

**Documentation Center of Cambodia
Genocide Education in Cambodia: The Teaching of "A History of Democratic
Kampuchea (1975-1979)"**

Training for Pedagogical Students, Takeo Regional Training School

Report, December 7-9 & 14-16, 2012

1. Introduction

On December 7-9 and 14-16, 2012, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (the Ministry of Education) conducted a six-day training on the teaching of "A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)" to 113 pedagogical students at Takeo Regional Training School. The training is divided into two major parts: presentation on Khmer Rouge (KR) history and presentation and model teaching on the modern methodologies. Materials used in the training include: Democratic Kampuchea history textbook, Teacher's Guidebook, booklet on case 002, magazine *Searching for the Truth*, and Student Workbook. In addition, the training also employs documentary films, survivor's stories, and guest speakers to give a more first-hand account of KR history. Trainees receive presentations on the history and teaching methodologies in the morning. In the afternoon, they have the chance to practice the methodologies.

The training represents DC-Cam-Ministry of Education's continued efforts to facilitate genocide education in lower secondary schools, with students ranging from age 13 to 16. These efforts ensure that the students in this age group begin to grasp the fundamental background of the tragedy of their country's history so that they are able to comprehend a deeper understanding on the larger picture of the KR history, including how the KR came to power, how the genocide was organized, and the ideologies the KR adopted and interjected into Cambodian society. The understanding on the rise, rule, and demise of the KR regime will allow Cambodia's young generation to have empathy toward the KR victims and tolerance and forgiveness toward former KR cadres, which is an important step for national reconciliation, sustainable peace building, and genocide prevention. At the same time, Cambodian educators are equipped with the methodologies that emphasize critical thinking and students' self-learning that increase students' cognitive development.

2. Activities of the Training

Opening Ceremony

The Head of the Provincial Office of Education gave a welcoming speech to the participants and he stated how he was proud to have had the opportunity to host the first training for pedagogical students. He totally supports the training initiatives and objectives; and, as a victim of the KR regime himself, he wanted to see Cambodia's young generation receive proper education on this particular part of Cambodian history.

The second speaker Mr. Vanthan Peou Dara, DC-Cam's Deputy Director, talked about the key developments in the efforts to teach KR history since 1979. Mr. Vanthan stated that the early teaching of KR history was based on political propaganda rather than objective history. This trend was a consequence of Cambodia's Civil War. Moving ahead to the 1990s, the history was quietly taken out of the school curriculum for the sake of national reconciliation and peace, which was a dominant priority at the time and was partially realized with the Paris Peace Agreement. However, the effort to teach genocide in Cambodia did not fade away. In 2007, these efforts were realized with the unprecedented achievement of publishing and distributing the textbook *A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)*, which has been endorsed as a mandatory reference for secondary teachers and students nationwide.

Her Excellency Ton Sa Im was the Chairperson of the opening ceremony and the last speaker. She expressed gratitude for the strong collaboration amongst the several institutions, which made today a reality. Her Excellency said that the KR history was integrated into the national curriculum long before the DC-Cam-Ministry of Education's initiatives. However, these past efforts were not adequate, and the current effort fills these past gaps. She emphasized that the current teachers and students have more opportunity as they have new teaching materials developed by DC-Cam. She then talked about the importance of teaching KR history for the purpose of preventing the past's tragedies. The participants can also learn from the living evidence such as survivors, crime sites, and human remains.

Chris Dearing's Methodological Presentation

He asked students what the trainees wanted their students to get at the end of the teaching. The question was important as it highlighted a key principal in the teacher's guidebook—student-centered learning. Students should be able to think and read critically. At the end, the teachers must consider what basic skills are most important for their students' future careers. For example, Chris introduced the subject of reading and he pointed out why reading is important for the trainees. Chris encouraged the trainees to do the same for their students. In addition, Chris highlighted some of the dynamics and techniques for teaching in class. For instance, the teachers can adapt their body position and body language to fit the atmosphere and learning mode of their lesson. If a teacher stands he or she will reflect authority and power over the students. In this sense, the students are the receivers of information. If a teacher sits, and arranges the students in a circle around the teacher, then the teacher is reflecting interest in the students' opinions and participation. This type of classroom behavior on the part of the teacher can assist the teacher's communication with different personalities in the classroom. Shy students are encouraged to participate more when the teacher is seated, however when the teacher is standing, he or she has greater control over the students' behavior.

Reading Comprehension: Further, Chris introduced the way teachers can motivate the students by taking Chapter One and Chapter Two as models. Chris asked

trainees to turn to Chapter One of the textbook and the guidebook at the same time. Chris asked for a volunteer to read paragraph one of Chapter One from the textbook and asked the rest of the trainees to read along with the student reading aloud. After reading, Chris asked the trainees to turn to page 23 in their guidebook and look at the guided questions. Chris asked the question, "When did the KR occupy Cambodia?" Chris emphasized that this was one way for the method of teaching reading comprehension. Then Chris showed another method of teaching reading comprehension. Like the first method, Chris asked one volunteer to read two paragraphs from Chapter Two of the textbook while the rest of the class had to close the textbook. The trainees were asked to take notes while the student read. After the student finished reading aloud, Chris explained the different ways a teacher could perform this reading/listening activity. Teacher can ask students to work in pairs in order to discuss what they remember from the reading. Alternatively, the teacher can ask each student to read their notes aloud to the class. Or a teacher can collect the notes in order to learn what the students have learned from the reading. Teachers can use the guided questions in the guidebook to learn the students' understanding. After explaining the method, Chris asked one trainee why the Cambodian communist movement collaborated with Vietnam as he saw this trainee took a lot more notes than the others. However, the trainee did not answer the question correctly. Another trainee stood up and responded correctly. At the end, Chris told the trainees that he was not trying to test their knowledge on KR history; he was mainly trying to demonstrate and explain the different methods that the trainees can use to teach the students. Chris recommended the note taking method because it allows the students to practice active listening, note taking, and synthesizing important points from the textbook. In addition, teachers can ask students to summarize the chapter as a way of reflecting on what they have read and learned.

Chris emphasized that each teacher should use different methods that vary according to the classroom situation and the students' attitudes and personality. Some students may feel good with the first method while others may prefer the second method. For example, if the students are too young, asking them to write the summary may not be a good method. One trainee gave an impression that if she employed the methods of asking students to take notes and answer the questions, she may not be able to finish the lesson on time. Chris explained that the enemy of all teachers is "time." Another enemy is "sleepiness" or "sleep monster." Therefore, the teacher has to use time efficiently and create conditions that help students stay engaged in the lesson. Administrative activities should be accomplished efficiently by assigning students to complete these tasks (when appropriate). Checking attendance can often take up valuable time that is better spent teaching and learning. Chris asked "If the students cannot answer the questions correctly, is it the students' mistake?" He stated that the teacher is responsible for creating an environment that is conducive to learning. If the students are not learning or they are not learning efficiently, the teacher should blame the students. He or she should first consider what the teacher must do to improve the students' learning. A teacher can walk to the back of the room and call on the sleepy students to engage them in the lesson.

Teachers also must be creative in their lessons. Students can become bored very easily with the same mode of learning. It is important for all teachers to be creative in changing their lessons and environment. If students become overly accustomed to a specific style of learning, then the teacher should change in order to continue to challenge the students.

Vocabulary: Next, Chris showed the trainees how to teach vocabulary. One trainee said that the teacher can ask students to work with the dictionary in the library. Chris asked how the teacher can teach new words without using dictionary. The teacher does not have much time to explain all the words in the text. Therefore, students have to be able to find the meaning for words on their own. Teachers can ask students to highlight the difficult words or write them down in the notebook. Then one student comes to the board and writes down the difficult words. As the teacher has all the difficult words from the students, the teacher can ask the students who knows some of the difficult terms to help explain to the others. Another method is to learn the difficult terms in context. To learn one word, students can read the sentences preceding and succeeding a particular term.

K-W-L Chart: After that, Chris explained the use of another method known as the K-W-L chart. K stands for “What do students Know?”; W stands for “What do students want to know?” and L stands for “What did students Learn?” This method can be used to teach difficult classes. Chris asked the trainees what they know about Pol Pot. The trainees provided a list of answers, which was recorded by a student volunteer on a blackboard at the front of the room. Chris reemphasized that it is important that teachers ask students what they know about the lesson that they are about to learn. Even if the students provide the wrong answers, it is pretty much fine as the key objective is to encourage the students to give answers. If the teacher rejects the wrong answers right away, the students will lose encouragement. After this, the teacher shall begin asking what the students want to know about the lesson they are about to study. The question is “What do you want to know about Pol Pot?” Chris stressed that, at this stage, the students have not learned anything from the lesson. Questions from participants include: Why did Pol Pot kill people? Who is Pol Pot? The reason for conducting these activities is to find out how much the students know about the subject that they are about to study, which will help the teacher to determine how much time that he or she should devote to the lesson for the students’ effective understanding. The teacher, of course, does not have enough time to answer all the questions from the students or the teacher may not know the answers to some questions. However, the teacher should remember that they do not need to know all the aspects of a history in order to teach it, and a teacher should not be afraid of being asked questions that they do not have the answer to. Then, Chris moved onto the letter “L.” The third column (“L”) is to be filled out after the students’ lesson.

Role Playing: Another student-centered method is to share different roles among the students. Teacher can divide students into groups of five and each member of the group is given a different role as either a note taker, reporter, leader, motivator or

time keeper. The note taker will learn how to be a good listener and writer while the reporter knows how to give presentations to the class. The leader receives instructions from the teacher and should demonstrate good leadership skills in order to coordinate the group. The motivator should also know how to facilitate the group members in order to focus the group's work. The time keeper should learn good time management skills. The most important point of this method is that each student has a chance to develop a particular skillset that will be important to their personal and professional development. In addition, each member has to contribute to the group's findings. The time keeper cannot just sit and watch the time only; she/he has to participate in the group's discussions.

Genocide Definition: On Day 2 of the training, Chris Dearing presented on another session that addressed methodology. At the start of the session, Chris asked if the participants knew the definition of "genocide." One student said that genocide is "killing one own people in a massive scale." Another participant said that genocide is "the killing of the people indiscriminately." The third participant said that genocide is "the killing of one own people by the KR." Chris said that he would introduce the genocide definition used by the Khmer Rouge Tribunal (KRT) in which genocide is defined as the act to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnical, social or religious group. Chris then explained the three key elements of genocide—the first of which is intent. The perpetrators have to have prior knowledge of the killing. For instance, if you are a President or a military commander, and your soldiers or subordinates committed genocide without your knowledge, you will not be accountable for genocide. However, though the commander may not be responsible for the crime of genocide, he may be responsible for event of the killing under other criminal charges. The commander will be held accountable in this situation for the crime against humanity or a war crime (violation of the Geneva Conventions). The second key element is the terms "in whole" or "in part." Here, there emerges another complexity as you can never determine the amount that counts toward the term "in part." The third key element is the protected groups: national, racial, ethnical and religious groups. There are some groups left out from the definition—for example, the political group. The simple reason for the exclusion of certain groups is because of the negotiations among the UN Security Council members. Another example of an exclusion is the social group who also suffered during the Holocaust.

Guest Speaker: Chris presented and modeled the teaching of Lesson 2 in Chapter 3. In teaching this lesson, participants can invite guest speakers to talk to the students. In this respect, teachers are encouraged to reach out to older people in the schools or from the nearby villages as guest speakers. It could be a refreshment to invite different people to talk to the students who will learn from different human experiences.

Picture: The teacher can also mix guest speaker and picture together. In order to teach and practice the lesson using pictures, Chris asked participants to work in pairs to discuss the pictures of evacuation from the guidebook. Each pair has to

write a one-page description of the picture. One person will write and the other person will present the writing to the class. But they both need to work together to produce the description. Participants were given ten minutes for this work. After that, several representatives came to the board to present their findings. The teacher should collect the writings from the students so that next time they will try hard to do this work.

Teaching Practices

From Day 2 to Day 6, participants had a chance to conduct teaching practice in order to strengthen their knowledge on the particular methods they've learned in the morning. The teaching practices were conducted in groups of two in which members of the groups were equally responsible for designing the lesson; however, only one member was made responsible for the teaching. Each group had a limited time of thirty minutes to do the teaching practice. After each teaching practice, the rest of the class would give feedback for improvement.

Pen Sophanna: Chapter 3, Lesson 2: 17 April 1975 Pictures

Sophanna began the lesson by asking the students if they knew the meaning of 17 April 1975. One student stood up and said that it was the day the KR occupied Cambodia. Then Sophanna turned to explain the objectives of the lesson; she wrote down the objectives on the whiteboard. She then showed the pictures of the 17 April and asked the students to describe the pictures. Several students took turns to describe the evacuation pictures. After that, Sophanna invited a guest speaker Teng Sophea Leaksmeay to tell the students about her life as a young child during the KR. Leaksmeay said that *"On 17 April 1975, the KR soldiers forced her families to leave the city to the mountainous area. On the way, some people delivered luggage by bicycle and there was a crowd of people. No one knew a clear direction, and some people lost contact with their family members. However, my five-member family rode on a moto without a clear direction. We did not have anything to eat as we were short on food. We thought that we would leave for only a few days, so we did not take many things with us. There were shootings on the way. Patients were forced to leave the hospital. Arriving in the village, my parents were asked to do farming."* After the guest speaker, Sophanna divided the students into groups of four—asking students to count from one to four. Each group had to produce a one-page report about the evacuation on 17 April 1975 based on the pictures, guest speaker and prior knowledge. At the end, Sophanna collected the reports in order to evaluate the students' understanding.

Pech Lyvalai: Chapter 5, Lesson 2: Role Playing "Victims and Perpetrators"

Before the start of the teaching, Lyvalai explained the objectives of the lesson. The three main objectives were to allow students to do role play by using the interview transcripts and to analyze context of the people during the KR regime. The students needed to take notes about the role play. Lyvalai chose testimonies 2 and 5 in the guidebook for two students to do role play. Before allowing the two students to do role play, Lyvalai explained the ethic in doing role play. For example, students should not show anger and do not discriminate against the perpetrators. Moreover, students should not judge people in the testimonies and should not show their feelings about a particular people in the testimony. After the role play, Lyvalai asked

students to work in pairs to write a brief note about their reflections on the two testimonies. At the end, Lyvalai asked several students to read their notes aloud in the class in order to summarize the students' learning.

Leng Sahen: Chapter 6, Lesson 2: Survival Box

Before the start of the class, Sahen recalled the previous lesson which was about the four-year plan. She asked students to present to the class what the KR four-year plan was about. After that, she asked one student to read aloud the three objectives of the lesson she wrote down on the flipchart. Sahen then explained in detail each of the objectives that she wanted the students to achieve at the end of the lesson. The main point in the lesson was to help students develop the skill of saving lives in a difficult situation such as that during the KR period. She then divided the students into groups of four. Each group was responsible to collect all materials they thought were important for survival if they lived in such a situation as the KR regime. After the group discussions, each group chose a representative to explain to the class why they decided on the items they put in the survival box. At the end, Sahen summarized all important items that students chose.

Ms. Soy Sreyny: Chapter 7, Lesson 2: My Diary during the KR

Before the start of the lesson, the teacher recalled the previous lesson. Then she explained the objectives of today's lesson. The main highlight of the lesson was to allow students to be able to write a diary by pretending that they were living in the KR regime. From that diary writing, the students would be able to analyze life under the KR and the effects of the KR crimes on the Cambodian people today. After that she asked one student to read the story of Doe Sereylen aloud in the class. She then divided students into groups of five to produce diaries on their own. One student from each group would come to the teacher to receive instruction. The diary writing focused on a question: "What would your life be like if you were living in the DK regime?" At the end, a representative from each group came to the board to present their diary writing.

Film Screening

On Day 3, the team screened three documentary films for the participants. The films include: Toul Sleng Prison, Prison in Baset Mountain and the KR Liberation Regions in 1973. Before the start of the screening, Dany Long, a national teacher, introduced the background of the three documentaries so that participants got to know some of their background information. Mr. Long also told the participants about how the documentaries, which were taken by Vietnam, were collected and given over to Cambodia by DC-Cam.

After the screening, Mr. Long led the discussions and/or questions with the participants. One participant expressed doubt about the 1973 liberation region film which he saw a number of Vietnamese cadres in the film. Mr. Long explained that the film showed the visit of the delegation of South Vietnamese revolutionary cadres who visited Cambodia in 1973. These Vietnamese cadres were the communist revolutionaries who cooperated with the North Vietnamese communists to liberate

South Vietnam. It should be noticed that Vietnam and the KR cooperated well with each other. Another participant asked why the US did not drop bombs on the liberated region in the film. Mr. Long said that the film was taken at a time that the US did not drop bombs or in a place which was safe from the American bombing campaign. In the film, all cars were covered with tree leaves in order to hide from the plane surveillance. Another participant asked if the film was taken by Vietnam or others. Mr. Long said that the 1973 film was taken by Vietnam as the film crew came along with the Vietnamese delegates. The second film about Tuol Sleng prison was also taken by Vietnam when Vietnam fought into Cambodia in January 1979. There were five child survivors in the film. Unfortunately, one child died immediately after found because of starvation. Two out of the four were adopted by German and Japanese people. The other two were Norng Chanphal and his younger brother Norng Channy. Chanphal is currently a civil party at the KR Tribunal.

On Day 4, the participants watched two documentaries: “Cambodian Children” and “Behind the Wall of S-21.” Seeing the first film at its start, most participants laughed as they saw some of the funny activities such as small children carrying each other on the back and picking up shells on the rice fields for food. They also laughed especially when they saw the children eating tree leaves. However, as they proceeded to the middle of the film, their faces began to change expression. They even murmured in shock when they saw those children eating rice with crowd of flies on it and the skinny children with only bones and skin left as well as the swollen children with a number of wounds all over the body.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Kar Sunbonath: The KR Legacy and Mental State of the People

On Day 5, Dr. Kar Sunbonath conducted a presentation on the effects of the KR legacy on the Cambodian people today. Dr. Kar placed great emphasis on the important role of the teachers in educating the young generations in civics for the development of the country.

Throughout human history, human beings always experience trauma which can cause incredible damage to a person’s well-being. The suffering can be experienced in your mind for many months or years, and it can take a long time to recover. There are two kinds of trauma: man-made trauma and natural trauma. If the disaster happens on its own without the presence of human beings, that is called natural trauma. However, if the events happen close to the people, for example, shooting, this will cause trauma to the people. Some disasters happen naturally while others are caused by human beings. KR experiences are not the only trauma experienced by Cambodian people. People can also suffer others disasters such as the damage to one’s reputation. It is important to note that if the disaster does not happen on the human body, it is not called disaster. It becomes disaster only when the human’s emotional state is affected.

During the KR regime, people suffered from mental illness and this suffering continues even today. Trauma can arise in those people who were directly near to and affected by a disaster—for example, bombs that kill people in front of many

other people. The worst trauma occurs when the suffering comes as a result of events that occur repeatedly over time.

Disaster and trauma are common to all people. All teachers in the training must have experienced some disastrous events such as a traffic accident or a house on fire. These disastrous events traumatize them for half month or more. People of all statuses, whether rich or poor, suffer in the same way—except the degree of suffering is different. Even a one-year old child can experience trauma. For example, let's imagine that a child was burned by fire. When he/she gets older, she/he is afraid of fire because of this past experience. Therefore, children should not be exposed to violence such as beating. Whenever children see a stick, they will feel fearful. Another instance is the child who has experienced a near-drowning. Whenever this child sees a boat, he will feel frightened. These bad experiences will constantly stay in a person's mind. Some people dream about similar disasters they have experienced. When they get up, they feel frightened and become sick. For example, one woman whose husband and children were taken for execution saw a pick and said to herself that if she had a chance to eat this pick; this would make a delicious meal. As the KR guard sneaking under her house heard her saying, she was arrested and beaten for several days. In the present day, she cannot hear the pick's sound; otherwise, she will be frightened. This is called trauma. One woman saw the KR soldiers disembowel the victims and then take the human livers to cook food. After the KR regime, that woman cannot eat meat and especially liver. Another woman stole rice and put the rice on the mortar to take the cover off. The KR guards caught her and bit her severely. After the KR regime, whenever she sees mortar or rice, she trembles. Another example is a student who is very smart. In class, that student always puts his or her hands behind their back. The teacher does not know why the student did that, so she punishes the student. Later the student did the same and she bit him again. From that time, the student stopped coming to class. Later the teacher found out that the student was traumatized by the event that the School Director was robbed and the student saw the Director's body on the top of the tree. In the classroom, the student always imaginably heard sound of robbery.

Traumatized people are easily frightened. Traumatized parents always keep asking about their children, and when the children go away from home. This difficulty undermines the self-independence of the children. Sometimes, the traumatized parents hear about the robbery case in Phnom Penh, and they tell their children in Takeo to close the door. The traumatized people take tiny things as big issues. They do not trust others and do not want to let their children out of their sight. Sometimes, the traumatized people have nightmares at night. When they wake up, the nightmare is still with them, and they become speechless. The children may mistakenly think that their father or mother got upset with something. Many Cambodian people who came through the KR regime have developed a lot of trauma. Some people who completely lose hope commit suicide.

The young generations who are born after 1979 also develop trauma because of the KR regime indirectly. The young adults today experience domestic violence. The

traumatic people lose the ability to control their temper. This kind of people usually has conflict with other people. Trauma from parents transmits to the children. Domestic violence can be especially harmful because it can have an effect on the child's mind, which is desperate for family comfort. Sometimes, the traumatized parents beat their children to release their anger that is pent up from other issues. As children are beaten by their parents repeatedly, they begin to leave home and make friends outside. Some children resort to using addictive drugs. This case happens to a number of students in school. Dr. Kar advises that the pedagogical students take into consideration if they meet this case when they come to teach in schools.

Question: I had good memory in the past. Now I don't have good memory as before. Why does this memory loss happen?

Dr. Kar: Memory is supported by the brain system. When you are too tired, the ability to memorize thing becomes lower. In another case, when you have trouble, your ability to memorize is also undermined. When you are too happy, your memory also becomes weak. For example, you hear information that a tycoon wants to marry his daughter to you; then you become too happy which makes your memory weak. Sometimes, your mind flies away unconsciously. However, it is important to note that this is not called mental illness. When you become older, your brain cells also become weak which undermines your memory ability. To deal with this problem, you should take a good rest. More importantly, you have to find out the root cause of the problem. You may have trouble in mind. If you are the bread winner of the family, you have trouble in thinking how to support your family. Doing sport such as football can also help. When you are tired of playing sport, you will be able to sleep well.

Question: How is trauma cured?

Dr. Kar: This has to be examined by the psychiatrist who will ask you about your experiences since childhood. To cure this disease takes a long time. The examination can be up to two hours, and the treatment takes many days or months. The psychiatrist examines both the physical and mental states. The psychiatrist needs to also examine the social factors such as relations with neighbors and the internal political struggles. The trauma treatment is more difficult than the treatment of the general diseases. The trauma treatment which is called psycho-therapy has to be conducted by both medicine and talk. Trauma develops for several years before the symptoms emerge.

Question: At the young age, a child experienced a frightened event. Now the child always recalls this experience. How to solve this problem?

Dr. Kar: This child has developed trauma. The solution is to consult with the psychiatrist who will examine the child both physically and mentally. Dr. Kar believes that the teachers will face denial from the students. The teachers should not

react fiercely and should learn about this student to find the root cause of the problem.

Question: I am always afraid of the thunder and lightning. How can I deal with this problem?

Dr. Kar: One woman who just gave birth to a child experienced an event of thunder shooting the coconut tree. She saw this event and lost consciousness. From that time, whenever the rainy season comes, she feels frightened and dares not go out of the house. This is a trauma that has to be cured by an expert doctor.

Question: Will a lot of thinking have negative or positive effects on the brain?

Dr. Kar: Thinking is the function of the brain. However, when you think too much, you will lose the ability to think correctly.

Question: When I saw the traffic accident, I feel frightened? Do I develop trauma?

Dr. Kar: To be frightened when you see or experience a disastrous accident is normal. If the fear is short, it is normal. If the fear is long—up to months—then this is a symptom of trauma.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

The trainees evaluated the whole training as excellent and relatively good. Most trainees gave excellent evaluations for the areas of: teaching materials, methods in doing presentation, knowledge on the related topics, skill in teaching, and ability in answering questions and leading discussion. Among the newly introduced teaching methods, most trainees voiced their interest in the methods of group discussion, K-W-L chart, role playing, oral presentation, films, guest speakers and the Jigsaw exercise. The trainees believe that these methods can be effectively applied in the Cambodian classrooms. Trainees also received model teaching from the trainers who were active during the training process. Trainees describe the relationship between trainers and them as friendly and lively. This pleasant relationship added to the positive training environment, which allowed more interaction amongst the trainees.

In spite of many good evaluations, there is some room for improvement. Trainers needed to improve their knowledge on KR history in order to enhance their capacity in answering the questions as well controlling the classroom discussions. In addition, trainers needed to clearly explain each method in the guidebook and the objectives of each lesson and materials so that trainees could grasp the whole content and are able to adjust particular methods to fit their classroom conditions. With clear explanation on the teaching methods, trainees may lose track on the key issues when they come to do teaching practices. For example, one trainee Tha Mom was nervous when she came to do teaching practice in front of the class and lost the direction of what lesson to teach and how to teach it. She came to the national teacher and asked for assistance for the teaching. The national teacher came to her rescue by explaining

the steps in the guidebook and also assisted her in the teaching process. At the middle of the teaching, Tha Mom was able to conduct the teaching practice on her own.

Moreover, trainers should try to be short and concise in their explanation and allow times for trainees to pose their queries. More importantly, the explanations on various controversial issues, especially the ones related to politics, should be precisely cultivated to avoid a sense of political avoidance which could marginalize the historical truths.

Below are some recommendations from the trainees to improve the subsequent trainings:

1. Some documentary films should be distributed to the participants so that they could make use of the films when they come to teach in the schools.
2. More original KR documents are distributed to the participants in order to grasp more in-depth on KR history. The participants want particularly the information related to the relationship between China and the KR and information about S-21 and the Khmer Republic regime.
3. The participants wish to learn more about the current prosecution of the former KR leaders at the ECCC, the information from which is the new development about KR leaders. This information is beneficial for them when they teach students about the leaders and latest updates on the KR legacy. For the future training, one official from the court should be invited to speak to the participants.
4. Participants wish to visit several historical sites, particularly Cheung Ek killing field, Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the ECCC. They suggested that the visit is important in the sense that it allows the participants to learn the history on the ground and from the experts who work there.

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End