide is necessary to preserve peace and order.	23	55	19	44

	N/A	4	10	1	2
<u>Opinion on the Forum</u>					
24	What do you think about this classroom forum?				
	Good and help develop my knowledge		40		93
	Not good, did not help anything at all		1		2
	N/A		2		5
25	What this classroom forum can help you?				
	Improve my knowledge on KR history		16		37
	Help to memorize the KR history		4		9
	Encourage to feel empathy and genocide prevention		2		5
	All above		20		47
	N/A		1		2