

GENOCIDE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA

REPORT

**Classroom Forum with high school students:
The importance of studying KR history**

Prek Sandek High School

24 Apr, 2019

INTRODUCTION

A 39th Classroom Forum with high school students was held at Prek Sandek High School located in Prek Sandek Village and Commune, Sithor Kandal District, Prey Veng Province. The Forum began at 9 a.m. of April 24, 2019 with 99 students (female: 49). Prek Sandek School is one of seven schools that Khmer Rouge used for security office, killing sites and detention. Many civilians, especially city dwellers and ordinary people from Eastern Zone's Region 22, were tortured and killed after they deported those people to Prek Sandek security office during 1975-1979.

In 1998 after desk-research on Front document, DC-Cam sent an expert team to conduct research on mass-graves and security office in Prek Sandek high school as well as all locations that Khmer Rouge committed crimes against people in Sithor Kandal district, Prey Veng Province. Section "School History" below will describe more information about crime in the compound of Prek Sandek high school.

Presently, Prek Sandek high school becomes an educational institution which all children who were born after the Khmer Rouge enter every day for their studies. The security office rooms have been using as classrooms for long time ago. Many students sitting on the chairs in the room have not been told what happened during Khmer Rouge regime. Only small number of them is aware of this.

The purpose of this event, Classroom Forum, does not only tell the younger generation of what happened during Khmer Rouge regime in general, but also let them know what happened in their classrooms, as well as giving them more knowledge on KR's first creation, KR during three years of power, KR after 1979, and understanding of the process of ECCC.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide students with an opportunity to share and express their personal knowledge on what happened during the Democratic Kampuchea regime;
2. To let students think critically on the transitional consequences of this legacy to the current Cambodian society;
3. To encourage discussion over this legacy in families and communities;

4. To distribute Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) textbooks to participating students;
5. To facilitate mentoring opportunities between trained SRI/DC-Cam/MoEYS officials and local teachers.

SCHOOL HISTORY

During Khmer Rouge regime, this location was used as security office and execution sites. The information from DC-Cam's 1998-Mapping report stated that two (4 rooms plus 8 rooms) of the three buildings in the school compound were used as detention center of Khmer Rouge. Most New people were captured and sent to imprison at these buildings before being killed and buried in graves nearby. According to former school principle Mr. Hakk Sroan, this site was the Regional security office of Region 22 (Sithor Kandal district). It was the third highest range of kind of security office levels. From interview transcripts with few witnesses during the mass-graves research, all victims were taken from everywhere in the region 22 and sent to the prison.



witness

Hakk Sroan, SD, is pointing at the pit in the compound of ~~the~~ Prek Sandek (SK)

Mr. Hakk Sroan and Mr. Moeung Hok Seng told that prisoners at Prek Sandek Security Office were (1) new people who evacuated from various cities and towns such as Lon Nol soldiers (first target) and all cooperatives in all sub-districts of Sithor Kandal district, (2) people formerly, who had connection with or tendency toward officials and public servants of the former regimes from various towns and cities, (3)

base people, who committed moral wrong doings, and (4) Khmer Rouge cadres themselves, who were in charge of logistics, economic sectors or in small and big Khmer Rouge military units from Koh Sotin district, Kampong Cham province and other districts.

Between 1975 and 1976, all the prisoners including pilots, National Radio personnel, government officials, and military officers in the Sihanouk and Lon Nol regimes were imprisoned and killed. The report wrote victims between 1,000 and 2,500 were killed. But the district report suggested only 1,084 victims.

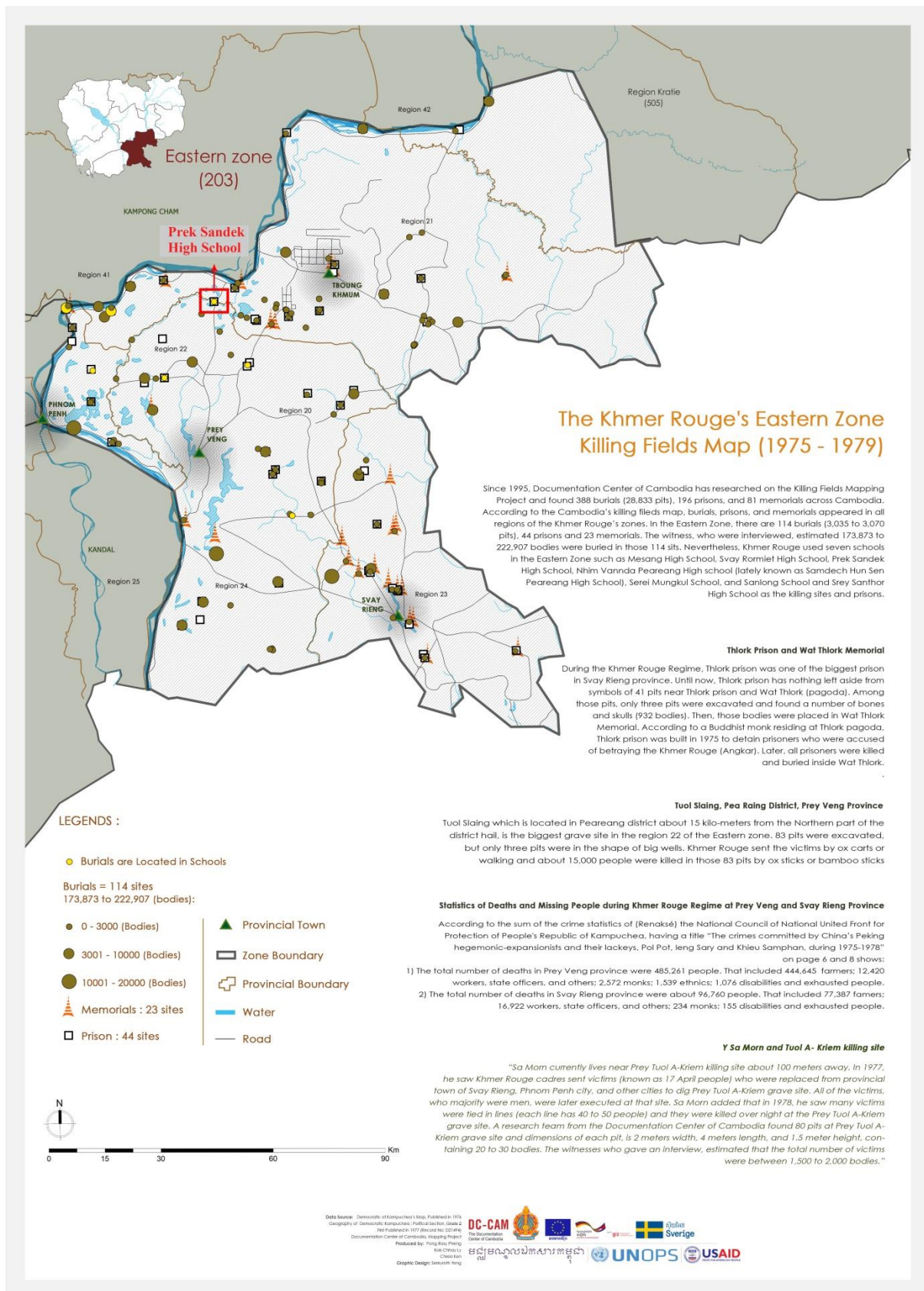
In 1998, one of the security cadre, Comrade Phaos, is still alive and



Prison

Prek Sandek H.S. in Prek Sandek village, Prek Chang Kran sub-district, Sithor Kandal district (by SK)

lives in Prek village, Rumlich sub-district, Sithor Kandal district.



ACTIVITIES

As usual, the team followed the same schedule as before. The schedule begins with introduction of the team members to the group of student, following a session of filling pre-survey (see the analysis of this on chapter of "Result and Discussion") to measure student's knowledge on Khmer Rouge history and Human Rights abuses during the Khmer Rouge regime.

After 30 minutes for students to fill in survey, they were asked to come to the front to answer three kinds of K-W-L questions for another 15 minutes. The forum coordinator posted 6 questions below:

- 1) Please describe briefly your knowledge of Khmer Rouge's first creation?
- 2) Please describe briefly your knowledge of Khmer Rouge during 1975 and 1979?
- 3) Please describe briefly your knowledge of Khmer Rouge movement after 1979?
- 4) Please describe briefly your knowledge of ECCC?
- 5) What do you want to know more about the creation of KR before 1975?
- 6) What do you want to know more about what happened during KR regime?
- 7) What do you want to know more about Khmer Rouge movement after 1979?
- 8) What do you want to know more about the ECCC?



Next, the "Children of Kampuchea" documentary film was screened to all participating students before Rasy did a presentation of DK history.

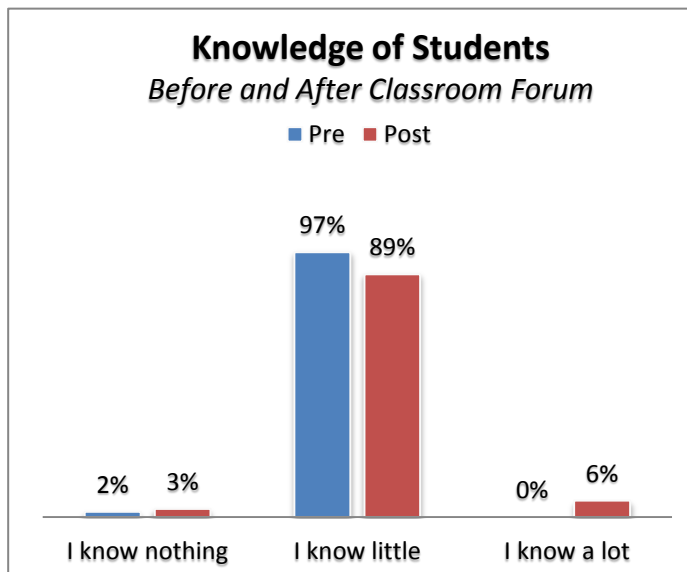
The presentation of DK history was a summary of what happened before, during and after Khmer Rouge regime. Some discussions about the ECCC were occurred during the presentation. Rasy took less more than 60 minutes for his presentation. This task mainly focused on four areas of Khmer Rouge's historical events in Cambodia: (1)

Khmer Rouge before 1975; (2) Khmer Rouge during 1975-1979; (3) Khmer Rouge after 1979; and (4) Process of ECCC.

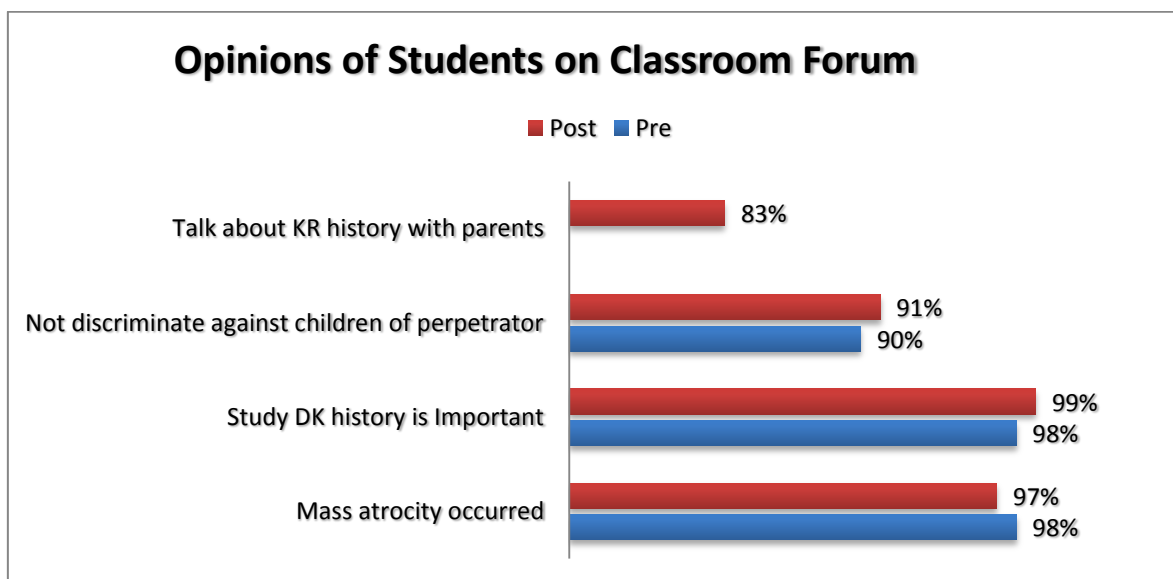
After his presentation finished, Rasy begun his role of answering many questions raised by the participating students. This took another half an hour.

Last session of the Forum was about the participating students to fill in the post-survey (see the analysis of this on chapter of "Result") and took some photos together with all students.

RESULT FROM PRE- AND POST-SURVEY

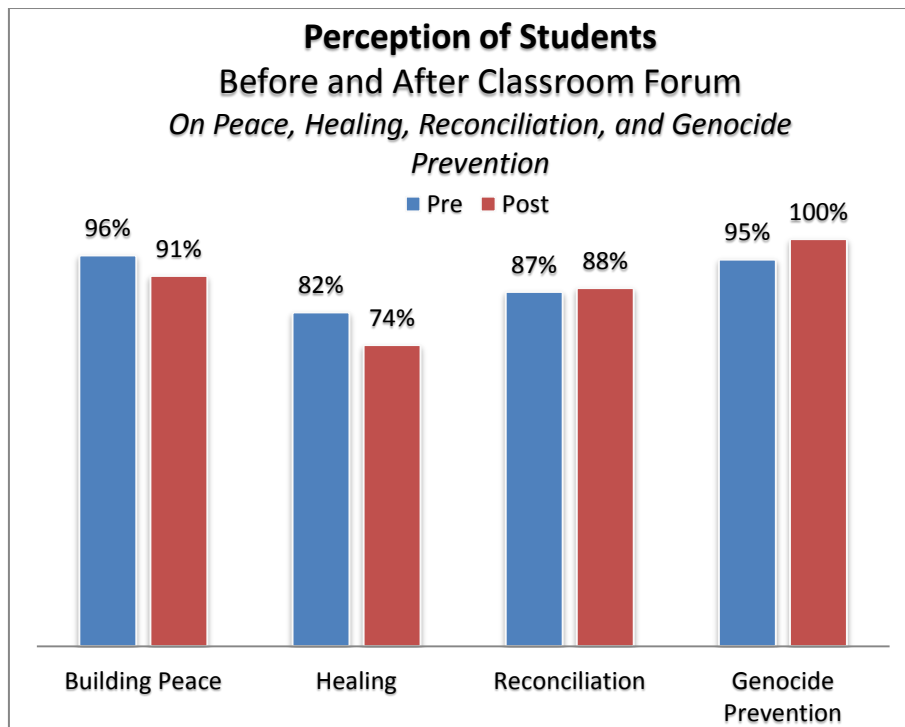


After participated in classroom forum for two hours, students are able to understand a lot about DK history. 97% of students know little about DK history before joined the forum decrease to 89% at the post-forum survey, however, percentage of students who very knowledge about DK history moderately increase from 0% to 6% at post-forum survey.

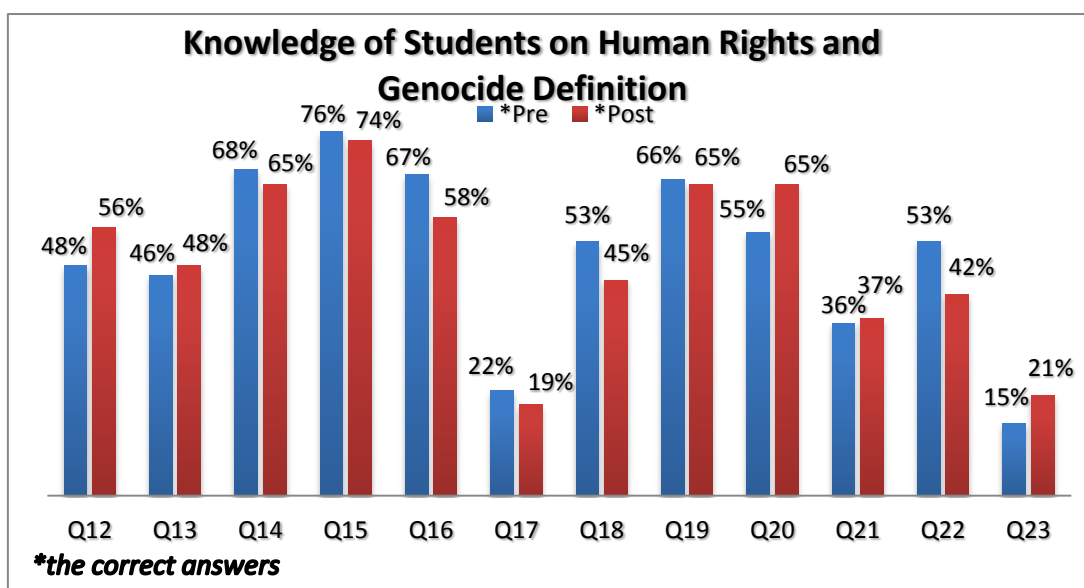


The discrimination against children of perpetrator still occur in society, however, there 91% of total students who joined classroom forum disagree against the idea of discrimination against children of perpetrator while other (9%) still have negative

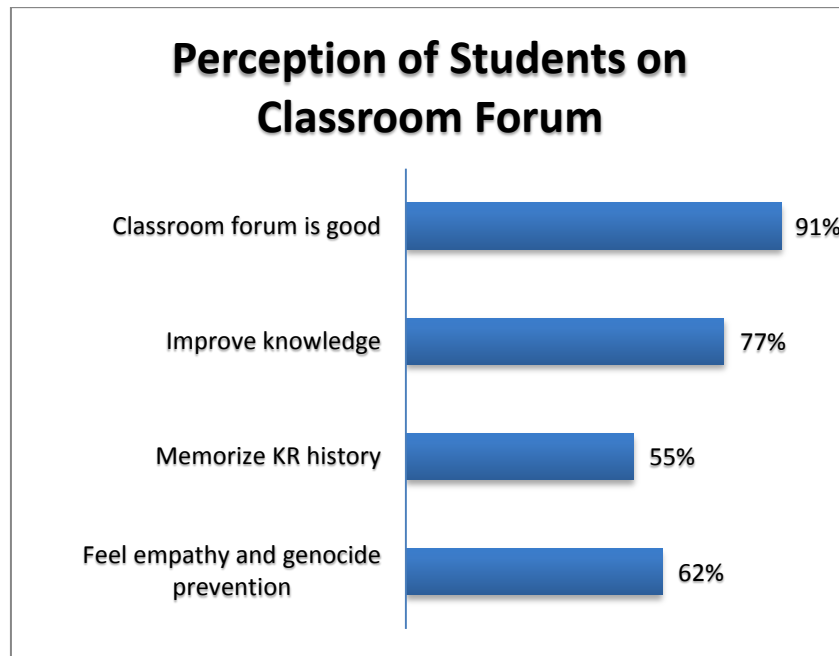
feeling toward those children. This can illustrate that genocide education is needed in Cambodia society to education people from every level. After classroom forum, 99% of student believes that study DK history is important.



After two hours lectured, most students (91%) think that study DK history could encourage them to think of building peace in Cambodia society, 100% believe that it could encourage them to think of genocide prevention in the future, 88% agree that it could encourage them to think of reconciliation while only 74% of students think that the study of DK history could help them to think of healing.



Human rights and genocide knowledge also include in the pre-and post-survey in the multiple choices from. Figure above illustrate the percentage of correct answers. The average percentage of correct answer in pre-survey is 50.41% and there is small change in post-survey (49.58%).



85% of student agrees that this classroom forum is good. 67% of students in classroom forum believe that this forum help them to develop their knowledge on DK history, help them to remember (65%), and encourage them to feel empathy, tolerance, and prevent the genocide reoccur (72%).

CONCLUSION

Classroom forum at Prek Sandek high school was successful conducted with the effort of DC-Cam team, cooperation with host school, and enthusiastic participated of students. There are issues about student's opinions pre and post survey (see the appendix). These are the reason which we should continue to educate young people about the genocide in our country to people understand and to increase their awareness. Base on observation, students were focus on the lecture and showed the appreciation after the forum finished.

Team : Pheng Pong-Rasy, Min Sanas, and Phat Sela
Support : USAID and MoEYS
Report : Pheng Pong-Rasy and Phat Sela
Photo Link : <https://photos.app.goo.gl/NNVQfPWBLkEi5bAu7>

APPENDIX

<i>N</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
		<i>Pre</i>		<i>Post</i>	
	<i>Age:</i>				
	<i>Male</i>	<i>42(46%)</i>		<i>40(45%)</i>	
	<i>Female</i>	<i>50(54%)</i>		<i>49(55%)</i>	
<i>History of Democratic Kampuchea Knowledge</i>					
<i>1</i>	<i>Would you describe your know ledge of DK period?</i>				
	I know nothing	2	2	3	3
	I know a little	89	97	79	89
	I know a lot	0	0	5	6
	I know enough to teach other	0	0	0	0
	N/A	1	1	2	2
<i>2</i>	<i>Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during DK period?</i>				
	Yes	90	98	86	97
	No	2	2	2	2
	N/A	0	0	1	1
<i>3</i>	<i>Have you ever talk about DK period with your parents or people who experience that period?</i>				
	Yes	72	78	74	83
	No	20	22	14	16
	N/A	0	0	1	1
<i>4</i>	<i>Do you think the studying of DK history is important?</i>				
	Yes	90	98	88	99
	No	2	2	0	0
	N/A	0	0	1	1
<i>5</i>	<i>If one of your friends is s son/daughter of perpetrator, would you discriminate against his/her?</i>				
	Yes	8	9	7	8
	No	83	90	81	91
	N/A	1	1	1	1
<i>6</i>	<i>Which school level that DK history should be taught in?</i>				
	Primary school	16	17	13	91
	Junior school	47	51	50	56
	High school	24	26	21	24
	University	3	3	3	3
	N/A	2	2	2	2
<i>7</i>	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of peace building in Cambodia?</i>				
	Yes	88	96	81	91
	No	3	3	7	8
	N/A	1	1	1	1

8	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of healing?</i>				
	Yes	75	82	66	74
	No	17	18	21	24
	N/A	0	0	2	2
9	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of reconciliation?</i>				
	Yes	80	87	78	88
	No	11	12	10	11
	N/A	1	1	1	1
10	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of genocide prevention?</i>				
	Yes	87	95	89	100
	No	2	2	0	0
	N/A	2	2	0	0
11	<i>How do you feel about the studying of DK history?</i>				
	Want to know and understand about this history	76	82	70	79
	Do not want to know	1	1	0	0
	Feel empathy to victims	14	15	19	21
	Boring	0	0	0	0
	N/A	1	1	0	0
<u>Human Rights Knowledge</u>					
12	<i>Which response below is the best definition of genocide as stated in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide?</i>				
	Killing members of a political group with the intent to destroy the entire group because of their political agenda	29	31	20	22
	Arresting leaders of a religious group with the intent to undermine the practice of religion	13	14	14	16
	<u>Deliberately starving an ethnic group with the intent to destroy the people</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>56</u>
	Killing enemy soldiers who are shooting at your soldiers during war	6	6	5	6
	N/A	0	0	0	0
13	<i>Which response below reflects circumstances that support violence and possibly future genocide in community?</i>				
	Students engaged in peaceful protest against a school policy	33	36	31	35
	<u>Local leaders requirement to force members of a religious group to live separate from the rest of the community</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>48</u>
	Police arresting persons who trespass on government property	4	4	4	5
	Immigrants from another country seeking to settle in a community	10	11	11	12

	N/A	3	3	0	0
14	<i>Which response below reflects circumstances that support violence and possibly future genocide in a country?</i>				
	<u>Religious leaders who describe members of another religion as “sub-human” and “worthy of death.”</u>	63	68	58	65
	Religious leaders who encourage their members to pray for members of another religion.	7	7.6	11	12
	Political leaders who encourage everyone to vote.	13	14	9	10
	Individuals who petition their government leaders to adopt a policy.	3	3	6	7
	N/A	6	6	5	6
15	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on individuals?</i>				
	Individuals suffer as a result of lower wages and job growth.	4	4	7	8
	<u>Individuals mourn the loss of family and friends who were tortured and/or killed.</u>	70	76	66	74
	Individuals are not impacted by genocide. Genocide only affects groups of people.	6	7	6	7
	Only children are impacted by genocide by the loss of parents.	11	12	9	10
	N/A	1	1	1	1
16	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on families and communities?</i>				
	Individuals suffer during genocide but generally families and communities are unharmed.	4	4	4	4
	Only poor families ever suffer during genocide. Rich families never suffer during genocide.	7	8	14	16
	<u>Genocide can impact families and communities in many ways for generations.</u>	62	67	52	58
	Genocide impacts communities but families can always escape by fleeing to another country.	18	20	18	20
	N/A	1	1.1	1	1.1
17	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on countries?</i>				
	Countries are not impacted by genocide.	0	0	1	1
	Countries can be impacted by genocide but the world is too big to be impacted.	45	49	43	48
	Countries suffer from genocide only when it is occurring. They can rebuild quickly	27	29	27	30
	<u>Countries can be impacted by genocide for generations.</u>	20	22	17	19
	N/A	0	0	1	1
18	<i>Which response below is the best description of an important strategy that</i>				

	<i>individuals can do to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Individuals can ignore violence when it occurs because there is nothing they can do	7	8	12	13
	Individuals can prevent violence by attacking their enemies before they are attacked	15	16	20	22
	Individuals can prevent violence by staying quiet and not criticizing violence	19	21	14	16
	<u>Individuals can prevent violence by speaking against such violence</u>	49	53	40	45
	N/A	2	2	3	3
19	<i>Which response below is the best description of another important strategy that individuals can do to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Individuals can encourage violence against their enemies	5	5	6	7
	Individuals can encourage victims to be silent because speaking out against violence will only encourage more violence	18	20	14	16
	<u>Individuals can denounce violence and encourage peaceful solutions to conflicts</u>	61	66	58	65
	Individuals can encourage perpetrators to commit their violence without public attention, which only aggravates the situation	4	4	8	9
	N/A	4	4	3	3
20	<i>Which response below is the best description of an important strategy that communities can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	<u>Communities can protect the individual rights of all community members, regardless of religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, political opinion or other characteristics</u>	51	55	58	65
	Communities can protect the individual rights of the majority group at the expense of minorities in order to preserve peace, order and stability	10	11	8	9
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights; rather, they must always seek to maintain peace, order and stability	13	14	10	11
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights because this is always a state responsibility	11	12	9	10
	N/A	6	7	4	5
21	<i>Which response below is the best description of another important strategy that communities can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				

	Communities can prevent violence by identifying minorities and requiring them to live separate from the rest of the community.	6	7	13	15
	<u>Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate human diversity through education about different cultures, religions, and communities.</u>	33	36	33	37
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate their own culture and identify ways to protect it from outside influence.	28	30	27	30
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth how to protect themselves and their communities through self-defense training	17	18	11	12
	N/A	8	9	5	5
22	<i>Which response below reflects an important strategy that <u>countries</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Countries can prevent violence by censoring information and news.	15	16	16	18
	Countries can prevent violence by attacking enemies before they are attacked	6	67	6	7
	Countries can never prevent violence but they can assist in peaceful resolution.	15	16	24	27
	<u>Countries can prevent violence through education and diplomacy</u>	49	53	37	42
	N/A	7	8	6	7
23	<i>Which response below reflects <u>another</u> important strategy that <u>countries</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	<u>Countries can identify and publicly denounce circumstances that support genocide.</u>	14	15	19	21
	Countries should never denounce other countries because it will weaken future diplomacy.	11	12	8	9
	Countries should only denounce enemies that support violence or genocide. Countries should never denounce allies involved in genocide because they are allies.	11	12	14	16
	Countries should only help people who deserve to be helped. Some genocide is necessary to preserve peace and order.	48	52	37	42
	N/A	8	9	11	12
<u>Opinion on the Forum</u>					
24	<i>What do you think about this classroom forum?</i>				
	Good and help develop my knowledge			81	91

	Not good, did not help anything at all	0	
	N/A	8	9
25	<i>What does this classroom forum help you?</i>		
	Improve my knowledge on KR history	22	25
	Help to memorize the KR history	3	3
	Encourage to feel empathy and genocide prevention	9	10
	All above	45	52
	N/A	9	10