



QUARTERLY REPORT
JANUARY TO MARCH 2003

1. NARRATIVE REPORT

During the first quarter of 2003, as in previous quarters, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) carried out work relating to seven specific projects. Those projects include our Mapping Project, Documentation Project, Microfilming Project, Magazine Project (*Searching for the truth*), Research Project, Project to Promote Accountability (PA), and Translation and Publication Projects. This report describes our progress in each of those projects during the past three months, notes challenges and constraints to our work, describes our strategies for dealing with those issues, and provides performance indicators.

1.1 Summary of Project Activities and Highlights of Project Impact

1.1.1 *The Mapping Project*

Since DC-Cam was established in 1995, our Mapping Project has involved locating mass graves (19,440), former Democratic Kampuchea (DK) prisons (185), and genocide memorial sites (77) constructed by survivors of the KR regime and mapping those with Global Positioning System (GPS) technology. Recently, DC-Cam's Mapping Team has undertaken two new project activities.

The first has been to write an extensive manuscript detailing the history of DK Security Offices, which also served as prisons. To date, Mapping Team members have completed a 397-page report describing 185 prisons. That manuscript is intended for future publication in order to demonstrate the widespread and systematic nature of the killing perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge (KR) regime. After the team members complete writing a draft of this manuscript, they plan to conduct further field research to add to the information contained in the draft.

DC-Cam is also in the process of finalizing plans for a new forensic study to be undertaken with Dr. Craig Etcheson and a team of international experts. The project will involve analysis of mass gravesites, genocide memorials, and excavation and analysis of human remains from locations across Cambodia. Among other things, the project is designed to shed light on the ways in which individuals were killed or otherwise abused during the Pol Pot era. It provides an essential complement to our existing Mapping Project and is something that we have endeavored to undertake for several years.

1.1.2 *The Documentation Project*

The Documentation Project entails collecting documentary materials and continually upgrading two major databases, the Cambodian Genocide Bibliographic Database (CBIB) and the Cambodian Genocide Biographical Database (CBIO). Both databases contain detailed information on former Khmer Rouge leaders and cadres. This project is designed to provide an organized, detailed, and Internet-accessible base of information for scholars, DK survivors, and other interested members of the public. The CBIB and CBIO also facilitate DC-Cam's program of family tracing, whereby survivors of Democratic Kampuchea can search for information on loved ones lost during the Pol Pot period.

During the first quarter of 2003, our Documentation Team continued to enter data in both Khmer and English into the CBIO by using the CDS/ISIS software program. The process of data entry includes two major steps. The first is to enter data into the computer by filling out 37 fields (and many more sub-fields) of data. DC-Cam staff members read through the relevant DK biographies and determine the appropriate information to enter into each field and sub-field. The second step entails crosschecking that data against original DC-Cam documents and editing the data. Only after editing is complete are records entered into the CBIO and uploaded to CD-ROMs and the Internet. Between January and March, Documentation Team members spent almost all of their time editing information as part of the "second step" described above, finalizing records for inclusion in the CBIO.

In the past three months, team members entered 2,900 records into the CBIO to make a total of 9,340 records in Khmer to date. Team members also continued to translate the existing Khmer data in the CBIO into English. By March 2003, they had also entered 9,340 English records into the computer and had edited 1,880 such records. The team is now working on editing the remaining records. A relatively new Documentation Team activity has been to review and catalogue the estimated 1.6 million survivor petitions obtained by the "Front" (*Renakse*) of the People's Republic of Kampuchea in 1982-83. The petitions detail abuses of the Pol Pot regime, and to date team members have compiled a list of 18,686 names on the survivor petitions.

1.1.3 *The Microfilming Project*

Conducted in cooperation with Yale University's Sterling Memorial Library, the Microfilming Project is closely related to our documentation work. The project aims to preserve documents from the DK period for the long term through the use of microfilm. That process allows researchers and legal investigators to obtain information in DC-Cam's archives without handling the original documents unless necessary. Many of the documents are becoming fragile with age, and protecting their physical integrity is essential.

During the first quarter of 2003, DC-Cam's Microfilming Team continued to work on microfilming the Center's "D" documentary collection, which include documents from the Pol Pot regime, including biographies, confessions, and minutes of DK meetings. To date, the team has microfilmed 2,363 records (numbers D17373 – D19735) of our "D" collection. Those microfilmed records comprise 22,157 pages. A number of negative films were sent to Sterling Memorial Library for development. According to our agreement with Yale University, one set of positive films is kept in New Haven, and another set is returned to

Phnom Penh for DC-Cam's archives. By March 2003, our team had sent 357 reels of negative film to Yale University, and 164 of them had been developed and sent back for storage in DC-Cam's archives.

We are currently working with the National Archives of Cambodia (NAC) to see if more cost-efficient microfilming processes are available. We plan to have the NAC microfilm some test materials (drawn from our magazine, *Searching for the Truth*). We will send the resulting microfilm to Yale University, and if it meets our high standards of quality, we may begin to retain the services of the NAC to microfilm original documents from DC-Cam's archives as well.

1.1.4 *The Magazine Project*

DC-Cam's magazine, *Searching for the truth*, is designed to disseminate our work to the public and to create a forum for public engagement on issues related to the Khmer Rouge period in the efforts to achieve justice and reconciliation. In our experience, the more information that we give, the more we tend to receive. Almost every day, the public responses from readers of all kinds have been strongly supportive, and many readers have come forth with useful information about the Pol Pot regime and its aftermath. Local NGOs have requested hundred of copies to distribute.

In the first quarter of 2003, DC-Cam published issues 37, 38 and 39 of our Khmer edition of the magazine. We published a total of 7,000 copies of each issue (for a total of 21,000) and distributed 17,212 copies free of charge throughout Cambodia and in some areas abroad. Additional copies were carried by DC-Cam field researchers to Cambodia's villages and distributed to local officials and interested villagers. The remaining copies were reserved for internal use at DC-Cam.

Through our experience on recent field trips, when villagers receive *Searching for the truth* magazine, they continue to read it very eagerly (and often immediately). Some have said that they hardly believe that the Khmer Rouge killed hundreds of thousands—or even millions—of Cambodian people. Others said that they appreciate the magazine very much, because its articles resonate with their own experiences under the Khmer Rouge regime. We hear from villagers that they relate the information in the magazine to their children. Villagers confirm that while most children know little about the Pol Pot era and hardly believe the stories they hear, photos and articles in our magazine help them to learn and understand that tragic period in Cambodia's past.

Searching for the truth magazine contains five sections: documentary analysis, history, legal issues, public debate, and family tracing. From January to March 2003, articles in our documentation section analyzed documents in DC-Cam's archives. As for our history section, we shifted our focus slightly in recent months. Previous issues usually drew excerpts from scholarly books; this quarter, we focused instead on the personal histories of certain elderly survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime, describing how they relate their stories to their grandchildren. In our legal section, we published the draft agreement between Cambodia and the United Nations relating to the planned Khmer Rouge tribunal and a compilation of excerpts from speeches by Cambodian leaders on the proposed tribunal. The debate section of our magazine included articles commenting on the draft agreement above, issues of peace

and reconciliation, and a piece on the rule of law and legacy of conflict, written by H.E. Mr. Sok An. Finally, our family tracing articles related to information that we obtained during field research in Cambodia's villages.

In connection with the Magazine Project, DC-Cam has also solicited public feedback about a range of issues relating to justice and national reconciliation. The primary mechanism for that inquiry has been a public survey distributed with our magazine throughout the country. We have obtained over 650 responses to date, and Suzannah Linton, a foreign attorney, has drafted an extensive report on the survey results. DC-Cam plans to expand that report as additional feedback comes in and eventually to publish our findings.

1.1.5 The Research Project

DC-Cam's Research Project is aimed at building the capacity of young Cambodian scholars to conduct research in the field of human rights violations during the Khmer Rouge regime. DC-Cam has recruited research staff to work on papers relevant to human rights violation under the Khmer Rouge regime between 1975 and 1979. Under a one-year-contract with DC-Cam, each researcher has to produce one research paper using the resources in DC-Cam's archives and information obtained from interviews in the field.

During the first quarter of 2003, DC-Cam researchers completed first drafts of two papers in Khmer, entitled "Khmer Krom Under the Khmer Rouge" (by Kannitha K. Kim, 70 pages) and "Women Under the Khmer Rouge" (by Pivoine Pang, 100 pages). Since the completion of those drafts, authors have been conducting further research by reading additional documents in the DC-Cam archives and by holding further interviews in the field. Research monographs entitled "Hill-tribes under the Khmer Rouge Regime" (by Sorya Sim and Sara Colm, 88 pages) and "Pochemdam Village Vietnamese Family" (by Sorya Sim and Dany Long) also approached completion between January and March. In addition, a completed paper entitled "The Khmer Rouge Division 703: From Victory to Self-Destruction" by Vannak Huy, was sent to the printing shop for publication in the coming quarter. Finally, we have recently arranged for Dr. Ian C. Harris of the Becket Institute at Oxford University to conduct a detailed two-year study on Cambodian Buddhism during the 1970s. DC-Cam plans to publish his findings as a book in our Documentation Series.

1.1.6 The Project to Promote Accountability

The Project to Promote Accountability (or "PA Project") is now based in four provinces—Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kandal, and Takeo. It is designed to locate and interview former DK cadres, who served the Khmer Rouge regime between 1975 and 1979. The information from interviews with former cadres can be used in both historical and legal contexts. Furthermore, transcripts from such interviews and information on the whereabouts of former Khmer Rouge cadres may provide very information for the work of any prosecutors in the upcoming trials of Khmer Rouge leaders. After the March 17 draft agreement between the United Nations and Cambodian government, the importance of the project appears even greater.

Before making trips to specific districts and provinces, each of DC-Cam's four "Accountability Teams" prints out former KR cadres' biography sheets from the CBIO.

These biographies include the birthplace of most former cadres, and the PA team looks for them in their home villages. Cadres located are interviewed, and transcripts are recorded. Between January and March 2003, PA team members investigated a total of 722 DK personnel files in the field. After an extensive search, the Accountability Team was able to identify and interview 90 of those KR biography owners. Through interviews and conversations with family members and acquaintances, the team also discovered that 97 other individuals in the CPK biography files are still alive and living in Cambodia or abroad. The remaining 474 individuals are believed to be missing or deceased. Although our teams tried to find those individuals, the whereabouts of 61 remain unknown to anyone we interviewed. The Accountability Team also worked frequently in the office to transcribe interviews. By March this year, our team members had transcribed 5,587 pages of new interview material.

For a more complete review of the PA Project, see the "Report and Evaluation" written by John D. Ciorciari, Esq., the legal advisor and supervisor of the project, on March 31, 2003. That report is available upon request from DC-Cam.

1.1.7 The Translation and Publication Projects

The last major projects taking place at DC-Cam during the first quarter of 2003 were our Translation and Publication Projects. Both projects involve translating works into English or Khmer for publication. In the first quarter of 2003, our team members completed their translations of the following works:

- *Voices from S-21* by Professor David P. Chandler;
- *Oukoubah* by Osman Ysa;
- *Brother Enemy* by Nayan Chanda;
- *The Khmer Rouge Division 703* by Vannak Huy; and
- *The Queen's Diary* by H.M. Queen Monique Sihanouk.

Those translations were entered into computers through the Quark software program in a way that made it easy to correct spelling errors and format the pieces before sending them to the printing shop. To date, the principal limitation on our ability to publish translated works and original research manuscripts is our lack of funding for certain publication endeavors. We are currently taking steps to secure such funds.

1.2 Challenges and Constraints

In general, our first-quarter progress was smooth for each of the projects described above. However, challenges and constraints remain. Significant constraints exist due to the size of our physical facilities and workforce. As our work becomes better known, and as the planned Khmer Rouge tribunal approaches, demand for our work—from governments, donors, scholars, and members of the public—continues to grow. We are attempting to increase our work output correspondingly. However, our existing facilities are crowded, and our options for expansion are limited. In addition, DC-Cam is committed to hiring only the most qualified staff members and training each member thoroughly. In practice, we cannot add to our staff (currently at 43 members) without straining our physical and managerial resources. Meeting added demands with a constant number of employees is an ongoing organizational challenge for DC-Cam.

Another general constraint on our work relates to translation. Although DC-Cam employs many individuals with dual-language capability, the sheer volume of documents and other materials in the Center makes translation an enormous task. Publication of the English version of *Searching for the truth* magazine always lags behind publication of the Khmer version for this reason. In addition, transcripts from the PA Project and many documents of historical (and potentially legal) importance are yet to be translated. Several employees at the Center already devote most of their time to translation, but limited human resources for translation represents an ongoing constraint on DC-Cam.

Field research also presents certain challenges and constraints. Researchers for the Mapping, Research, and PA Projects conduct much of their work in the field and are sometimes limited by weather conditions (such as flooding or heavy rain), difficult terrain that prevents auto access to research areas, and difficulties in locating and interviewing certain individuals. As DC-Cam's work spreads more and more into the provinces, and as the Center attempts to develop its grassroots contacts in the interests of education and reconciliation, managing fieldwork in the provinces becomes a central organizational challenge.

1.3 Lessons Learned from Program Adjustments

To adjust to some of the challenges described above, DC-Cam begun to implement significant organizational changes in late 2002. These came into full effect by the end of the year, and during the first quarter of 2003, they were quite successful. The principal change has been to open up four temporary field offices in Kampong Thom, Kandal, Takeo, and Kampong Cham provinces. Each office is a small rented house that accommodates a modest office space and lodging for approximately four staff members. These offices allow staff members to base themselves near their areas of research for periods of three to four weeks at a time and to carry out fieldwork more efficiently. Community information centers established by the Asia Foundation have proven very helpful in streamlining our research and keeping teams in the field in close contact with staff in our central office in Phnom Penh. We also gratefully received a new automobile in January 2003, which has improved our capacity to conduct field research.

Between January and March 2003, 23 of our staff members (including drivers and part-time employees) spent time in one of the field offices, normally traveling in teams of three or four persons. The PA Project has been particularly active in the provincial offices, which save money by alleviating the costs of hotels or guesthouses for researchers. Our yield of interviews for the PA project has also increased dramatically, showing the greater efficiency of the arrangement. Another important effect of our field offices has been to decrease pressure on our central office space in Phnom Penh. We are also trying to address this issue through plans for a new and permanent Center on our plot of land adjacent to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. We have been actively soliciting funds for this purpose and will continue to do so in the months ahead. Foreign and local scholars continue to request opportunities to conduct research at DC-Cam, but we are frequently unable to accommodate them. Our proposed permanent Center would have greater space for staff members, a library that would better serve outside researchers, and an exhibition area for our many public and governmental visitors. We have also acquired some additional office space in the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum that will accommodate researchers once we are able to furnish it with the necessary equipment, including computers, microfilm readers, desks, and chairs.

We are also trying to improve our capacity to translate large amounts of material quickly and accurately. We have retained an English language instructor from the United States, Ms. Joanna Munson, for a three-month advanced English training course. Staff members—including translators and others—will devote time before and after work each day to improve their English language aptitude. We are also exploring ways to enlist outside translators to assist us in this aspect of our work.

2. INDICATORS

2.1 Human Rights Advocacy with the Cambodian Government

During the first quarter of 2003, DC-Cam engaged daily in direct human rights advocacy with the Cambodian government. We have distributed many free copies of our magazine, *Searching for the truth*, through local government officials in Phnom Penh and the provinces. Local officials often serve like “lending libraries” in villages where our limited print run does not permit us to distribute our magazine to all interested readers. Furthermore, local government offices often serve as collection points for surveys that we distribute to readers of our magazine about the magazine’s content, public views on the accountability process, and other matters.

A second way that we continued to work with the government to advance human rights in Cambodia during the first quarter of 2003 was through direct educational presentations. With the approval of responsible authorities, we presented our research findings and information about *First They Killed My Father* by Luong Ung, *Anne Frank’s Diary*, and the Jewish Holocaust at state universities and 13 state secondary schools in Phnom Penh and selected provinces. The response to those meetings, where we discussed the history of the Pol Pot regime and other grave violations of human rights in modern history, was overwhelmingly positive. We also work with local officials almost every day as part of the Research Projects and Project to Promote Accountability, as village, sub-district, and district authorities assist us in locating suitable interviewees for specific research projects or former Khmer Rouge cadres for our accountability work. In many areas, we have developed working relationships with local officials who understand our organizational missions and provide useful local advice. These relationships are underscored by ongoing support from the Ministry of Interior, which has been helpful in providing for our security in the provinces and facilitating our work with local officials.

It is difficult for us to calculate a precise percentage of interactions with the Cambodian government that have positive outcomes. However, we can assert confidently that the vast majority of our contacts (over 90%) have resulted in cooperation. Government officials have generally supported our activities and provided useful assistance in spreading our information to the public and pursuing additional research leads.

2.2 DC-Cam in the Local and International Media

For years, DC-Cam’s work has been covered very frequently in the local and international print media, in addition to receiving coverage from radio and television programs such as BBC, CNN, CNBC, and others. The first quarter of 2003 was no exception, as DC-

Cam was featured in the print news media many times, both in Cambodia and abroad. The month of March provides a suitable example. Some of the most recent articles discussing or presenting our work have included the following:

- Reach Sambath, "Cambodians still haunted by their brutal Khmer Rouge Past," *Agence France Presse*, March 9.
- Youk Chhang, "Transparency Necessary for KR Trial Talks," *Cambodia Daily*, March 12.
- "Chhang Youk réclame 'justice,' Sam Rainsy le report de la mission de l'Onu," *Cambodge Soir*, March 12.
- "UN Arriving Today for KR Trial Talks," *Cambodia Daily*, March 13.
- "De Chhang Youk," *Cambodge Soir*, March 18.
- Jacqueline Kozin, "Women Changing Lives: Keokannitha Kim," *Digital Freedom Network*, March 19.
- Molly Ball and Thet Sambath, "Observers React Positively to KR Tribunal Deal," *Cambodia Daily*, March 19.
- Irène Berelowitch, "L'accord entre Phnom Penh et l'Onu accueilli avec optimisme," *Cambodge Soir*, March 19.
- "Sharing files on the disappeared to contribute to healing from genocide," *New Tactics in Human Rights*, March 28.
- Vannak Huy, "Ex-KR troops talk bravely to hide fear," *Cambodia Daily*, March 28.

In addition to the Khmer version of the *Cambodia Daily*, numerous articles referring to our work regularly appear in other Khmer-language papers. A new documentary film about DC-Cam's work on "Victims and Perpetrators" was also completed this quarter. Directed by the Franco-Khmer filmmaker Rithy Panh, it will come out in May 2003. We estimate that at least 50 articles in the international and domestic print media have referred to DC-Cam or quoted our Director or staff members during the first quarter of 2003. DC-Cam distributes many of the articles featuring our work via e-mail. We would be pleased to add any of our donors to our distribution list if it would be helpful in evaluating our progress.

2.3 Analytical Papers and Briefing Reports

During the first quarter of 2003, DC-Cam produced a significant number of analytical reports and briefing papers for conferences, academic presentations, and publication. Members of the Research Team presented a total of four papers at the Royal University of Phnom Penh between January and March. The Director of DC-Cam, Youk Chhang, presented papers at conferences in Singapore, New York, and Belfast, and his paper entitled "Cambodia: Shadows of the Past," appeared in the winter 2003 edition of the academic journal *Welt Trends*. DC-Cam also prepared a monograph relating to a new project that DC-Cam is undertaking in collaboration with experts in psychology on the effects of the Pol Pot regime on survivors' mental health. As noted above, DC-Cam researchers have also produced a number of completed papers or advanced manuscript drafts for publication through the Center's Research Project. In total, DC-Cam produced approximately 12 analytical reports and briefing papers this quarter, in addition to the many articles produced for *Searching for the truth* magazine.

Prepared by Vanthan P. Dara and John D. Ciorciari. (April 1, 2003)