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DOCUMENTATION CENTER OF CAMBODIA
Genocide Education in Cambodia
The Teaching of "A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)"

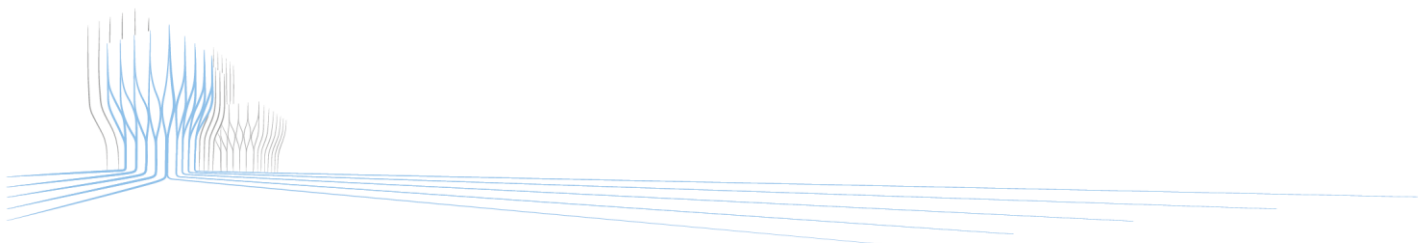
Regional Pedagogical Training Center, Kandal Province

March 29-April 2, 2016

Day 5--April 2, 2016

Today's themes: For the training's last day, the 5-day training culminated today with an invited speaker, civil party to the ECCC, Him Huy talking to the trainees about his experiences as a guard at S-21 and earlier as a soldier for the Khmer Rouge. The program concluded with a closing ceremony with Her Excellency Ton Sa-Im, the Undersecretary of MoEYS.

Today was the last day of the 5-day Pre-Service Teacher Training at the Kandal Province Pedagogy Center, which ended in several sessions that brought together all of the things the trainees have learned this week. In the morning session, the trainees had the opportunity to hear firsthand from one of the few remaining people who experienced S-21, Him Huy, who they had also been introduced to in the documentary yesterday. He gave a short overview of his life and what he experienced during DK, before opening up the conversation to trainees' questions. In his introduction, he stressed that he wanted to share his story – and gave testimony at the ECCC – so that the next generation and the world would know what happened here so that it does not happen again. This theme is also something that H.E Ton Sa-Im reiterates in her remarks later in the day. During the question and answer session the trainees were very enthusiastic in asking questions. It was the most involved that I had seen them, especially in the combined large group. They were eager to have an opportunity to ask their questions directly to someone about their experience. Some of the questions just restated what they heard already in his introduction or in his account in the documentary yesterday, but he was gracious in answering even if it was something he



had already told the group. The questions focused largely on how he felt about his responsibilities at S-21, to which he responded talking mainly about fear and being



A trainee at group discussion

forced to comply. He also commented a few times that he felt like he could not rebel or go against his superiors on his own, he would need an organized group. A few others asked about the demographics of the staff at S-21. He explained that most of the guards were younger men, around 18, and there were no women directly working there but a few who were the wives of cadres. This also raised the question

of whether other prisons did have female staff and what their roles were. One of the more interesting questions that a trainee asked, especially given the current focus at the ECCC, was whether he observed that different ethnic groups were treated differently at S-2. This was a really thought-provoking question that I hadn't really considered earlier about differential treatment within the prison system. He responded that no, everyone who was brought there was essentially brought to be killed, so they were treated equally poorly. When asked what he remembered the most from the DK period, he responded that it was fear. Throughout all of his answers, there was a sense that even though he was higher up and relatively trusted, he felt he or his family could be killed at any time. Coming through this discussion very clearly was the sense that he was caught between being both a perpetrator of violence and a victim of the regime that forced him to comply with a lot of horrible acts. It seemed like the trainees had processed a lot of the information with which they were presented during



the week and this question and answer session provided them with a forum to find out more about some of the history that they had learned.

The afternoon session opened with a wrap up and review with the trainees to find out from them what they had learned, what they had hoped to learn at the beginning of the training, and what they still wanted to learn. A large majority of the trainees reflected that they wished there had been more history lessons and fewer pedagogical ones. Only two or three (some seemed hesitant to raise their hands) said they wanted to have more pedagogy training and less history. After discussing their view of the program, everyone prepared for the closing ceremony. The closing ceremony began once H.E Ton Sa-Im arrived. Mr. Peng Pong Rasy acted as the host for the event, opening the ceremony thanking the trainers from the MoEYS and DC-Cam, as well as talking to the trainees a bit more about the history of DK. Following his remarks, Mr. Dara talked for a few minutes to again thank everyone and give the overview of the training program itself. Following the remarks from the DC-Cam team, the trainee representative, Ms. Borey Va gave a speech on behalf of the trainees. She comments that she learned a lot from the trainers and their lessons, but also from the interesting questions that her peers asked about the DK period. She also says that she hopes the training continues in other provinces. She concludes in adding she is determined to share the history that she learned this week with her future students as well. After her speech, H.E Ton Sa-Im is invited to formally conclude the training. H.E Ton Sa-Im began with again welcoming everyone and engaging the trainees about their background. She starts to talk about her own experiences during the DK period, telling the assembly that of her family of 10, she was the only survivor. She also reiterates the importance of learning about the history of the KR. She tells them that it is critical to learn about DK not only to know the history, but to understand why it happened so that they can prevent something like genocide from happening again in the future. She also encourages the trainees to use their as teachers to do greater research and continue to learn more about what happened under the KR. Her speech goes on to discuss the more recent growth in the province and the role that peace has played in development. She returns to the trainees encourages them to not only be knowledgeable teachers but also empathetic ones, adding that empathy is necessary in

order for the country to remain united. She then formally concludes the speech and the ceremony.



H.E Ton Sa-Im presides over the closing ceremony

I was able to talk to a few trainees briefly after the program concluded, although many were eager to go start their preparations for the school-wide New Year celebration on Sunday. The trainees told me that they really enjoyed the training and thought they would likely use all of the kinds of lessons that they learned in their future classrooms. One trainee commented that she thought the methodologies would be useful in kinds of subjects, not just teaching DK history. In particular, they thought the group work



activities had been helpful. When asked what she would do differently if she were leading the training, she replied that it would be good to link learning about these subjects to seeing the places where they took place and suggested going to see Tuol Sleng when they learn about its history. The trainees seemed more comfortable in their knowledge of the DK period after the training and more confident about their abilities to teach on this subject as well in the future. Seeing how much their willingness to participate increased over the five days really reinforced this idea, many spoke more confidently and were not hesitant to ask questions in front of the whole assembly. The last day's sessions reflected a culmination of the previous days' programs, bringing together the history that they've learned but also the spirit of engaging critically and asking questions that the trainers worked to convey.

APPENDIX I: Report of Observations & Recommendations

By: Christopher Dearing

Observation Period

1-2 April 2016

Summarized Recommendations

1. Shorten the number of hours in class, but increase student responsibility for learning of material by introducing quizzes.
2. Experiment with a short 'study/reading' session during class.
3. Ensure students understand the importance of peer and self-evaluation during teaching practice sessions.
4. Implement a pre- and post-evaluation of student knowledge for donor reporting using Teacher Guidebook's final exam.

Observations

Explanatory Note

The observations are organized under two categories: a) Sustain or b) Improve. Observations identified under 'Sustain' equate to aspects of the training that stand out as notable, positive details that should be sustained or enhanced for future trainings.



The 'Improve' category refers to those aspects or details of the training that should be minimized, changed, or improved for future trainings. Separately there is a listing of recommendations for future trainings.

Teacher guidebook and textbook distribution

Sustain: Providing each student with their own reference materials is a 'sustain' because it empowers the future teachers with the ability for self-study and reproduction for student use.

Improve: None at this time.

Trainer instruction on history

Sustain: Trainer use of outlines and focused question and lecture on history forces students to read, study, and think about the history during class time. Notably, most students don't appear to read/study the material outside of class so the focused reading/lectures are valuable.

Improve: Excessive time is devoted to students reading the materials during class, which can be boring and not conducive to student interaction.

Recommendation: Recommend the trainers set aside a few minutes before each class for the students to study the material. Then students can be given a quiz (verbal or written) to test their learning. This may expedite the time spent in reading and reduce the amount of time devoted to lectures.

Trainer modeling of student-centered methods

Sustain: Trainer, Mom Meth, was adept with modeling different teaching methods, then explaining the reason for each method and how to implement it in the classroom. This technique of demonstration and explanation gives teachers an opportunity to see an example of the classroom method, and then ask questions and hear a deeper explanation of the method.

Improve: Not all trainers were modeling student-centered teaching methods. While every trainer had a slightly different way of modeling/teaching the material, some trainers simply lectured with limited student interaction.



Teacher practice sessions

Sustain: The practice sessions are a critical aspect of the program because it forces student-teachers to practice their teaching and mentoring skills. It also allows student-teachers the ability to share ideas on teaching lessons in different ways. (i.e., the epitome of student-centered learning)

Improve: Trainers need to direct the student-teachers to self- and peer-evaluate each other's lessons. Trainers need to give feedback as well at the end of the practice session. Certain small groups just taught their lessons with no peer or trainer feedback.

Improve: Student-teacher management of their own small group practice sessions was a novel approach that could be sustained, but requires improvement. Essentially, the DC-Cam or Ministry Trainer moves thru each Teacher Training Practice Session, observing, but not actually sitting through the entire practice session. While it is ideal to have a DC-Cam staff member in each group to ensure oversight, it was observed that when the Pre-Service Teachers were given complete responsibility for managing their own small group sessions, the quality did not dramatically diminish. However, in the one group this was observed, the student-teachers did not understand that they were supposed to give feedback to each person. The trainer should remain engaged to ensure the small group sessions are managed well.

Film

Sustain: The use of films is a sustain because it offers a different medium for instruction and interaction with the historical content.

Improve: The DC-Cam staff trainers did not offer much student participation before or after the film. DC-Cam staff provided an introduction to the film on S-21, along with commentary on the film's speakers (Bun Mey, Him Huy, etc). However, after the film, the DC-Cam staff just asked if the students had any questions. There were no questions, so they immediately went to a break. This post-film period could have been improved by having a discussion about the film. For instance, DC-Cam staff could have asked the students about how they define a perpetrator? How do they define a victim? What did Him Huy think he was? Can Him Huy be a victim? Can he be a victim and a perpetrator at the same



time? If you are a bystander to a crime, are you a perpetrator? These are just a few questions that could have been asked to increase the learning value of the film.

Program Assessment

Sustain: The use of surveys is a critical tool to evaluate the trainees' sentiments on the training.

Improve: The genocide education programme does not have an adequate understanding of its impact on trainee's knowledge/understanding of DK history. This can be addressed by providing a pre- and post-assessment using the Teacher Guidebook's final exam.

General Recommendations

1. DC-Cam staff should consider changing different aspects of their program to experiment for purposes of maximizing student learning in the shortest time possible. For example, the staff could try introducing 'study periods' followed by short quizzes.
2. The training schedule of 0700 to 1700 may be too long. There is a two-hour lunch, which means the day encompasses approximately eight hours of classroom time; however this may be too long. Staff should experiment with letting students go home earlier with the promise of a quiz each morning on the material from the day before. It would give the students more responsibility for their own learning, which is one aspect of the program that requires improvement.
3. More interaction, and more practice teaching sessions with post-practice feedback to students would increase the student-centered thrust of the program. Students seem to enjoy the practice teaching sessions the most because of the opportunity to interact with and learn from each other.
4. Consider introducing quizzes to increase student responsibility for learning of material.



Implement a pre- and post-evaluation of student knowledge for donor reporting. The use of the student survey, while important, will not satisfy donor interests in assessing the impact of the genocide education programme. Recommend that the evaluation is created by reference to the teacher guidebook's final exam questions.

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