

A Summary Report of DC-Cam's  
Pilot Investigative Police Training

This training was the result of a meeting between representatives of the Documentation Center of Cambodia and Lt. Gen Mao Chandara, Cambodian Chief of Security for the ECCC and Major Gen. Thong Lim, Deputy Director of Central Justice Police Department on June 9, 2006.

Major Gen. Thong Lim stated that the police need further training in 3 areas:

1. Training of police in technical expertise, such as conducting on-site investigations at mass graves
2. Training on questioning/taking statements from victims, witnesses, and suspects
3. Training on the protection of both witnesses and accused persons in all phases of the trials (pre-trial, during trial, and post-trial)

We recommended the following pilot training course for a preliminary group of 12 police investigators:

1. forensic evidence collection training on the proper collection and safekeeping of evidence.
2. training on the proper questioning/taking statements from victims, witnesses, and suspects
3. training on reading/interpreting Khmer Rouge documents, including actual hands-on work at the Tuol Sleng archive center.

Due to the flexible nature of a pilot training program, we began by asking the participants what they expected from the program. We ascertained that the participants had little knowledge about the ECCC and international law. The

participants expressed their desire and need to understand more about the ECCC and international law, thus, we adapted the training program accordingly.

## **Activities**

The two-week pilot Judicial Police Training program, from 24 July 2006 - 4 August 2006, introduced 12 members of the Judicial Police assigned to work with the ECCC to the structure, procedure, and jurisdiction of the ECCC, basic concepts of international law, challenges to be faced while working on large-scale investigations, appropriate interviewing strategies and techniques, and issues related to both evidentiary procedure and the proper collection and handling of evidence.

Throughout the training, we stressed the importance of ethical behavior and of adhering to internationally accepted standards of procedure.

The first week of the training introduced the participants to the structure, procedure, and jurisdiction of the ECCC, basic concepts of international law, and several related activities. In addition to this legal overview, we addressed several other issues through film viewings, on site-visits, and engaging with victims.

On Monday, we watched the film, *The Khmer Rouge Rice Fields, The Story of Rape Survivor Tang Kim*, in order to encourage discussion on the kinds of victims and crimes that the investigators may encounter during the course of their investigations. Most participants actively engaged in the discussion and this led us to discuss the current situation regarding sexual assault in Cambodia.

On Tuesday, we joined the DC-Cam tour of the ECCC premises and subsequent visit to the U.S. Ambassador's residence. Each member of the training program introduced themselves to Ambassador Mussomeli who expressed his support for the program. We then began our lecture on basic concepts of international law and jurisdiction of the ECCC. We then discussed crimes applicable to the ECCC and forms of criminal responsibility.

On Wednesday, a former Khmer Rouge Cadre and subsequent victim of torture by the PRK, joined our class and took questions from the participants. All participants felt that the opportunity to speak with someone who may represent the kind of witnesses they will be interviewing in the course of their investigations was an invaluable experience. We introduced the importance of suspect and defendant rights in this segment of the training.

On Thursday, we watched the film, *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine*. The film follows several former Tuol Sleng guards as they walk through the former prison demonstrating the interrogation and torture methods used daily on the prisoners. Following the film, we talked about the fact that those who appear to be perpetrators may be called as witnesses before the court.

On Friday, we toured the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. As we toured the museum, we looked at the museum from an investigatory perspective, how the items and documents left behind may still be considered as evidence before the court. The participants viewed original documents found in the prison and were lectured about the importance of securing original documents in order to preserve them from the elements and the possibility of tampering. Pong-Rasy Pheng, a member of DC-Cam Response Team gave a brief lecture on forensics. As he is not an expert on this area, he spoke only briefly about his experience working with forensic experts from Canada, his skill in operating GPS, and interviewing relevant informants in the field.

The second week of the training addressed issues related to large-scale investigations, interviewing witnesses, victims, and suspects, evidence law and procedure, and evidence collection and handling.

On Monday and Tuesday, we covered the difficulties and challenges of working on massive criminal investigations and the possible use of analysts in organizing, collecting, and analyzing the data amassed in such an investigation. We then began

our discussion of interviewing strategies and techniques and proper witness and police statements.

On Wednesday, we covered evidence law and procedure and the proper collection and handling of evidence.

On Thursday, we traveled to Kampong Speu to visit two mass grave sites. The evidence from the first site had already been collected and placed into a stupa. The evidence from the second site was still out in the open. We discussed procedures for collecting and securing evidence and the unique aspects of investigating 30 year old mass crime scenes.

On Friday, we administered a 30 question exam on the ECCC and international law concepts to review what the participants had learned and to reinforce the concepts which will be relevant to their assignments to the ECCC. The participants put a lot of energy and thought into the exam.

### **Achievements**

The training was conducted on a very small budget. The Documentation Center provided all funding for this training. The participants were given no per diem. We consider the training to be part of their duties for the Ministry of the Interior and thus, participants should continue to receive their normal salary for the time they are in training.

The participants were asked to fill out evaluation forms at the end of each week. All of the participants stated that they found the training to be very beneficial. They hoped to be able to apply the knowledge gained in the training to their positions with the ECCC and in their general positions as Judicial Police.

Most participants also stated that they found the training to be interesting and the ideas exchanged relevant to their investigative positions and for their own general knowledge.

The success of the program to engage the participants was exemplified by the willingness of the participants to ask questions and offer examples. We were very impressed by the caliber of the questions asked and ideas expressed by the participants. Most of the participants took the training program very seriously and both the trainers and participants benefited from these exchanges.

The discussions that occurred in conjunction with the showing of the films and with the speaker were invaluable. They were critical in provoking discussion that led to an exchange of ideas among participants. It is always a success when constructive dialogue occurs.

### **Impact**

It is our hope that the concepts learned by the participants will be relevant to their positions with the ECCC.

We received coverage of our training program by several media sources including Voice of America, The Cambodia Daily, Cambodge Soir, and Magnum Photographs. The U.S. Embassy and the Ministry of the Interior have also expressed both interest and satisfaction with this training program.

### **Lessons Learned**

Designing and implementing a two-week training program was extremely challenging.

A training program requires an extensive amount of research and preparation and one person cannot adequately do this job alone. It must be a group effort.

It is important to have a manual to provide to the training class and power-point presentations to explain key concepts. If at all possible, all materials should be provided in the native language of the participants.

It is vital to have trainers and interpreters who work well together. The interpreter must be well-versed in the subject matter and the mannerisms of the speaker or there is the possibility that the interpretation will not convey the meaning of the speaker or detract from the potency of the lecture.

It is also important to break up lecture time with other activities such as speakers, movies, and practical exercises.

## **Conclusion**

The training program appears to have been successful, but if it is to be used as a model for training the remaining Judicial Police assigned to the ECCC, it will need to be improved. A manual must be prepared in advance and all materials translated into Khmer. One key concern mentioned by both Major Gen. Thong Lim and the participants in the training is the need for practical exercises. These exercises must, however, be conducted in conjunction with theoretical lectures. Investigators must have an understanding of the general concepts underlying proper practice and procedure.

Experts in the fields of investigating and forensics should be brought in to conduct portions of the training. While this will increase the cost of the training, it will also increase the caliber.

The experience and skill level of the participants should be taken into consideration when designing the training course. Program coordinators should also be familiar with the quality and quantity of equipment available to the participants in their positions as Judicial Police.

The number of participants (12) seemed appropriate for the program. This number should not be exceeded due to the nature of on-site visits and practical exercises.

It is our hope that this program can be expanded and become a model for training the remaining Judicial Police assigned to the ECCC and conducted in cooperation with the ECCC.

We would also like this program to be modified and designed for provincial level police.

**Appendix A:  
DC-Cam Pilot Investigative Police Training Program : List of Participants**

- 1) In Bora, Colonel, Deputy Director of Criminal Department
- 2) Tit Bunna, Lieutenant Colonel, Office Chief, Department of Science
- 3) Muong Sothea, Lieutenant Colonel, Office Chief, Department of Science
- 4) Sor Vanthon, Lieutenant Colonel, Office Chief of Forensics and Chemical Science
- 5) Mao Dara, Lieutenant Colonel, Office Chief of Serious Crimes
- 6) Hang Sophanara, Lieutenant Colonel, Office Chief, Department of Science
- 7) Chheang Mony, Major, Deputy Chief of Serious Crimes Office
- 8) Ai Sokhema, Major, Deputy Office Chief
- 9) Kheng Vanny, Major, Deputy Chief of Interrogation Office, Criminal Department
- 10) Put Sao Sirana, Captain, Chief of Order Section, Criminal Department
- 11) Nun Samnang, Captain, Chief of Section, Criminal Department
- 12) Nov Sam At, First Lieutenant, Official in charge of Interrogation