

Report from Preah Vihear

January 23-28, 2012

By Khamboly Dy and Sok-Kheang Ly

1. INTRODUCTION

On January 23-28, 2012, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (the Ministry of Education) conducted a quality control including classroom observations and evaluations in Preah Vihear Province. The team consisted of two DC-Cam's staff members, Mr. Khamboly Dy and Mr. Sok-Kheang Ly, and one official

from the Ministry of Education, Ms. Ben Neang from the

Curriculum Development Department. The team observed four actual classrooms teaching sessions and conducted fifteen interviews with teachers, students, school directors, former Khmer Rouge (KR) cadres, and villagers. At the end of each classroom observation and evaluation, the team provided feedback and recommendations for improvement on teaching KR history to the observed teachers and school directors. The team also provided extra copies of the *A History of Democratic Kampuchea* textbook and DC-Cam's magazine *Searching for the Truth* to all schools. In day two, the team conducted a public education forum with the villagers in Tbeng Meanchey District to learn about the impressions and reactions from the villagers on the teaching of KR history in the classrooms and to update them about the development of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal (KRT). All villagers in the province are minority Kuoy.



Sangkum Thmei High School in Sangkum Thmei District

Preah Vihear is considered one of the most remote provinces of Cambodia, and some areas of the province are among the last KR strongholds which were totally integrated into the government only after 1998. Land mines, the legacy from the war period, still exist today, and deaths and casualties from mines continue to threaten the residents though the number has decreased considerably. Preah Vihear consists of seven districts and one city. They are Preah Vihear City, Tbeng Meanchey, Chheb, Rovieng, Sangkum Thmei, Chey Sen, Choam

Khsan and Kulen Districts. Some areas of the districts continued to be the fight-and-run battle fields until 1998. In 1979 the then People's Republic of Kampuchea regime captured and controlled only the downtown areas. The residents lived with both the KR forces and those of the government. In the early 1980s, people in Preah Vihear could not travel to Phnom Penh by car for fear of mines and shooting from the KR guerrilla forces. People had to travel by plane. There was a popular saying *"People in Preah Vihear are the luckiest; they travel to Phnom Penh by plane."* People normally lived close to each other so that they could help one another during the chaos.

During this period, teachers taught during the daytime and guarded at night. Teachers had to take guns and dig up trenches inside the school compound to guard both the schools and the surrounding areas. Mr. Peou Lyheang (director of Tbeng High School) said that killing was normal at that time. Mr. Chhum Chhauth, director of Choam Khsan High School, claimed the same thing. He said that he came to teach at Choam Khsan in 1988 at which time the KR and government forces were fighting each other. Teachers not only became militiamen to guard the school and the villages but also delivered weapons to the front line. At one point in the early 1990s, the KR burned down the school and the director's office. In 2003, the local authorities decided to move Choam Khsan High School to the new location which is a former military garrison. Before the construction, the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) spent two months to clear mines.

Schools in the early years of their opening encountered great difficulty. Normally, people travelled in and out the provincial town by plane. However, teachers who were unable to take the plane spent about five days to reach Preah Vihear town to teach. In another case, the school in Sangkum Thmei District was hard to reach even four or five years ago due to the very poor road conditions. People would spend three to four days travelling between the provincial town and the district town. People rarely travelled outside the district due to infrastructure difficulty. Teacher Chea Sopheak of Sangkum Thmei High School called Sangkum Thmei District "an island on the land." Sopheak said that the people and children in the district were like "a frog in the well." Only in the past few years were English teaching and other trainings brought into the district and the people were able to perceive the outside world.

In the present day, not many former KR cadres live in the province though they were given land and houses. According to the villagers, most of them moved to Anlong Veng and Pailin, where they joined the other cadres. Among the four observed schools, the team found only one teacher who is a former KR cadre. The school directors of the four schools are not able to share or have no information on the number of students who are children of the former KR cadres.

The table below is a brief summary of the evaluation work in Preah Vihear.

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| Quality Control Project Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching of <i>A History of Democratic Kampuchea</i>. • Evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching materials: (1) Democratic Kampuchea (DK) history textbook, (2) Teacher's Guidebook, and (3) Student Workbook. • Evaluate the integration of DK history into the daily |
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| | regular teaching in schools. |
| Means of Evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-hour observation • Interviews • Surveys |
| Tools for Evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observation checklist • Questionnaire for teachers • Questionnaire for students • Interview questions |
| Types of Schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban, rural and remote areas |
| Number of Classes Observed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four schools (Chea Sim Tbeng Meanchey, Sangkum Thmei and Rovieng High Schools and Choam Khsan Lower Secondary School) |
| Average Number of Students per Class | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 45 and 65 |
| Approximate Number of Students with Textbook | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • |

2. PRE-OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES



Mr. Uk Boreirun, Deputy Head of Preah Vihear Office of Education

Arriving in the province on the 23rd, the team members quickly sought a meeting with the head of the Provincial Office of Education in order to request permission to perform classroom observations and evaluations and to learn about the general education situation in the province. Mr. Uk Boreirun, deputy head of the Education Office received

the team and briefed us about the development of education. Mr. Uk said that the number of schools in the province in 2012 has increased to 315 schools, of which thirty-six are lower secondary schools and nine are upper secondary schools (high schools). The rest are primary schools including 62 kindergartens. The number of students in lower secondary schools is 6,920 while high school level receives 3,560 students according to the 2012 statistics.

With regards to the teaching of DK history, Mr. Uk said that his office had sent teachers to participate in the training by DC-Cam. His office received thousands of copies of the DK history textbook and distributed to all lower and upper secondary school in the province. As an educator and survivor of the KR regime, Mr. Uk totally agrees with the teaching of KR history in the classrooms. He said that older teachers can contribute their experiences to students. For instance, his father was chief of Sa-ang District in the 1960s, and he is actually

from Phnom Penh. He studied in Preah Yukunthor High School, which in the Khmer Republic regime was renamed to Keo Sangkim High School. (Keo Sangkim was the Education Minister who was assassinated during the student riot in Phnom Penh in 1973. Preah Yukunthor High School took the name Keo Sangkim following his death.) Mr. Uk and his family were evacuated to Kampong Thom Province and finally to Preah Vihear. His parents, two brothers, and one sister died in the KR. His mother died of sickness and starvation. He dug up the graves and buried his mother and brothers with his own hands. Nine children remained, including him, the oldest. After the KR collapsed in early 1979, he took care of all the siblings and brought them up until they all had jobs and got married. Mr. Uk believes that stories like his would be a great source for both teachers and students.

In the end, Mr. Uk explained the locations of each school and endorsed our classroom observations and evaluations. The table below summarizes the schools we observed and evaluated.

| No. | Name of School | Teachers | Female Teachers | Students | Female Students | Number of Classrooms |
|-----|-------------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Chea Sim Tbeng Meanchey | 80 | 39 | 2,195 | 1,002 | 40 |
| 2 | Sangkum Thmei | 6 | 0 | 240 | 120 | 6 |
| 3 | Hun Sen Choam Khsan | 20 | 6 | 360 | 212 | 17 |
| 4 | Rovieng | 32 | 9 | 982 | 470 | 20 |

3. CLASSROOM AND GENERAL OBSERVATION



Mr. Chea Sopheak, Director of Sangkum Thmei High School

Preah Vihear Province is a remote province in the West part of the country, near the Thai border. Most schools in the province were built in the early 1980s. Chea Sim Tbeng Meanchey High School (Tbeng High School) is the biggest school in the province. It was built in 1982 as a lower secondary school and became a high school in 1989. There were only two wooden buildings at that time. Prior to 1989,

students in Preah Vihear had to travel to Kampong Thom to continue their high school degree. Likewise, Choam Khsan High School was also built in 1982 and moved to its current location in 2003. Sangkum Thmei High School was built in 2008, just a few years ago. At that time, there was only one wooden building with only a roof and no walls. The school was built with contribution from the community members who did not want their children to travel far

to attend high school. About fifty students registered for the first academic year.

Though teachers and education officials claimed that the education quality and condition are much better than ten years ago, all schools still face a number of challenges. One of the prominent challenges is the lack of specialized teachers who have no choice but to teach beyond their specialization. For instance, Tbeng High School has only one history teacher, Kong Naryroth, for over forty classrooms. The question is "How can one teacher teach history subject to over forty classrooms?" Worse still, Naryroth was trained as a lower secondary school teacher, yet she was recruited to teach at the high school level due to the lack of teachers. The school director Mr. Peou Lyheang, said that this history teacher has no incentive to teach. To fill in this big loophole, the school has to borrow teachers from other institutions, as part of its preliminary solution. The school director will continue to request more teachers from the provincial education office.

There are two main reasons leading to the lack of teachers in all high schools in Preah Vihear. First, not many students in the province return back to teach in their home province after graduating from the university. They usually find what they call "better jobs" in other places. Second, the newly arriving teachers tasked to teach certain subjects in the



Students Studying in the Classroom

schools transfer to the economically advantaged areas within the first two to three years of their service. Most teachers who transfer out quickly are in the field of social science. Teachers of this area are not able to earn extra income from private classes like those in the field of real science such as Math and Physics.

Another major challenge is the lack of teaching resources and necessary facilities. Mr. Chea Sopheak from Sangkum Thmei High School explained that looking from the outside it appears that the education condition has improved considerably. The number of schools and teachers has increased from year to year. However, Sopheak said that the increase is not consistent with the number of students and the needs of the country to catch up with the outside world. Sopheak said that the education quality in his school is relatively low. His school lacks almost everything ranging from course books to human resources. Some teachers teach two or more subjects. Sopheak himself performs two functions as a school director and teacher. He teaches more than thirty hours per week in addition to his job as the school administrator. To deal with this problem, Sopheak said that he had to borrow teachers from the lower secondary schools. He has requested more teachers from the provincial education office but the office has had difficulty in allocating teachers to all schools since more and more schools are created. There are six teachers in the school, including the school director. Sopheak claimed that the school needed at least seven more

teachers. His high school does not have a director's office and library, nor laboratory rooms and vocational training. Likewise, Choam Khsan High School is seeking support to build extra classroom buildings, a director's office, and library.

Because of not enough teaching materials such as course books and teacher guidebooks, some teachers do the teaching without lesson plans or teaching objectives. Teacher But Vanthol from Choam Khsan High School said that the program is new and that he has not received the teacher guidebook yet. Therefore, the teaching depends on the level of his knowledge and desire.

All teachers the team interviewed claimed that the low quality of education was partly because of low incentives, which they referred to as low salary and poor economic well-being. In their words, "No matter how good the curriculum and teaching methods are, if the implementers do not perform well, the education quality is still low." The teachers said that without outside business, they cannot survive. Vanthol's wife sells groceries in the nearby market, and Vanthol helps out his wife's business after he finishes teaching.

Teachers in the remote villages of the province complain that the communities do not give much value to the education and the quality of the students is low. For the villagers, education is too long of an investment, as the villagers need immediate income to help ease their family's economic burden. Many female students get married after finishing primary school or lower secondary school. Some students become career-oriented from which they can earn money quickly. For example, some students in Sangkum Thmei High School take exams to become primary school teachers. Poor parents discourage their children to study and ask them to drop out to help with farming. Students in Rovieng High School serve as day laborers on the potato farms, where they can earn nearly four USD per day. This is a big amount of income for the villagers in the remote areas. Getting married, career-oriented tendencies, and earning income as farm laborers form three big reasons for the relatively high dropout rate and poor educational quality. Teacher Vanthol told the team that students in seventh grade cannot even read the texts properly. However, the school dares not take strong action; otherwise, many more students would drop out.

Education in Preah Vihear also faces the lack of schools and each school does not have sufficient number of classrooms. There are nine high schools for the seven districts and one city of the province, which means one district has one high school, except Rovieng, which has two high schools. Some students live twenty kilometers from the schools. To continue their education at the high school level, they have to come and stay in the pagodas for male students. Female students rent private houses, and some others stay with their relatives. The long distance to the schools forms part of the reasons why many students choose to drop out. In addition, each school does not have enough classrooms as yet as of 2012. For instance, Rovieng High School which can be considered the best high school of the province does not have enough classrooms. Each classroom consists of sixty and more students. As the classrooms are too crowded, teachers are not able to employ new methods such as group discussions and oral presentations and eventually end up in using the traditional methods such as reading loudly in the classes followed by fact-finding questions to learn the comprehension of the students. Kun Sovanhet of Rovieng High School said he loses control of the classroom due to too large number of students. In almost all cases, many students in a class sit leisurely with no action.

4. OBSERVATIONS OF STUDENTS

Students in the four observed schools expressed their interest in studying KR history. Kong Naryroth from Tbeng High School said that her students ask a lot of questions whenever she described her own experiences to them. The students asked about the living conditions, food rations, and the killing. Vung Kanhna from Tbeng High School said that though her parents and relatives rarely talked about the KR, she learned the history from her teacher. She wants the teacher to teach more KR history in the class. Students claim that although the teachers have talked about the KR history in the classrooms, the talks are mostly brief and they want the teachers to go deeper into the details. Neak Borey from Choam Khsan High School wants his teacher to explain the reasons why the KR killed their own people. *(For the detail reactions from the students, please see appendix two.)*

5. INTEGRATION OF DK HISTORY COMMENTARY



Students Working in Groups

The teaching/integration of KR history in Preah Vihear high schools is considerably limited. Out of the four observed teachers, only two teachers integrated the KR history into their regular teaching, and the integrations were only in the forms of oral descriptions either at the beginning or at the end of the classes. According to the interviews, there are several main reasons for the limited teaching/integration of KR history. First, teachers voiced

concerns over the lack of time. They said that the schools are off for many days per year. Some students still had not returned to school even on day three of the Chinese New Year, which is not an official holiday. Second, teachers do not know how to integrate the lessons. For example, teacher Kong Naryroth from Tbeng High School taught Chinese and Japanese history (1919-1939). Due to similar events, he lesson has great potential to integrate the KR history lessons. However, Naryroth decided not to integrate as she could not identify the place where she could do so. Third, some teachers claimed that they do not have enough knowledge of KR history, thereby, dared not talk much about it. Naryroth said she had not finished reading the whole book to learn the best areas that fit with her regular lessons. Naryroth claimed that after the training, teachers need more readings and research to be able to teach KR history. She also needs more documents related to the KR.

As stated above, most teachers the team observed used oral descriptions to integrate KR history. Teacher But Vanthol from Choam Khsan High School talked about the shortage of

food and how the KR came to power and was defeated in 1979. Vanthol told the students that the KR had one good point. "Both the rich and the poor had equal rights." Vanthol talked about Khmer killing Khmer but did not elaborate on this point. He encouraged students to ask their grandparents for more information. At the end, Vanthol admired the 7 January Day at which time "Cambodian people were liberated from the hands of the KR."

However, it has to be acknowledged that the integration is impossible for some lessons. Chea Sopheak from Sangkum Thmei High School taught about "the beauty of the Khmer language." The lesson is too far from the contents of KR history. If he is to integrate, Sopheak can only do so by asking students to do it as part of their homework and discuss together in the next session.



Beng Neang, a National Teacher, Giving Feedback to a History Teacher

answers into their notebook after verification from teachers. The teachers should have asked the rest of the students to give feedback or provide extra answers if they had any. Chea Sopheak from Sangkum Thmei High School arranged the table and chairs in a U shape and allowed all students to have equal chance to participate in the learning process. He asked the students to count the number from 1 to 4 to form four groups. Each group had to choose one note taker, one reporter, and one coordinator. Sopheak gave each group one sheet from a flipchart to use for group discussions and presentations.

Among the four observed teachers, three did make use of the methods they had received from the training to apply to their classes. The teachers asked students to work in groups to discuss the lessons and to find answers on their own. Then each group chose one representative to present the finding to the class. Some representatives did not do presentations but wrote down

their answers on the board.

Other students copied the

Some school directors talked about KR history during the general meeting with students or what is called "special hours for the school director." Mr. Chhum Chhauth of Choam Khsan High School said that he used to narrate KR history to his students. He talked about the living conditions, the killing, starvation, elimination of religion, and the abolishment of formal education. He emphasized the gratitude of 7 January Day, the day that the ruling government claimed to be their genuine day of liberating Cambodian people from "the genocidal regime." Chhum Chhauth asked students to learn the history from their parents in order to clarify more truths. He told students repeatedly that the KR history is not fiction. Mr. Chhauth requested that DC-Cam bring some teachers and students from his school to visit Tuol Sleng and Cheung Ek so that they can disseminate the information more widely when they come back. For him, this visit would help enhance the teaching of KR history in the classroom.

6. TEXTBOOK, GUIDEBOOK AND WORKBOOK AVAILABILITY AND USE

Distribution of the DK textbook among the four observed schools was uneven. Rovieng High School received almost 300 copies of the textbook, Tbeng and Choam Khsan High Schools have only a few copies, and Sangkum Thmei High School received only one copy as the director attended the commune teacher training and brought one copy back with him. Very few students claimed that they have copies of the textbook on hand and that they have read it. All schools in Preah Vihear still lack many copies of the DK history textbook, and they have requested more copies so that more students can benefit from the teaching of DK history. In a separate issue, it is understandable that only history teachers who attended the training received a teacher's guidebook and student workbooks.

7. COMMUNITY OBSERVATIONS/INTERVIEWS



Kuoy Minority People Carrying Food

The team talked to a group of about fifty villagers to learn their attitude toward teaching DK history in the formal classrooms. All villagers are Kuoy minority members. They said that although the Kuoy minority was not targeted as a group by the KR, they suffered from evacuation from their home villages, family separation, and killing. Most women who were asked about

their experiences during the KR said that they lost their husbands who were accused of being enemies and were eventually executed. The villagers voiced their agreement on the teaching of DK history in the formal classroom setting. *(For the detailed description of the reactions from the villagers, please see Appendix One.)*

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the new curriculum, the full teaching of DK history will be conducted at the end of the academic year along with other Cambodian modern histories. For semester one, the teaching of DK history is conducted in the form of integration. All interviewed teachers and school directors recommended that to have a wider teaching of DK history in the classroom, the content of the history should be included in the government's social studies textbooks. The Ministry of Education has already done this work. The Ministry of Education inserted parts of the DK history textbook into the government's social studies textbooks in ninth

grade and twelfth grade. And the actual teaching of DK history will be done at the end of the second semester.

According to the teachers, integrating DK history through either oral description or teaching the topic within the regular curriculum is not fruitful. Vanthol from Choam Khsan High School commented that *"students just listen and forget. They will not remember and understand when teachers just talk briefly."* If the teachers are tasked to do integration, they will do little as the teachers hardly finish teaching schedule on time. For effective teaching, as mentioned above, DK history has to be inserted into the government's social study textbook.

With the interviews with teachers and students, the team finds that most students are interested in studying this history. However, most of them prefer to listen rather than ask questions. The prominent questions teachers encounter the most are regarding how Khmer killed Khmer; how one or two young cadres could take thirty to forty prisoners to execution; and why didn't prisoners fight back? Most of the time when teachers described DK history to them, the students asked the teachers to talk more but failed to ask specific questions.



Young Students Attending Private English Course in Sangkum Thmei High School

The insufficient general educational infrastructure has strong connections with the effectiveness and broader teaching of DK history in the schools in Preah Vihear. Students' knowledge is strictly framed within the content of the textbook. Most teachers use only the existing questions in the course books but fail to creatively form other questions that benefit students' self-learning and critical thinking to expand

students' understanding. Furthermore, most teachers never take outside materials to teach and/or integrate in the classes. The reasons range from shortage of time to lack of incentive, insufficient knowledge on the subject matters, no resources, and poor and inadequate training.

In general, the schools in Preah Vihear lack sufficient specialized teachers and core course books, particularly the schools in the most remote areas. According to the report of the annual conference of the provincial education office, all lower and upper secondary schools lack specialized teachers and core books and guidebooks for students and teachers, respectively. The same report comments that some school directors do not possess the ability to follow-up the teaching and to do the reporting to the upper levels. The inspections of all secondary schools are insufficient, so is the application of the student-centered approach. These loopholes have a dramatic impact on the effectiveness of the teaching of DK history in the classrooms in Preah Vihear.

Appendix One: Public Education Forum with Kuoy Minority

On 25 January 2012, the Quality Control Team conducted a public education forum in Bro-me Commune, Tbeng Meanchey District, Preah Vihear Province. The commune chief opened the ceremony by stating that today the commune was lucky to have DC-Cam's team to distribute the DK history textbook and the center's magazine *Searching for the Truth*. He then mentioned that the team, which included Mr. Sok-Kheang Ly and Mr. Kamboly Dy from DC-Cam and Ms. Ben Neang from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, would discuss the Khmer Rouge (KR) history with the villagers.



Mr. Sok-Kheang Ly and the Commune Chief Addressing the Participants

Mr. Ly took the floor from the commune chief and explained the purposes of the forum. He explained that the forum aims to disseminate the information on the KR history in order to have national reconciliation. Before starting the discussion and explanation, Mr. Ly asked the villagers to share the history of Kuoy minority. Mr. Nuon Toch, Director of Bro-me Primary School talked about

Kuoy's history. Mr. Toch said that the Kuoy minority did not have a clear village structure in the past. The minority lived dispersed in the forests. There was a story that the Thai came in and took the Kuoy minority with them to Thailand. Also, there was an epidemic disease which forced the Kuoy villagers to settle down in different places. Economic relations were with Thailand and Laos. The people went to these two countries to buy food and other basic products. They farmed and maintained rice plantations for their livelihood. When Cambodia received independence from France, Prince Sihanouk gathered all the Kuoy minority people to live in Bro-me Village.

Mr. Toch added that Kuoy is a speaking language but is not written in script. The KR banned the speaking of Kuoy language during the regime because the KR did not understand the language. Kuoy people also lived in some parts of Kampong Thom Province. In the present day, most Kuoy people live in Bro-me village. There were some killing during the KR regime, but Kuoy were not targeted because they were Kuoy minority. However, Kuoy minority were also recruited to work for the KR.

Khieu Pem said that she was evacuated to Choam Khsan District. Most people from Choam Khsan fled to Thailand and Laos. Therefore, the KR switched the people. Those in Choam Khsan were asked to live in Tbeng while the Tbeng people were transferred to live in Choam Khsan. The commune chief was the chief of the mobile unit for the construction of Kamping Puoy dam (not Kamping Puoy dam in Battambang). The commune chief said that people from Mondul Kiri and Ratanakiri came to control the Preah Vihear Province.

Another villager named Nuon Mon said that initially the minority were not put in charge of Preah Vihear. Those from Svay Rieng and Kandal controlled the province. Her husband was deputy chief of regiment in the province. Other military chiefs were Ta My, Ta Min, and Ta Hoeun. Her husband Ta Min, a Tampuon minority, was imprisoned two times: once during the KR and the other after the KR. He was accused of being an American CIA agent. Her husband was also imprisoned in Vietnam. Nuon Mon served as a KR revolutionary dancer. Mon believed that her husband was not CIA. The reason of his arrest was the power struggle.

Mr. Toch also believed that the power struggle was behind the killing. The KR killed all the educated people who were disliked because they were marked as imperialists, feudalists and businessmen. Monks were also marked as a feudalist class; the KR believed that monks did not do any work and waited for food. Monks were considered as leeches that suck people's blood. Teachers and students were not spared as well. All villagers said that they have at least one family member who died during the KR regime.

Mr. Ly said that because all participants are Kuoy minority, he wanted them to know the condition of minorities during the KR regime. He asked all participants to turn the DK history textbook to page 51. The school director read the section "Enemy of Angkar." After the reading, Mr. Ly asked if they had known about the conditions of other minority groups such as Vietnamese



Kuoy Minority People Attending the Forum

and Choam. Phan Roeun said that she felt very pained after listening to the reading. Her husband, who was the driver for the KR hospital, was a KR cadre and was arrested while she was still eight months pregnant. Her husband was accused of setting fire on the car with his cigarette. After her husband was killed, she was constantly spied upon. Roeun described her story with tears. Duong Vuth, 67 years old, said that her son Chuon Hok disappeared during the KR. Hok joined the KR in what was called a dedicated children's unit (Komar Leah Bong) in 1974. In about 1975 her son and a group of other children were sent to the battle field in Anglong Veng and disappeared ever since. Than Nuo, 42 years old living Brame Commune, wanted to find her brother who disappeared during the KR. Her brother's name was Than sann, who was put in the armed forces and sent to the battle field with Chuon Hok. Suon Sokhom's brother Suon Kav also disappeared during the KR. Kav was a KR regional solidier.

After discussing about the life of Kuoy minority during the KR, Mr. Ly continued to discuss about the education in the commune. Mr. Duong Sophon said that his children finished high school but were not able to continue to higher education. The children took the exam to enter the pedagogical school to become teachers but failed. Mr. Ly asked if the teaching of DK history is important. Non Muon said that the teaching is important because the children

have to know the history in order not to walk on the same path as the KR. Ms. Khieu Pem said that she wanted her children to know and remember the genocidal acts of the KR but she has never told her children about her story at that time. Chey Loeung used to describe her experiences to her children, especially the story of the dam construction.

Mr. Ly also talked about the Tuol Sleng (S-21) Prison, Duch's role as chief of the prison, the killing sites, and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal (KRT). Mr. Ly asked if the villagers know the KR leaders being prosecuted by the court. One teacher said he knew some information about the court through TV and radio broadcasts. The leaders to be prosecuted include Duch, Khieu Samphan, Ieng Sary, Nuon Chea, and Ieng Therith. Mr. Ly showed the photos and explained the roles and positions of all the leaders to be prosecuted. Finally, Mr. Ly asked if the prosecution is important. Phan Roeun said the court is important as she lost one brother. Mon said the prosecution is important because the KR leaders were the killers at that time.

To conclude, Mr. Ly said that the forum is an informal education on the KR history. He encouraged the villagers to read the book and share their stories with the children as the KR history appears in the high school exams. He added that the education aims to achieve national reconciliation, forgiveness, and tolerance. He encouraged the Kuoy villagers to follow the KRT as the court is created for the villagers.

At the end, the commune chief closed the event by thanking the team for conducting the forum. He stated that in the past he had received the book and the magazine, but had never received any team and forum like this before.

Appendix Two: Students' Reactions to the Teaching of DK History

Ms. Vung Kanhna: I am studying at eleventh grade in Chea Sim Tbeng Meanchey High School. I have rarely heard people talking about this history, including my parents. I never received any textbooks about the DK history. However, my teachers used to tell me about the killing and the brutality of the KR regime. I really wanted my teachers to focus more on what the KR did to the Cambodian people.

Mr. Chhoeung Samnang: I am studying eleventh grade at Chea Sim Tbeng Meanchey High School. I have received the DK textbook and read it at some points. I was impressed by the pictures of people carrying earth and building canals and dams. My parents also tell me about the fact that DK regime was authoritarian. Initially, I've thought that it might be taking place. It



Students Working in Group

might be true as the people lived a miserable life. My teachers of history and Khmer literature often focus on the history, but do not go deeper.

Ms. Sao Sreiroath: I am studying in eleventh grade at Chea Sim Tbeng Meanchey High School and rank number one in class. I have been reading the DK textbook while getting access to a library at my secondary school in Koulen District. What I remember is that the Cambodian people have suffered the most during the KR regime. My parents also told me about the worst living conditions, such as the lack of food and the mass executions. My teachers in tenth grade usually reminded us of this history. Now, the teachers touch very little on it. Teachers should try to incorporate this history into each lesson for the sake of clearer understanding. Through education, we can learn from what has happened in our history. I suggest that each student should do the same to use this educational approach to prevent the genocide.

Ms. Ly Sinat: I am studying tenth grade at Sangkum Thmei High School. I used to read books about the KR history as my father brought it for me. But I did not read it in great detail. I feel shocked when I see the picture of nails being pulled out. My father also told me about the period. He was assigned to carry bundles of rice since four o'clock in the morning. I tended to believe in his story as my mother and relatives also spoke about this. My teacher reminded each student of the period, too. The teacher even raised a question of how to prevent the mass atrocities. Each responded by stressing about mutual understanding and tolerance. My teacher even promised to recall this history. I even watch television about the KR period.

Ms. Sos Kim-Y: I am studying tenth grade at Sangkum Thmei Secondary School. I have yet to receive any copies of the DK history textbook. What I learned about the DK period is through my history teacher, who often incorporates the discussion in each lesson. Also, my parents told me about the period. They mentioned about the interruption of their studies because of the DK's



The Compound of Chea Sim Tbeng Meanchey High School

prohibition of school and the evacuation. They continued to say that immediately after the KR's fall, they escaped to the Cambodian-Thai border only to find themselves in danger of mines as they were pushed back through Dangrek mountain by the Thai authorities. Many people died by stepping on mines. What I suggest is that teachers should stress the way that the DK came to power, how the DK regime caused people to die, and also about the internal purges. It is beneficial for our society to prevent this from happening again. As for other foreign context, I knew about the death during the World War I and II. In the future, I have a vision to build up my career to be a lawyer.

Mr. Neak Borey: I am studying seventh grade at Hun Sen Choam Khsan Secondary School. I have yet to come across any textbook of DK history. However, my teachers used to tell me about the history. What I want my teachers to do is to explain as to why the regime killed the people.

Ms. Sim Pach aka Tola: I am studying seventh grade at Hun Sen Choam Khsan Secondary School. I used to read the DK textbook in the school's library. What I remember was the dates when the KR came to power and were overthrown. It is rare for my parents to tell me about the history. But my teachers tell me about the family separation, overwork, starvation, and about the mass executions. I'd like to ask teachers to incorporate more history teachings in the classroom for the sake of general understanding.

Ms. Yutha Amry: I am studying eleventh grade at Rovieng High School. I have never read the DK textbook, but my mother narrated the story of the DK period. She said people were forced to work extremely hard. And, she said it was very lucky for me to be born after the regime. I also heard about the killings of the Cambodian people, which were different from those in Germany during the Hitler's rule.

END.

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