

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam)

Genocide Education is Genocide Prevention

Education on Democratic Kampuchea History in Cambodia (1975-1979)

Report

28<sup>th</sup> Classroom forum on "the importance of studying the Khmer Rouge history (1975-1979)

at Bun Rany Hun Sen Koh Dach High School

Report by: Seang Chenda

January 23, 2018



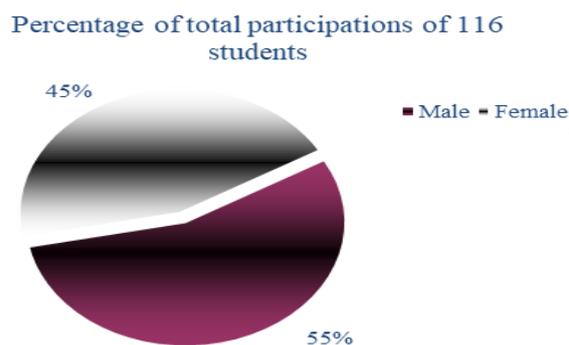
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## Overall Summary<sup>1</sup>

26th Classroom Forum on the importance of studying the Khmer Rouge (1975-1979) history took place at Bun Rany Hun Sen Koh Dach High School, participated by more than 100 grade-12 students. One week before forum started, the team went to target high school in attempt to 1) Inform High School principle of the coming classroom forum, 2) Install "Forced Transfer" Exhibition and 3) Examine it all of the hall, facility and location.

*Bun Rany Hun Sen Koh Dach High School located in Koh Dach Island at the bank of Mekong River, just about 30 kilometers away from the city. As the day of the event arrived, the team left the office at 11.30am by van along National Road Number 6. Until noon, the team had quick lunch and hurriedly continued the travel to heading to the high school by ferry. It took more than an hour to be in Bun Rany Hun Sen Koh Dach.*



Upon an arrival at 1.10pm, the team moved all educational materials to the hall where the forum was expected to be started. As there appeared quietness in the hall, the team member went to look for an instruction from the principle. A few minutes later, the high school principle informed all

grade-12 students to partake in the educational-based forum for the awareness and understanding of the Khmer Rouge history. During the teaching material installation process, more and more students arrived. The school principle and his staffs were also facilitated the classroom forum preparation. With this great help and good cooperation of the team, all were accelerated to be hosting 116 students (52 female/ 64 male) for the opening of the event. Well-preparedness and mutual collaboration between the team and the high school pushed a good environment to allow the forum to flow as scheduled between 1.30pm to 4.30pm.

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<sup>1</sup> Photo of Activities:

[https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipP5zBvlN\\_hhzPnYizTzPNVoxVWszLTe46GDcMqiTdo3vrds2PepAN1FjMGESI5cmQ?key=c2ZWRXhNakVzN2FTd0xBN3d1OGY3Mwo2dm9WSUxn](https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipP5zBvlN_hhzPnYizTzPNVoxVWszLTe46GDcMqiTdo3vrds2PepAN1FjMGESI5cmQ?key=c2ZWRXhNakVzN2FTd0xBN3d1OGY3Mwo2dm9WSUxn)

[Louk Krou] Pech Cham the principle of the high school gave an insightful and encouraging remark on the importance of the studying of the KR history to the participants, all of whom are in grade 12. Then, Mr. Long Dany opened his speech to the students and moved it to the pre-forum survey session. By so doing, it aims to navigate the students' early knowledge about the KR history from their parents' narrative and build thought-provoking of the Khmer Rouge history as flipchart method summarized existing knowledge on the whiteboard.

In addition, the team also screened a documentary film "Kampuchea Children" to allow the students to learn how the KR came to power and to increase awareness of students about life of children after fall of KR regime (1979). Instilling of the knowledge and awareness by the screening of the documentary films in the students, Mr. Dany did the presentation about the KR history. As the forum went almost finished, the team began to distribute the textbooks of "A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)" and to guide them of the "Forced Transfer Exhibition." Finally, the team provided notes on the whiteboard consisting of necessary website [http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Genocide/Genocide\\_Education.htm](http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Genocide/Genocide_Education.htm) and Facebook page of Genocide Education in Cambodia. It is beneficial for their self-study and research.

## **Purpose of the forum**

23 January, 2018, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) in collaboration with Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) with the support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), launched the classroom forum on "the Importance of the studying DK History (1975-1979)" at Bun Rany Hun Sen Koh Dach High School in the suburb of Phnom Penh.

To build the students' awareness of Cambodia's darkest history, this classroom forum aims to educate the high school students about the Democratic Kampuchea history (DK) also known as the Khmer Rouge (KR) by inspiring their curiosity to historical narratives as content, critical thinking, debate and reflection on how the country's past informs its present-day problems and future. The forum's objectives and activities include:

1. Provide students with an opportunity to share and express their personal knowledge on what happened during the Democratic Kampuchea regime.

2. Let students think critically on transitional consequences of legacy to Cambodian society.
3. Encourage discussion over this legacy in families and communities.
4. Distribute Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) textbooks to participating students.

Activities	Time
Opening remark	1.30pm – 2.00pm
Pre-forum survey completed by the students	2.00pm – 2.15pm
Flipchart	2.15pm – 2.30pm
Screening of documentary films	2.30pm – 2.40pm
Presentation on the importance of studying DK history (1975-1979)	2.40pm – 3.30pm
Q & A session	3.30pm – 4.00pm
Forced Transfer Exhibition	4.00pm – 4.30pm
Closing remark	4.30pm

## Forum

### 1. Opening remark

While the students warmly welcomed the team and showed their enthusiasm to learn the KR history, [Louk Krou] Pech Cham, the school principle, opened an encouraging remark of the forum, highlighting the importance of the study of the history as the young generations to learn in prevention of such man-made disaster from reoccur again. He thanked DC-Cam team committed and endeavored to educate the students to learn about the past history.

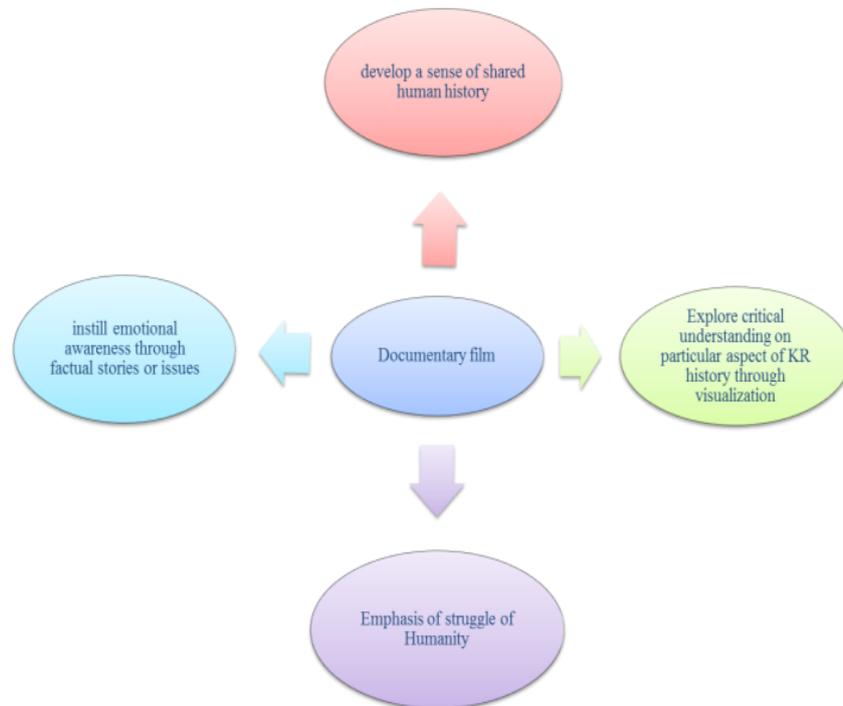
### 2. Pre-forum survey and K-W-L chart

After school principle finished his remark, Mr Dany started the quick introduce the team members and began to hand the pre-forum survey sheet to the students for 15-minute completion. The survey enabled the team to be aware of the current level of students' knowledge and understanding of the Khmer Rouge history. Then, Mr Dany moved to the next session of the K-W-L as two flipcharts already put on the whiteboard. It had twofold aims at 1) Inspiring thought-provoking and 2) Self-critical understanding. All students were encouraged to share what they know and write on the papers. This is considered to be the moving process not only encouraging them to share the knowledge to others but provoking their critical thinking about the history.

### 3. Documentary film screening

The team screened a documentary film entitled "Cambodian Children" to the students. It functioned educational with the specific theme in attempt to permit the students explore and

shape their understanding of the Khmer Rouge history by the visualization of the movie. All in all, narrative visualization of the film screening gave the students a further explanation of the past history.



#### 4. Presentation of DK history and Q & A

Followed by the screening of the documentary film, Mr Dany did the historical-based lecture of the Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979), narrating and elaborating causes of how the Khmer Rouge come to power, the mass evacuation, and the KR policies leading to starvation, execution and death, resulting nearly two million of life lost, along with political changes in Indochinese context in the cold war period. The presentation was based on chronological and critical narration of the past history as well as in attempt to response what the students **wanted** to know in K-W-L flipcharts of their perspective. In this lectured, Mr. Dany used KWL teaching method (K=have known, W=want to know, L=have learned). Upon the end of the lecture, Mr. Dany encouraged the students to ask questions to explore their understanding.

#### 5. Democratic Kampuchea History Text Book Distribution

When the presentation and Q & A session finished, more than 100 copies of "A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)" textbooks were distributed to all students taking part in

the event as additional materials intending to allow them explore their understanding of the history. All of them expressed of their appreciation on it all of the insightful lecture and textbooks.

## 6. Post-forum survey

DC-Cam's team members distributed a post-forum survey paper to the students to be completed.

In attempt to evaluate their understanding after participated in the classroom forum, the post-forum survey was applied to navigate the students' perspective towards the Khmer Rouge history aiming to inspire the tolerance and reconciliation in Cambodia's society.

## 7. Forced Transfer Exhibition

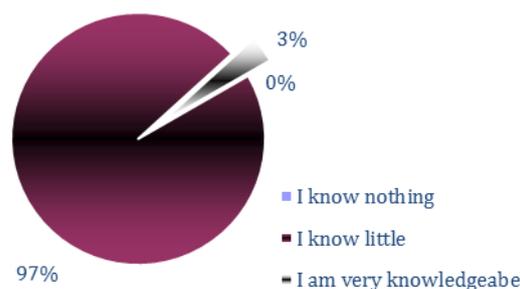
Finally, the exhibition entitled "Forced Transfer" was integrated in this educational forum and placed in another building. Students were guided to explore the knowledge and provoke the dialogue through its content. It has survivors' story during the forced evacuation and daily life conditions during the DK, as well as brief biography of Khmer Rouge top leaders. The display of the exhibition was very moving as the striking photographs, survivors' narration and folktales encouraged for remembrance and value of the suffering of the victims in the Khmer Rouge regime.

## 8. Pre- and post-forum data

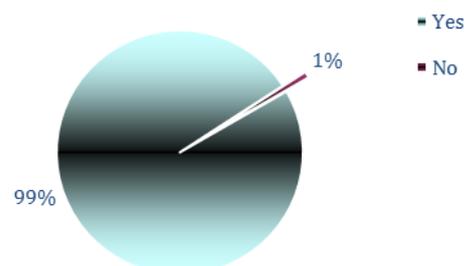
### Pre-forum survey

Intended to elicit the students' existing knowledge and perspective-provoking of the KR history was built upon six insightful questions as following:

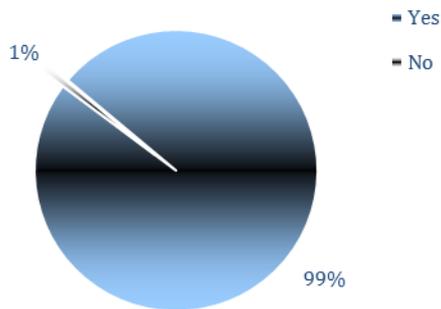
Q1 How would you describe your knowledge of the DK history?



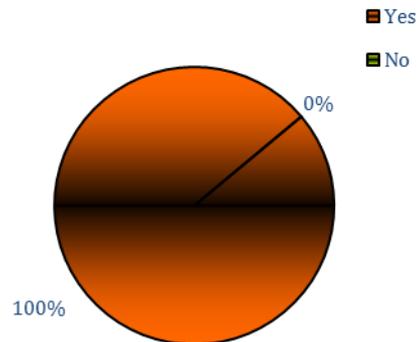
Q2 Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during the DK regime?



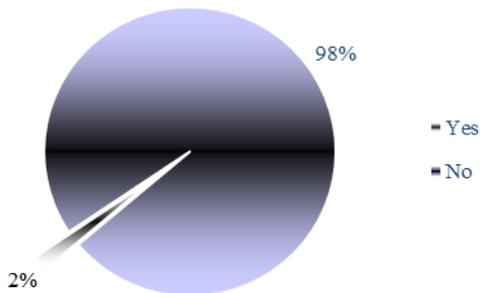
Q3 Have you ever talked about the DK period with your parents or people who lived during this time?



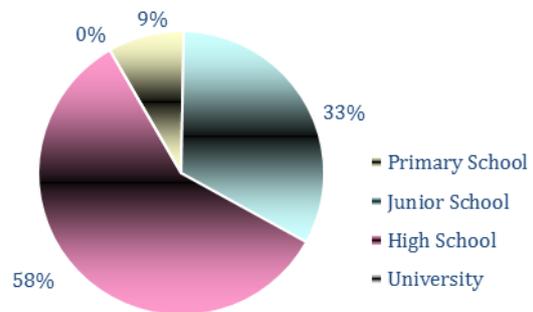
Q4 Do you think the study of DK History is important?



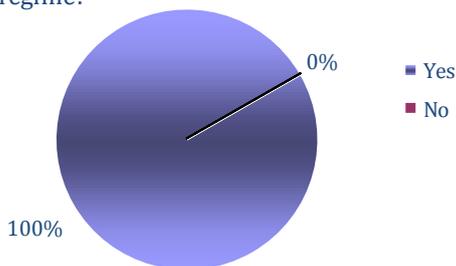
Q5 If one of your friend is a son/ daughter of a perpetrator would you discriminate against him or her?



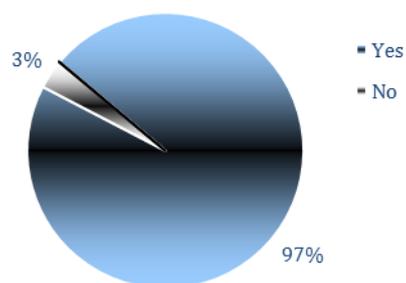
Q6 Does the history of DK could be taught in which school level in Cambodia?



Q7 Do you believe that forced transfer happened during the DK regime?



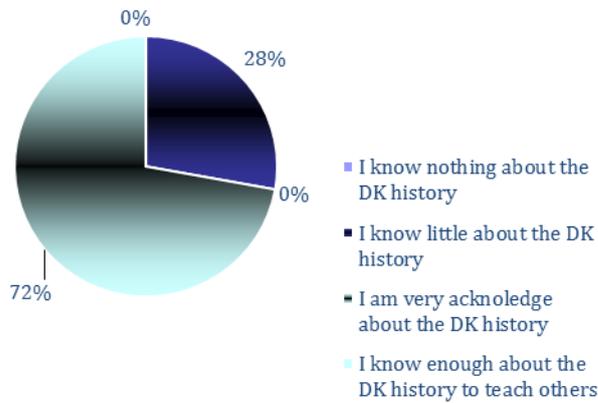
Q8 Do you believe that a family was broken up during the DK regime?



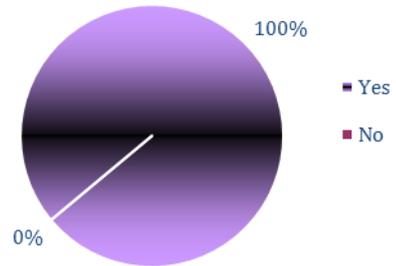
### Post-forum survey

Created to examine the development of the students' knowledge after the end of the forum. Below are 17 questions in this post-forum sheet:

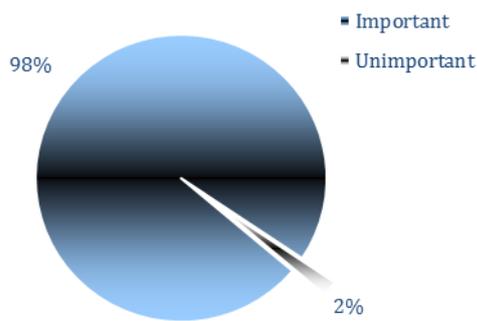
Q1 How would you describe your knowledge of the DK history?



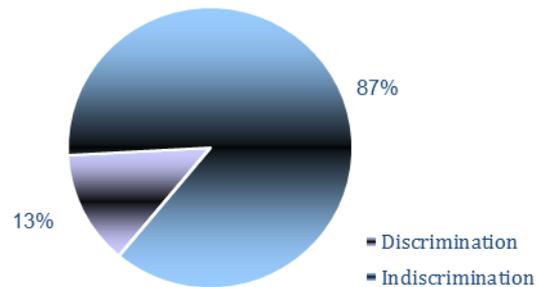
Q2 Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during the DK regime?



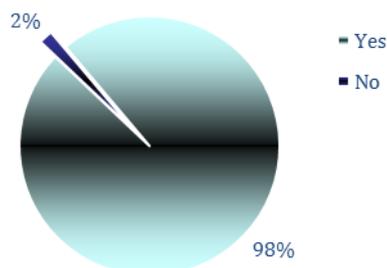
Q3 Do you think the study of the DK history is important?



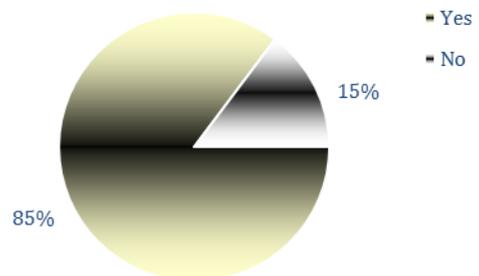
Q4 If one of your friends is a son/daughter of a perpetrator, would you discriminate against him or her?



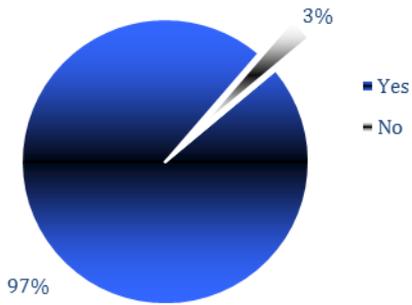
Q5 Does the study of the DK history encourage you to think of building peace in Cambodia's society?



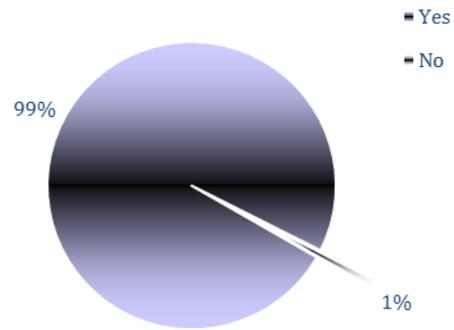
Q6 Does the study of the DK history encourage you to think of healing?



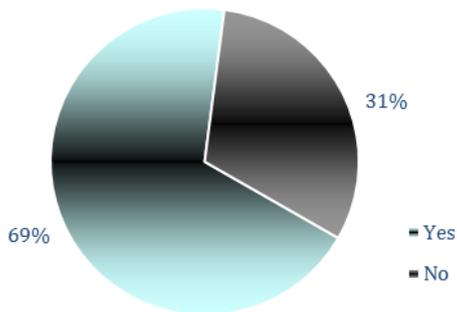
Q7 Does the study of the DK history encourage you to think of reconciliation?



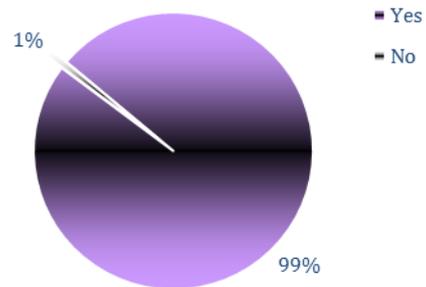
Q8 Does the study of the DK history encourage you to think of Prevention of Genocide in the future?



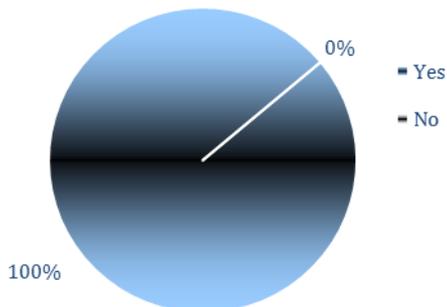
Q9 Do you feel uncomfortable learning the DK history?



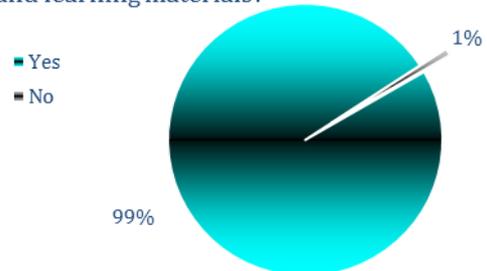
Q10 Do you believe "Forced Transfer" happened during the Khmer Rouge regime?



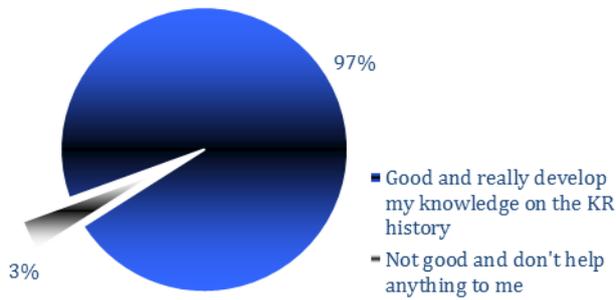
Q11 Do you believe "Forced Separation of Family" happened during the Khmer Rouge regime?



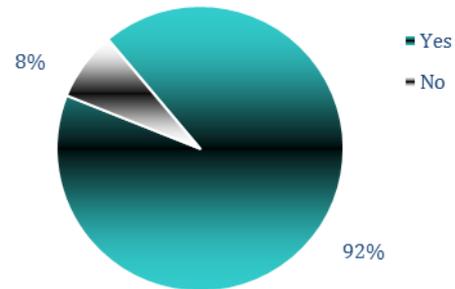
Q12 Besides studying the Khmer Rouge history inside classroom or in public space, do you think this history be posted on social networks for additional learning and learning materials?



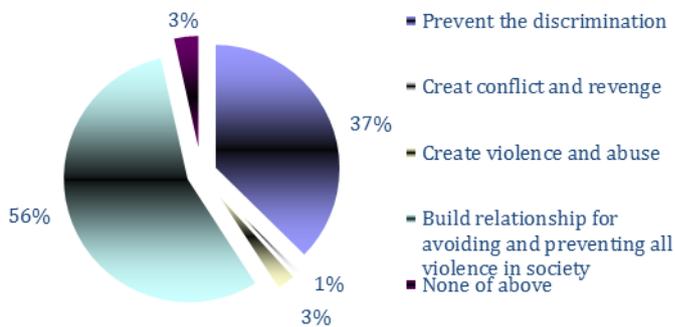
Q13 What do you think about this classroom forum?



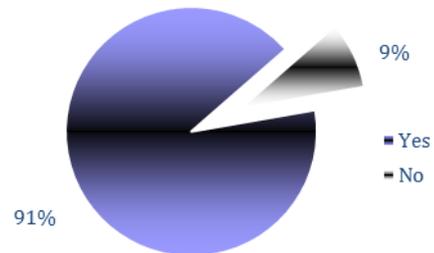
Q15 Do you think the study of the DK history encourage the value of Human Rights?



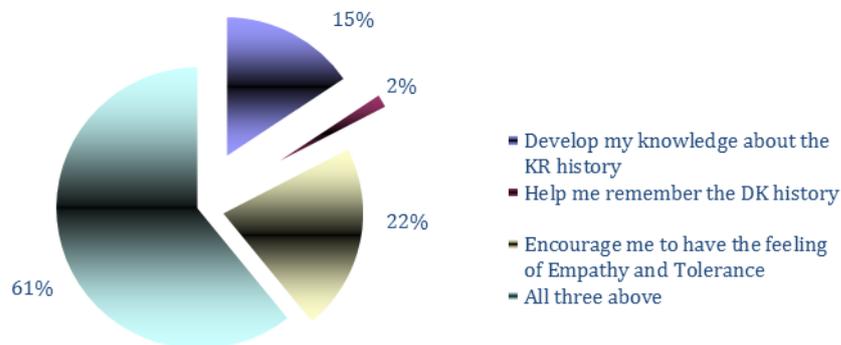
Q16 If yes, do you think what could it help?



Q17 Do you think th study of the DK history make you understand about the Human Rights?



Q14 What does this classroom forum help you?

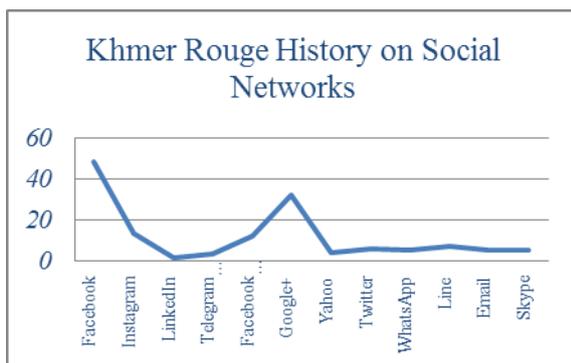


## 9. Results

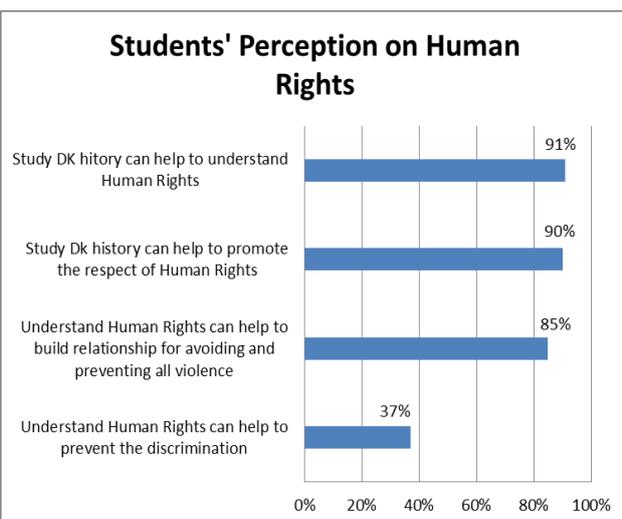
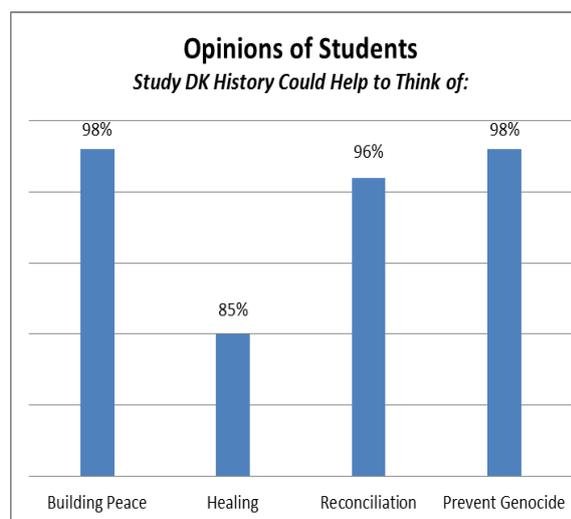
Results of the pre- and post-forum surveys appeared on the changing of students' knowledge and understanding on DK history. First of all, students' response indicated of the complete decrease of "know nothing" with 3%. Before the forum, 97 percent of students answered "know little" as of the declined trend by 0% in post-forum survey. The good is that the decreased percentage of the previous trends contributes the growth of the students' wider knowledge on this history, for 72 percent of the students answered "know enough," which indicates of their "much" knowledge on the KR history afterwards.

Discrimination as the legacy of the KR history remains sensitive in the post-genocide society of Cambodia in which tolerance and reconciliation is continually reconstructed. It, therefore, can a question of how the discriminative perspective and reaction against the second/ third generation of the former Khmer Rouge cadres emerge. In pre-survey result, 98 percent of all students had *the non-discriminative stance against the perpetrators' children as just 2 percent responded applying to taking the discriminative.* Nonetheless, the post-forum survey reflected a very surprising reversal that there would be deterioration on the continuing process of reconciliation and tolerance as it had a decline of 11 percent of "no discrimination" whilst the number of students taking "discrimination" increased up to 13 percent. To wrap it up, still is there an existence of "discrimination" against the former KR cadres' offspring in the society. However, this level of discrimination is still low and that is the reason that genocide education is needed in Cambodia's classrooms.

As smart device is now in palm of our hand, students find it easily accessible to search



for any related information to DK history online — on diverse social network website. *Facebook and its messenger* take the first stand of the most popular accessibility of its betterment for information sharing and transfer, *Google+* the second and *Instagram and Telegram* the third.



## **10. Conclusion**

The classroom forum at Bun Rany Hun Sen Koh Dach High School is completed and succeeded by the mutual collaboration between DC-Cam team and the high school principle and staffs as well as students participating. It was proved by the increase of students' knowledge and critical understanding on the history. At the end of the forum, the participants showed much appreciation on the lecture and activities built by the team. There is a hope that more dialogues related to the KR history will be continuingly built and provoked by the students in class and at home in order to deepen the understanding and critical perspective.

## Appendix

### Pre-Survey

<b>Pre-Survey of Koh Dach High School Classroom Forum (116 students)</b>			
<i>N</i>	<b>Questions</b>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Gender</b>			
	<b>Male</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>53</b>
	<b>Female</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Average age of students</b>			
1	<i>Would you describe your knowledge of DK period?</i>		
	I know nothing	5	4
	I know little	106	91
	I am very knowledge	5	4
2	<i>Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during DK regime?</i>		
	Yes	116	100
	No	0	0
3	<i>Have you ever talk about the DK period with your parents or people who lived during this time?</i>		
	Yes	101	87
	No	15	13
4	<i>Do you think studying of DK history is important?</i>		
	Yes	112	97
	No	4	3
5	<i>If one of your friends is a son/daughter of perpetrator, would you discriminate him/her?</i>		
	Discriminate	3	3
	No Discriminate	113	97
	N/A	0	0
6	<i>Which type of school in Cambodia that DK history should be taught?</i>		
	Primary school	11	10
	Junior high school	33	28
	High school	70	63
	University	0	0
	N/A	2	1
7	<i>Do you believe about Forced Transfer during DK regime?</i>		
	Yes	116	100
	No	0	0
8	<i>Do you believe that families were broken up during DK regime?</i>		
	Yes	113	97
	N/A	3	3

## Post-Survey

<b>Post-Survey of Classroom Forum at Koh Dach High School (115 students)</b>			
<b>N</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>			
	<b>Male</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>58</b>
	<b>Female</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>42</b>
1	<i>How would you describe your knowledge of the DK period?</i>		
	I know nothing	1	1
	I know little	31	27
	I am very knowledgeable	83	72
2	<i>Do you believe that Mass Atrocities occurred during DK regime?</i>		
	Yes	115	100
	No	0	0
3	<i>Do you think the study of DK history is important?</i>		
	Important	113	98
	N/A	2	2
4	<i>If one of your friends is son/daughter of perpetrator, would you discriminate him/her?</i>		
	Discriminate	15	13
	No Discriminate	100	87
5	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of building peace in Cambodia society?</i>		
	Yes	113	98
	No	2	2
6	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of healing?</i>		
	Yes	98	85
	No	15	13
	N/A	2	2
7	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of reconciliation?</i>		
	Yes	111	96
	No	3	3
	N/A	1	1
8	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of genocide prevention in the future?</i>		
	Yes	113	98
	No	1	1
	N/A	1	1
9	<i>Do you feel uncomfortable when learning DK history?</i>		
	Yes	35	30
	No	78	68
	N/A	2	2
10	<i>Do you believe the "Forced Transfer" was happen during DK regime?</i>		
	Yes	113	98
	No	1	1
	N/A	1	1
11	<i>Do you believe the "Forced Separation of Families" was happen during DK regime?</i>		
	Yes	115	100
	No	0	0
13	<i>Beside study DK history inside classroom or public space, do you think the history</i>		

	<i>should be posted on social network for additional learning and learning materials?</i>		
	Yes	114	99
	No	1	1
14	<i>What do you think about this classroom forum?</i>		
	Good and really develop my knowledge of DK history	110	96
	Not good and do not help anything	1	1
	N/A	4	3
15	<i>What does this classroom forum help you?</i>		
	Develop my knowledge of DK history	93	81
	Help me to remember DK history	82	71
	Encourage me to have a feel of empathy, tolerance, and genocide prevention.	100	87
16	<i>Do you think the studying of DK history promote the respect of Human Rights?</i>		
	Yes	103	90
	No	7	6
	N/A	5	4
17	<i>If yes, do you think what could be helps?</i>		
	Prevent the discrimination	43	37
	Build relationship for avoiding and preventing all violence in society	98	85
	Create conflict and revenge	1	1
	Create violence and abuse	4	4
	None of above	3	3
18	<i>Do you think the studying of DK history can help you to understand human rights?</i>		
	Yes	105	91
	No	8	7
	N/A	2	2