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CURRICULUM REFORM AND TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

Written by Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum

Abstract

TSGM members have 4 members consisting of Mr. Hang Nisay, Mr. Song Pheaktra, Mr. Keo Seiha, and Mr. Bou Chantha, working on research of case study about Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. Team decided in consensus to focus on level of high-school-students' understanding of the Khmer Rouge Regime and S-21 history. S-21 was a main and brutal prison in the Khmer Rouge regime, between 1975 and 1979. S-21 was converted into the museum in the late 1979. S-21 history is also included into education curriculum by Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS); and numbers of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also provided many types of supports such as project interventions, cooperation, and technical assistance. The supports are to provide awareness of Khmer Rouge history, and S-21 history mostly to youth to understand about torture, crimes, pain, and tragedy existed in S-21.

With this account, the team conducted two type of data, primary and secondary data, related to topic. Primary data is conducted with senior high school at 12th grade to know about their knowledge and understanding of Khmer Rouge and S-21 history. Questionnaires were sent to teacher and students through google forms in order to fill and send back to the team for the analysis. Secondary data is focused on state institution and NGOs' successful results working on educating youth and outreach community nationwide. In addition, the team member also included other official publication, and education curriculum regularly updated by Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. However, with type of the assignment the team members called it research of case study because the case needs to research more information to support and evaluate situation where level of student's understanding and awareness on the case.

Therefore, team expected that the case study research will be usefully informed to relevant stakeholders, donors, government and technical supporters for good cooperation to better way/methods to promote youth and next generation awareness of the history. It is essential for youth to have better understanding of the case because they will take actions, join, and prevent the recurrence.

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Problem Statement

Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum was a former S-21 detention center where there had been at least 18,063 people been killed between 1975 and 1979. What happened in S-21 was one of the aspects among many other crimes committed by the Democratic Kampuchea regime (PRT, August 1979: ECCC, 26 July 2010, 16 November 2018). After the fall of Democratic Kampuchea, the Khmer Rouge history has been part of Khmer history curriculum in senior high school of Cambodia. Some of the former crime sites have been preserved as the site of remembrance and reflection. For instance, the former S-21 has been converted into Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and memorial site where people can visit



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and understand the crime and atrocity of the Democratic Kampuchea; especially, the crimes in S-21 (TSGM, 2019a).

To this day, Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum serves as a memorial and education site. It also serves as an important historical landmark in Cambodia, especially in Phnom Penh. From 2014 to 2019, an average of 400,000 national and international tourists visited the museum each year. But the number of national visitors is only about 15% to 20% of the total. For instance, the number of tourists visiting TSGM in 2019 was 524,295, of which 121,716 were national visitors, equivalent to 23%. Of the total of national tourists, 65,962 were students, equivalent to 54% (TSGM, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019b).

The above data shows that the number of locals is low compared to the foreign visitors. The students visiting the museum is also low in comparison to the total number of students in the country. This small number of national visitors, especially students, is a sign of great concern. According to the 2019 census, three-quarters of the total population of Cambodia, amounting to an estimate of 11.6 million, are Cambodians born after 1979 (NIS & MoP, October 2020). The numbers of surviving victims and witnesses are dwindling and many of the historical sites and archival material are lost or are in the process of deterioration. Hence, the Democratic Kampuchea history education, especially the history of S-21, is a priority issue that needs to be addressed.

With all these in mind, this paper selected the topic "Curriculum Adjustment and Transitional Justice: Curriculum of Grade 12 High School Students at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (2016-2019)" to be the case study for the research.

1.2 Research Objectives

This case study aims to do research on both formal and informal curriculums in schools and institutions on the history of S-21 between 2016 and 2019 as part of the "Curriculum Adjustment and Transitional Justice" project supported by Global Initiative for Justice, Truth and Reconciliation. To get a broader picture of this study, the project team focuses on three key elements: curriculum, level of knowledge of the student, and the teacher's perception.

1.3 Research Questions

To meet the objectives of this paper, here are three research questions:



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- 1. What curriculum do public and private schools use in teaching the history of the Khmer Rouge and S-21? What are the organization and institution's educational programs about history of the Khmer Rouge and S-21?*
- 2. To what extent do the students understand the history of the Khmer Rouge and the history of S-21?*
- 3. What do the high school teachers think about the Khmer Rouge history curriculum and S-21 history?*

1.4 Research Methods

A. Data collection

This case study attempts to understand the level of knowledge of the young people about the history of S-21 through official and non-official education. State institutions and NGOs working on the history of the Khmer Rouge, especially the history of S-21, will be included in this study. The project team is conducting two types of data collection including primary and secondary sources for the study, where the former is focused on 12th grade high school students under supports from their teachers locally. Those would be 399 students, selected from 6 different provinces and 1 capital (Phnom Penh, Tboung Khmum, Pursat, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Kampot, and Kampong Cham) for interviews.

For key informants, the team selected 9 high school teachers from these provinces and capital above for the study because those who used to have a good cooperation and experiences in previous project activities would provide an objective reason to learn about the Khmer Rouge history lesson plan, challenges, and solutions in their local areas.

For the latter, secondary data, the team members used the textbook of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the educational report of TSGM, the publication on the history of S-21, and related interventions from different NGOs that have been working on S-21. With this collection, team members used Google forms for assistance due to Covid-19-pandemic constraints and government measure on public meeting and/or collection.

The schools from these city and provinces are high schools that the museum has previously worked with for educational programs. We also have received support from teachers as partners in data collection. Only the 12th grade students studied the history of Democratic Kampuchea and S-21. This assessment questionnaire is modeled on the teacher assessment questionnaire that has been implemented in the school. Please see "questionnaires attached in the appendix"

B. Data analysis

When data is collected, the team reviewed, discussed, verified, conduct data entry and then analyze. Team members use Microsoft excel and Google forms for analyzing data, in particular, primary data. For secondary data, it was conducted by reviewing, noting, discussing and comparing between stage to stage, actions to actions, and intervention activities by different institutions who are working on the related issues of S-21.

Section 2: Literature Review



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2.1 Background of Education S-21 History

2.1.1 History of S-21

S-21 was one of the main detention and torture prison during Democratic Kampuchea regime. Location of S-21 was a former high school which is located in the center of Phnom Penh capital city. The prison was established in 1975, shortly after the Khmer Rouge came to power, and lasted until the fall of Democratic Kampuchea in early 1979. During the operation, S-21 played an important role in fighting the enemies of the Communist Party of Kampuchea and Democratic Kampuchea regime (ECCC, 26 July 2010). According to Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), at least 18,063 prisoners were taken into the prisons, tortured and killed at the facility, including its staff (Annex F.1 - Revised OCIJ S-21 Prisoner List [18,063 Prisoners] (17,961 Prisoners Analysed in F.2, 2007). There were only 12 victims who survived from S-21 (TSGM, 2019a).

S-21 prison covers a large area of Phnom Penh. It was surrounded by a wire fence and thousands of security guards. Interrogations took place almost daily, and on some days, there were a total of 1,500 detainees. Most of the victims were imprisoned, interrogated, inhuman tortured, and killed. Apart from being an interrogation site, S-21 was also a killing site until the massacre was transferred to Choeung Ek, more than ten kilometers south of Phnom Penh (ECCC, 26 July 2010).

The interrogation and torture system left behind more than 700,000 pages of documents, most of which were confessions after the detainees' interrogation. Both the work system, the structure, and in particular the level of the prison crimes reflects the systematic crimes of Democratic Kampuchea (Song, 2021). The department was headed by a Khmer Rouge cadre, Kaing Guek Eav alias Duch, he was a former teacher and had several staff members, including interrogators, guards, cooks, and other units (Chandler, 1999). Duch died in 2019 after being sentenced to life in prison by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia for crimes against humanity and grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions (Case 001, 2021).

However, S-21 was only one of nearly 200 Khmer Rouge prisons operated nationwide between 1975 and 1979. These prisons had been discovered and identified (Pheng, 2006a). In addition to prisons, there were 389 mass graves (Pheng, 2006b). There is also an estimate of 1.7 to 2.2 million Cambodians who died under the regime of the Democratic Kampuchea. The researchers claimed that approximately half of those died under the violence (Ewa & They, 2009).

2.1.2 History of Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum

After the fall of Democratic Kampuchea regime in 1979, the government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea preserved all criminal sites. According to the People Republic of Kampuchea, the preservation of crime sites was the main policy of the state at that time. Unfortunately, the poverty and devastation left behind by the Democratic Kampuchea regime was enormous, in part contributing to the destruction of many criminal historical sites including partly of TSGM (TSGM, 2019a).

Since S-21 was discovered, the government has preserved it for criminal investigation. Shortly afterwards, the history of this location was known through witnesses, survivors, and substantial evidence. In August 1979, the People's Revolutionary Tribunal tried the Khmer Rouge leaders in absentia for their crimes, including the crimes at S-21 (PRT, August 1979). Since then, the site has evolved into a museum of crime and, in 1982, was officially renamed to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (TSGM, 2019a).



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The main purpose of establishing the TSGM was to make the national and international public aware of the crimes of the Democratic Kampuchea regime. In the 1980s, civil war still continued and Khmer Rouge still remained and received international support, especially in managing the United Nations seat representing Cambodia. TSGM presented the evidences of crimes committed by Khmer Rouge in the former S-21. Through the buildings, archives, and torture equipment, visitors learned what happened. In addition, the museum also presents other exhibitions about the crimes and the devastation left by the Democratic Kampuchea regime. Every year there are an average of 400,000 visitors, both national and international. Visitors to the museum expressed shock and regret over the crimes committed in S-21. The government arranges regular official visits for national and international delegates to visit the museum and encourages Cambodians to visit.

Currently, the museum's role is to preserve the site, evidence, and memory. Locations, five buildings, thousands of graffiti, hundreds of thousands of documents, exhibits of detention and torture, and many of the victims' clothing remain in the museum and some of them were exhibited. The exhibits serve to educate and disseminate information on the crime and evidence of the Democratic Kampuchea regime. This also serves to be the contributions of the subsequent prosecution of the Khmer Rouge leaders. According to an official document from the museum, TSGM looks forward to a peaceful and stable Cambodia in which, as a historical museum and memorial site, it has helped society recover from the pain and suffering of decades of war and mass crimes, and has contributed to making the world more peaceful (TSGM, 2021).

2.2. Official education about S-21 History

2.2.1 Curriculum of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

Since the fall of Democratic Kampuchea, dissemination of criminal history at S-21 and Democratic Kampuchea has been a key policy. However, it should be noted that in the 1980s, in the textbook, there was only small inclusion of S-21 history while it presented such a long description about history of Democratic Kampuchea (Ministry of Education, 1986a; Ministry of Education, 1986b; Ministry of Education, 1987). Instead, the national dissemination might focus on social commemorations such as May 20 or the day of hatred, encouraging both students and teachers to visit in person to crime site, and promoting other art forms such as poetry and music. Until now (2021) the song "Bandam Tuol Sleng" (Legacy of Tuol Sleng) still well known among people (Ki Soklim, 18 August 2010) and the museum always recruits high school students to participate in the composition and recitation of poems related to the history of crime or violence in S-21 almost every year since 2018 (TSGM, 2018).

After political situation in 1990s, the time of searching for peace and national reconciliation, Khmer Rouge veterans were integrated into the society. It led to discussions about the inclusion of the S-21 history into the education curriculum and the history textbook published by the Ministry of Education. Prior to the textbook reform in 2013, the 12th grade textbooks related to the history of Democratic Kampuchea were not yet comprehensive for students to gain much knowledge. The Tuol Sleng Prison or S-21 history has yet to be included in the curriculum. The history textbook in 2001 was entitled "Social Studies" and was divided into two sections: the first, geography and history, and the second, moral study, and house affairs. This textbook also included the study of Democratic Kampuchea, briefly describing the Khmer Rouge rise to power, the administrative structure of state, and the socio-economic framework of Democratic Kampuchea. There was still no inclusion of S-21 history in this textbook (MoEYS, 2001).



According to the detailed curriculum of MoEYS in 2009, history subjects were taught for two hours per week, and in the Democratic Kampuchea history lessons were taught for eight hours for whole year of grade 12th (MoEYS, 2009). In addition, in 2011, within the framework of reforming the high school education system, there was a division between science and social sciences class. The science class must study history two hours a week and the social science class three hours a week. This affected the teaching of the Democratic Kampuchea history.

Until 2012, the history textbooks of the grade 12th students began to mention S-21 or Tuol Sleng Prison in the curriculum (MoEYS, 2012a). At the same time, the history textbook for teachers of grade 12th which uses as supplemental information on the content of the lesson of history of Democratic Kampuchea and S-21 were published (MoEYS, 2012b). Both textbooks describe S-21 history which focused on the definition of the code name of S-21, the leaders, the structure, the provisions of the prisoners. However, the lessons of the history of Democratic Kampuchea and the history of S-21 presented in the high school curriculum are limited and focus on general information, little discussion or lack of reflection on students' perception and understanding of these historical experiences. There is no updated version of history textbook for 12th grade until 2021.

2.2.2 Curriculum Visit to the TSGM

Although there has no study tour to TSGM in MoEYS curriculum, some public and private school curriculum still organized their own program to visit the museum. A visit to the site of the museum is an opportunity to learn about the history of S-21 by visiting its exhibitions, listening to the guide's presentations. This also gives opportunities for reflection. According to the TSGM's annual report, from 2015 to 2019, an average of 1,600 students officially visited the museum (this number does not include students of private visitors).

Table 1: shows numbers of students visiting TSGM through the years

Years	Public school	Private school	Total
2015	602	116	718
2016	0	3177	3177
2017	0	126	126
2018	196	513	709
2019	2974	459	3433
Total	3772	4391	8163

(Source: TSGM, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019b)

It should be noted that although many local private schools apply with the official curriculum of the MoEYS, a few private schools in cities and towns have organized study tour for their students to visit to historical sites, especially, TSGM and others sites in Phnom Penh rather than public school.



2.2.3 Remembrance "20 May"

Education of Khmer Rouge history and S-21 also took place in the form of national ceremonies and religious ceremonies related to the TSGM site. Among them, “20th of May” Day of Remembrance is a nationally recognized national holiday. Recently, at the request of the ECCC which is prosecuting Cambodian leaders, and the attention of the Royal Government of Cambodia, “20th of May” has been declared an official Day of Remembrance (ECCC, 7 August 2014). The purpose of this event is to commemorate the victims of the Democratic Kampuchea regime, both dead and alive, especially to raise awareness among the younger generation about the regime's atrocities. During this occasion, people take a break from work and organize religious ceremonies to dedicate to the victims and to have a sense of psychological reconciliation (Hun, 14 February 2018).

However, May 20 dates back to 1984, commemorating events that took place during the Khmer Rouge regime, such as May 20, 1973, the birth of the Khmer Rouge comparative policy (Ministry of Education, 1977) and May 20, 1975, also marked the beginning of the Khmer Rouge's brutal genocide of the Cambodian people (UPI, 1984). Since the mid-1980s, TSGM has been the target of commemoration of 20th of May event, with thousands of people in attendance. It was a time when people and young people came to visit and publicly remembrance about the crimes at S-21 (TSGM, 2019a).

2.3. Non-formal Education

2.3.1 TSGM Education and Outreach Program at the High School Level

TSGM identifies the education and dissemination of the history of Democratic Kampuchea and S-21 is one of the four main pillars. TSGM's education and outreach program focuses on educating high school students about S-21. Currently, the program focuses on students in private and public schools in Phnom Penh with the support of the MoEYS for 5 years, focusing on two provinces: Phnom Penh and Kandal (Hang, 26 January 2017). In this program, students from various schools receive lectures on the history of S-21 by professional staff from the museum, visit the mobile exhibition, and participate in activities such as watching movies and involve the tours of the museum with audio guides or person tour guides (TSGM, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019b).

Table2: showing numbers of school and students participated in TSGM outreach activities in between 2015 to 2019;

Years	Number of Schools	Number of Student
2015	02	230
2016	03	380
2017	03	76
2018	13	1594
2019	20	2974

(Source: TSGM, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019b)

In addition, the TSGM has been compiling guidebooks and training materials for outreach programs. The tourist guide books supported TSGM staff to provide a consistent message accurate information



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to the visitors. Recent research discoveries related to history at S-21, studied by researchers from the museum itself, are also part of the historical education for young people, although not entirely focused on high school students. These include:

- A study of the history of the TSGM by compiling data on school history, including interviews with alumni at Ponhea Yang High School, the site of which later became S-21 (TSGM, 2019a).
- Difference research on remain graffiti of buildings (Chhay, Banan, Vong, & Muth, 2018)
- A study of the S-21 archives, focusing on the criminal system through the remaining archives evidence (Song, 2021)
- A study of the roots of violence, detention and torture at S-21 by examining the history of the former M-13 prison between 1970-1975 (Kampong Speu Province) (Hang, 2021)

Through the results of the work between 2016 and 2021, TSGM hopes to expand the quantity and quality of education and outreach programs, and expect for the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for another 5 years. More provinces far from the cities in will be included. Among other educational and outreach activities, TSGM will advocate with MoEYS to increase more learning time about the history of S-21 and the Democratic Kampuchea regime in the official history curriculum at public schools (TSGM, 15 December 2020).

2.4 The work of civil society organizations

The Royal Government of Cambodia values multilateral cooperation with civil society organizations in national development. According to the 2020 report, Cambodia has a number of NGOs and associations doing different development projects. Among them are a number of organizations engaged in historical research and partly focused on the history of S-21. The work of civil society organizations has contributed to attracting young people to visit TSGM. The following are two important tasks that civil society organizations have carried out in relation to the S-21 History Curriculum.

2.4.1 Research and Publication

Research on the history of the Khmer Rouge and S-21 began after the fall of the Democratic Kampuchea. Since 1979, foreign researchers start to study the devastation of the Democratic Kampuchea, partly focusing on the criminal history of Tuol Sleng. Many of these studies were conducted through the analysis of museum archives, interviews with survivors, and empirical evidence (Song, 2021). Although the research has produced many works on Tuol Sleng, they are in a foreign language and do not reach young readers in Cambodia. In the 1990s and 2000s, some research was translated into Khmer. Important books such as:

- *When The War Was Over: Cambodia and The Khmer Rouge Revolution, and the Bophana: A Cambodian Tragedy* had an important part describing the history of S-21 and some of its victims. The author has visited and researched the TSGM archives. These are two among many early works which focuses on the ordinary victims, especially women who suffered persecution from the Khmer Rouge at S-21 (Becker, E. 2005)
- *Voice from S-21*, is a complete work translated into Khmer in 2003 by DC-Cam. This work provides an in-depth description of the history, location and manner of the crimes committed (Chandler, 2003).

The Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), was established in 1995, did a lot of study on the history of Democratic Kampuchea and S-21 history. DC-Cam has researched and published such as:



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- Searching for the Truth: This was published with 232 issues and was distributed to schools across the country (DC-Cam, 2019). Through its past publications on S-21 history, the magazine has been published in three categories: writing based on archives, research based on the interviews with witnesses, and information about the work of historians on S-21. In using the primary source from S-21, the authors selected the confessions of some high-ranking Khmer Rouge cadres who were arrested, interrogated, and recorded at S-21, such as Hou Nim, Minister of Propaganda. (Issue no. 24) Vorn Vet (Issue no. 44) Phok Chhay, (Issue no. 1) Meak Touch, Ambassador of Democratic Kampuchea to Laos (Issue no. 2) Huot Sambath, Ambassador to Yugoslavia (Issue no. 20-21) - etc. Recent research has included interviews with some former staff and survivors at S-21. Some of these interviews included Prak Khon, the interrogator (Issue no. 10), Him Huy, the former bodyguard (Issue no.28) and the former photographer Nim Im (Issue no. 94) - etc. Former prisoners who were interviewed for this study included Chum Mey or Chum Manh (Issue no. 22) and Bou Meng (Issue no. 38). These articles were written in a similar format, citing the life experiences of those staff or prisoners in S-21.
- A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) also included the chapter about S-21 (Dy, Chandler, & Cougill, 2007, pp. 59-68). Starting by description of the premises and the overview of S-21 or Tuol Sleng Prison, then showing the conditions of the prisoners, the interrogation, as well as the functionality of S-21. The main source of information in this article based on interviews of the staff of S-21. This book was recognized as a supplementary textbook in the high school curriculum in 2008 and distributed nationwide (Im, 30 April 2008).

DC-Cam has published a handbook for teachers on how to teach the history of Democratic Kampuchea to help teachers better understand and apply the content of the book on the history of Democratic Kampuchea to students. In Chapter 10, the authors mention the history of S-21 and they also descriptively explain the teaching methods for students. (Phala, C & Dearing, C, 2014a). In addition, there are similar resources such as the Training of Provincial Trainers Book from the History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) at the Secondary School, Exercise Book for Students (Phala, C & Dearing, C, 2014b). These books help teachers and students to gain additional knowledge from the lessons of the history of Democratic Kampuchea through research, exercises and answer questions related to the history of the Khmer Rouge. Chapter 9 deals with the history of S-21 (Tuol Sleng Prison), which requires students to do exercises and gain additional knowledge from S-21.

The Bophana Audiovisual Center is another institution that researches and preserves archives from the history of Democratic Kampuchea, S-21, and trained teachers on how to teach Khmer Rouge history. The co-founder of the center, Rithy Panh, was a well-known film producer about the Khmer Rouge history. Among the films he produced, there are at least three films related to the history of S-21: Bophana: A Cambodian Tragedy (1996), S-21, The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine (2002), Duch, Master of the forges of Hell (2012). These three films tell the story of the victims and the experiences of the staff and officials at S-21. It also describes in detail the original documents and evidence at S-21. Among the films released publicly for free is Bophana: A Cambodian Tragedy. This film is shown yearly on March 18, a day which commemorates Bophana's death in S-21.

The Bophana Center also conducts research and created the educational application called App Learning Khmer Rouge History. In the Khmer Rouge history app, they also included the history of S-21. Chapter 6, and Lesson 3 of the application briefly provides information on how S-21 functions, the relocation of S-21 sites, the administration, detention, torture and execution of prisoners (Keo et al, 2017). This added feature of the application is largely due to the new information that the ECCC released. The other part of the information is shown in the 12th grade history textbook of MoEYS



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(MoEYS, 2017). Through this program, the Bophana Center conducts teaching and outreach in some schools in the provincial capitals (Keo, 2021).

These existing publications actually contribute in part to high school students. The book about History of Democratic Kampuchea, published by the DC-Cam or the Bophana Application, is an important part of motivating students to study history. However, both documents include a small and not in-depth section about S-21 that allows students to adequately discuss and reflect on their views about history.

2.4.2. Visit the Museum

Another major activity that civil society organizations have contributed to disseminating the history of S-21 is facilitating the visit. These institutions created working activities with the youth, the survivors, and the victims of the Khmer Rouge regime. Most of the training activities or visits include a visit to TSGM and reflect on the views of visitors, personal experiences or the development of a non-violent perspective in the future.

In the past, Kdei Karuna organization has implemented a major project to promote crime by encouraging young people to explore historical aspects. Kdei Karuna is currently implementing four major projects. Among them, there is a project on jointly addressing the past: understanding sexual violence, gender-based violence against ethnic minorities during the Khmer Rouge era to prevent future recurrences, and an education by visiting TSGM (KdK, 2018: Run, 2021).

The Youth Resource Development Program is another organization that works closely with youth on two major projects: Civic and Political Right Education for Youth and Peace Building and Reconciliation Engagement for Youth. This project included Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Program which focuses on strengthening the capacity of young people and their moral and social attitudes to build peace through their participation in training on conflict change and resolution, Non-violent activism, inter-ethnic and inter-faith peace-building, peace-building and national reconciliation through the reflection of history and other peace-building activities of national and regional networks. Reflections on this work were organized by bringing young people to visit and learn about the violence that took place at S-21, now the TSGM (YRDP, 2020).

The Youth for Peace is a local organization based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, established in 2001. Youth for Peace is focusing on research and education of the history of Democratic Kampuchea including facilitating study tours to the crime site. This study tour helps young people better understand, remember and reflect what they have learned. The conversion of S-21 into TSGM as a national memorial site is one of the goals that Youth for Peace has always facilitated for young people in the community to come and learn about TSGM. The organization has made a significance contribution to the preservation and converting of a former crime site, call Kraing Ta Chan Prison in Takeo Province, into a local memorial (WFP, No date).

The special feature of the above organization's visit is that it contributes to the opportunity for young people, especially high school students, to get to know and visit the museum. In addition, the discussions and reflections after each course motivate young people to have the opportunity to use their resources and ideas to look for other memorial sites close to their homes. But the amount that these institutions are able to accommodate is very small compared to the number of students and young people who visit.



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Section 3: Students' Understanding of S-21 History

After the cross-checking and the examination of the curriculum and the history of S-21 in different institutions, both public and private, it is evident that there are still limitations in the activities and content of S-21. Hence, the quality of teaching can be measured by the students' knowledge on the history of S-21. To be able to check, the researchers have interviewed 399 students (61% is female) from 10 different high schools in 7 city and provinces. All high school students are at grade 12 or students of technical training schools with the same level. The selection of grade 12 students, because they have studied history of Khmer Rouge and S-21.

Since the history of S-21 is part of the Khmer Rouge history education, the researchers divided the questionnaire into two parts: Khmer Rouge and S-21 history. These questions are taken from the curriculum published by MoEYS.

The results from the interview would be classified into two parts:

3.1 About the history of the Khmer Rouge

Of the students, 96.7% claimed to have studied Khmer Rouge history. According to the Textbook of the History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979), focusing on: the Khmer Rouge's policy, leadership structure, the destruction of the Democratic Kampuchea regime, S-21, and the fall of the Democratic Kampuchea regime (MoEYS.2020).

In order to verify the level of knowledge and practical lessons, researchers made 5 multi-answer questions and 2 open questions. In multi-answer questions, the students can answer correctly. The following is a detailed database of student responses:

- Who was first named the Khmer Rouge? 57.4% of students answered correctly.
- When did the Khmer Rouge come to power? 87.5% of students answered correctly.
- Who was the supreme leader in the era of Democratic Kampuchea? 85% of students answered correctly.
- How could the Khmer Rouge come to power? 54.4% of students answered correctly.
- Why did the Khmer Rouge fall? 59.9% of students answered correctly.

Two open questions are highlighted requesting their opinions, knowledge, and their attitude toward real situation. As a result, number of responses is very significant so as to know their understanding. When we asked a question "what did you know about the devastation in Khmer Rouge Regime?", they provided responses regarding to their views, understanding and experiences. They stated that the devastation was included loss of national treasures, the damage of public roads, the destruction of the schools, hospitals and pagodas, and landmines. The loss of human resources and relatives, orphans, widows, and the disabled. The society became insecure; and the people were poorer because of the war, and the human rights violations. Leaving scars on women during the Khmer Rouge era, such as forced marriages and rapes. The country has not progressed in all areas such as economy, tourism, transportation. In particular, the victims are still overwhelmed by symptoms related to trauma and physical trauma.

In addition, when we asked question "why do you study Khmer Rouge history?", they responded in many ways through their understanding about the case. However, they said learning Khmer Rouge History is very essential. The following are their responses to the questions. It makes us



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understand the painful history, the unforgettable hardships of the people, the hard work and no time to rest. The dictatorship and the oppression of the Khmer Rouge killed their own race. Let us study, learn and understand our history. If a nation does not know its history, it seems blind. On the other hand, it enables us to unite, to fight, to hate war, to love peace, to unite in order to be successful, and to enable us to understand the knowledge, past and experiences of people, people and a country through written sources, including documents. Especially, history is an important national identity of each country, as a citizen should know and know the story of its history, to avoid committing the repeated mistakes. The study of history brings us the national pride, understanding the self-defense and self-development for the nation.

3.2 About the history of S-21

It should be noted that 56.6% of all students have visited the museum. Teaching the history of S-21 is included in the curriculum such as the content of the text books describing S-21, and focusing on the definition of S-21, the leaders, organizational structure, and the detainees. In order to verify the level of the students' knowledge about S-21 history and the curriculum, researchers designed the questionnaire consisted of 6 multiple choice questions and 1 open question. The following is the data that students correctly answered the question:

- What was S-21? The students chose the answer that S-21 was the Khmer Rouge detention, torture and killing place, which was 93.7% correct.
- What was the meaning of the acronym S-21? 84.5% of students answered correctly.
- Who was the director of S-21? 72.9% of students answered correctly.
- How long did the S-21 operate? 57.4% of the students answered correctly.
- What was S-21 before the Khmer Rouge? 81.2% of students answered correctly.
- Where is the former S-21 located today? 81.2% of students answered correctly.
- Types of victims at S-21:
 - o Political prisoners, ex-soldiers and civil servants of the Government of the Republic of Cambodia
 - o Khmer Rouge cadres and troops
 - o Secret agents, Vietnamese, ordinary people
 - o Intellectuals, teachers, monks, students, sculptors, painters.

Among the students who answered the above questions, some expressed their views on MoEYS about educational program and a study tour at TSGM. Kong Thea Ratana, a student at Hun Sen Khnar High School, said: *"The curriculum of the Ministry of Education from S-21 is not enough because the student's study only in the textbooks or research documents. And the students go to study directly to the location is limited."* (11 October 2021).

Regarding to the study tour at TSGM, Ms. Yi Eyhong, a student at Preah Norodom Ranariddh High School, said:

The study tour program at Tuol Sleng is very important for high school students because it gives us knowledge on the historical sites of S-21, to know the history of Democratic Kampuchea, to know the leaders of S-21 and to know about the torture and killing of the prisoners who were arrested there (Yi, 11 October 2021).

Similarly, Kong Thea Ratana said:



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The study tour program at Tuol Sleng is very important in conducting historical research for high school students, because it gives students a lot of memory to understand the atrocity; so that students can quickly understand the aspects of direct punishment and the management. This gives the students a better understanding of S-21, making S-21 a place for study and research for students. (Kong, 11 October 2021).

Section 4: Teachers' Perceptions

Besides understanding the level of the students' knowledge on Khmer Rouge and S-21 history, the research also figures out the experiences and perception on teaching history of the teachers by interviewing 9 teachers (3 female) from 6 different city and provinces. Interestingly, all teachers have visited TSGM and voluntary share their names and contact of information. A list of interviewees is attached in the appendix.

4.1 Content of S-21 History Teaching

Most of the teachers, whom the researchers interviewed, used almost the same content to teach the students about the history of S-21 such as the background, the organizational structure, the location of the site, the meaning of the prison's name, and the leaders of the prison, etc. In addition to this, they also taught about types of prisoners, the interrogation and torture, showing the photos of the victims in this detention center, and describe the suffering of the victims in this detention center.

However, all teachers claim that the official curriculum incorporating the history section of S-21 is not enough. Missing the important points of S-21 history could lead the students to lose interest in learning about the history of S-21. Moreover, the teachers also mention that there is a lack of documents and materials, while the existing documents is not filled with the updated information. Teachers suggest that MoEYS should add more pictures or photographs of victims at S-21 and site of S-21, so that, the students can have a better understanding about the detention center. In addition to that, Mr. Soy Chamroeun, a teacher at Hun Sen Kang Tanoeng High School in Kampong Cham province, stated: "The Tuol Sleng (Genocide) Museum should have a program for high school students to visit S-21 directly so that they can know and understand more about history of S-21" (27 September 2021).

4.2 Study Trip to Tuol Sleng Museum

Most teachers thought that it is necessary to conduct the trip for the students to visit TSGM after having class at school. Because it could help the students to have a better view about the organizational structure, the situation of the detention, the tortured tools, and to see the actual photos of the victims displayed in the gallery. Ms. Ieng Nary, a teacher at Hun Sen Peam Ror High School in Prey Veng province, said:

It is very important to bring students to Tuol Sleng Museum, because the history of the Khmer Rouge era is what every young Cambodian have to remember. Moreover, S-21 is one of (most) the largest prison sites where hundreds (thousand) of prisoners were imprisoned, interrogated, tortured and killed. On the other hand, going to explore after this class is to show the students more clearly that there is really evidence left in that period (27 September 2021).



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4.3 The Importance of Learning History of S-21 for Grade 12 Students

Mr. Chhorm Puthy, a teacher at Chheu Tom High School in Pursat province, said: “(learning about S-21) to let the students know about the most brutal torture and killings committed by the Khmer Rouge. The student would not believe about the killing (during Khmer Rouge) if there is no S-21” (27 September 2021). This opinion is claimed by most of the teachers that learning the history of S-21 is important for the grade 12 students. Because they can gain more new knowledge about S-21 such as the types of prisoners, reason for arrests, interrogations and torture of all prisoners, and to understand the Khmer Rouge leadership in prosecuting individuals accused of treason. In particular, teachers see the history as an experience or a lesson learnt for the younger generation to understand the sorrow and the suffering of the victims.

4.4 Teachers’ Opinions on Organizing the S-21 History Education Program

4.4.1 Official Education

In order to make the S-21 history education successful at school, the teachers should understand clearly and be trained about the history of S-21 organized by TSGM and its expert. Moreover, the detailed program must be included in the curriculum of the MoEYS and other stakeholders. Arrangement of the visit to TSGM for the students should also be included because it is easy for them to illustrate the picture of the real situation. In addition, information such as photos of victims suffering from interrogation at S-21 should be included.

4.4.2 Non-formal education institutions

Most teachers suggested that the workshop would be organized more by the specialized institutions about S-21 history. Some material also helps to promote educational programs, including creating images or videos that show more about S-21. They should also add more content to the lesson on S-21, and to bring the student to visit the museum at least 2 times in their study life from grad 7 to 12 with the introduction and guided by the expert.



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Section 5: Lessons Learned, Reflection and Recommendation

5.1 Lessons Learned

History education, especially the modern history of Cambodia, is a must for the students to learn and remember. Having done this case study, the researchers have seen that both teachers and students are eager to learn more about the Khmer Rouge history, and to remember for non-recurrence in the future. According to the statements and the students, the researchers understand that having understood the painful history of the Khmer Rouge period may make the spirit of unity plausible to avoid repeating this difficult experience in the future.

Besides the above mentioned, the researchers can also see the long-term negative impact present in the different generations. Some of the students still recall the loss of relatives and family members. This could be told by their parents or elder relative, and it means that this painful memory still exists within family.

In addition to the painful history and the loss of family members, the national devastation such as the destruction of infrastructures, currency, and schools also occurred; and it led to the slow progression in development.

Moreover, the researchers recommend that both students and teachers be required to visit TSGM. It is because this museum is almost the only place where people can learn the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge regime through evidence that serve as remnants such as the confession, detention cells, photos, graphic prints and negatives. Thus, TSGM is a place to reflect on what happened during the Khmer Rouge regime, and to prove the crime of inhuman torture against the people.

5.2 Reflection

Having gathered the information of the above research, the researchers can identify that the opportunity of getting the knowledge on the history of S-21 of the students from private schools is better than the public one. It is because the private schools arrange more visits to TSGM due to their policy and financial support for the visit.

According to TSGM report in 2019, there has been a high number of students visiting the museum, and the student from private schools is higher than the public. There are some reasons to have more private school engagement visiting the museum. Most of private schools are located in Phnom Penh which is easy for them to bring the students to the museum. They also have the transportation to visit. On the other hand, public schools have no visitation program to the museum which means that students only learn based on the textbook. However, this report also mentions the visit of public school to the museum; but with the support of ECCC, and TSGM.

Some NGOs also have unofficial Khmer Rouge and S-21 history program for the students. Although, they have a different teaching program, there are still limitations in understanding the S-21 history as there have been a small number of student visitors to the museum.

TSGM welcomes the study tours of the students from every institution and provide a tour guide to explain. In particular, TSGM has partnered with MoEYS to teach students about the history of S-21 in many public and private schools in Phnom Penh and to bring them to visit the museum. But none have reached the provinces.



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5.3 Recommendation

- Through learning from education curriculum of MoEYS, it showed curriculum focused on some part of Khmer Rouge Activities committed in the regime. It was not uncovered what caused problem happened or what was behind scenario. Therefore, if possible, the curriculum should have included root causes that led Khmer Rouge regime come to power, leading massive devastation nationwide.
- Based on numbers of students coming to visit TSGM, it illustrated a very small numbers or percentage of students came and visited TSGM if compared to total numbers of student graduated each year. Learning Khmer Rouge History in class is important, however, it seems a story telling, they might not remember clearly or longer. With this, they might not be anchored to the real situation happened with pains. Therefore, based on teacher views, they are appreciated to see at least 2 visits to TSGM for those at grade 7 to grade 12. Direct visit is a study tour activity by observing sculpture, pictures and materials of torture conducted during the regime. Students can use their observations and lessons from class so as to reflect what painful activities had occurred at that time. Therefore, on behalf of Khmer ethnic generation, knowing and deep understanding of own history, in particular, Khmer Rouge regime is very essential and inevitable because it showed serious torture and detention must not be replicated, and it is an important message for next generation, especially, politician to make sure and avoid the dark situation again.
- Linking to Non-formal education which conducted by civil society partners, it illustrated that many activities were implemented such as therapy, reconciliation, compilation of personal story, involving in extraordinary chamber of criminal code of Cambodia, and so on. These are helpful activities to have good cooperation between Cambodian Government and Non-governmental organization on the same issues. In addition, the study see that activities are still far from need of Cambodian generation. This recommendation is to require more collaboration and cooperation to conduct multiple related activities in entire country, instead of focused or important areas because all Cambodian people have enough right to know and understand the Khmer Rouge regime and/or S-21 while the Cambodia citizens are still less understanding and don't know how to get involved in the need. Therefore, all Cambodian people should access to such activities inevitably.
- In accordance with quality of guiding expert in TSGM, they need more capacity building such as pedagogy, research methods, communication skills, networking skills, etc. With the demand, TSGM is to open for all connections for better collaboration and cooperation with national and international partners so as to strengthen staff capacity, especially to have broader exchange program/activities.



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ACRONYMS

DC-Cam	Documentation Center of Cambodia
DK	Democratic Kampuchea
ECCC	Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia
KdK	Kdei Karuna Organization
KR	Khmer Rouge
MoEYS	Ministry of Education Youth and Sport
MoP	Ministry of Planning
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
PRK	People's Republic of Kampuchea
S-21	<i>Santebal Number 21</i> (Security Office 21)
PRT	People's Republic Tribunal
TSGM	Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum
YFP	Youth for Peace
YRDP	Youth Resource Development Organization



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APPENDIX

List of high schools / schools surveyed

No	Name high schools / schools	Capital City/Province	Number of Students	Data Collection	Contact Number
1	Prah Norodom High School	Prey Veng	18	Tren Vanny	098 446 440
2	Hun Sen Prek Sandek High School	Prey Veng	97	Eng Phirun	031 222 39 39
3	Hun Sen Peam Ror High School	Prey Veng	12	Ieng Nary	069 584 460
4	Bun Rany Hun Sen Prey Porn High School	Prey Veng	22	Sorn Sokha	069 470 287
5	Chher Tom High School	Pur Sat	51	Chhorm Puthy	017 449 887
6	Hun Sen Kang Taneng High School	Kampong Cham	16	Soy Chamreun	069 910 789
7	Hun Sen Khnar High School	Tboung Khmum	30	Hong Srey Rath	096 537 23 23
8	Bun Rany Hun Sen Chantrea High School	Svay Reing	38	Kheiv Mea	096 255 10 95
9	Prah Norodom Ranrith High School	Kam pot	91	Chan Likha	010 739 717
10	PSE - Pour un Sourire d'Enfant	Phnom Penh	24	Sok Kimsey	077 77 29 18
Total	10 high schools / schools	07 Capital City/Province	399 Students		



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List of Teachers

No	Name	Gender	High School	Age	Contact Number
1	Ieng Nary	Female	Hun Sen Peam Ror High School	27	069 584 460
2	Eng Phirun	Male	Hun Sen Prek Sandek High School	26	031 222 39 39
3	Chan Likha	Female	Prah Norodom Ranrith High School	28	010 739 717
4	Chhorm Puthy	Male	Chher Tom High School	36	017 449 887
5	Sorn Sokha	Male	Bun Rany Hun Sen Prey Porn High School	32	069 470 287
6	Soy Chamreun	Male	Hun Sen Kang Taneng High School	28	069 910 789
7	Kheiv Mea	Male	Bun Rany Hun Sen Chantrea High School	39	096 255 10 95
8	Hong Srey Rath	Female	Hun Sen Khnar High School	23	096 537 23 23
9	Tren Vanny	Male	Prah Norodom High School	31	០៩៨ ៤៤ ៦៤ ៤០



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Questionnaire for Students

Name..... Sex.

School. Age

Phone number

I. Understanding the history of Democratic Kampuchea or the Khmer Rouge era

1. Have you ever studied the Khmer Rouge era?

- a. Yes b. No

2. Who was first named Khmer Rouge?

- a. Lon Nol
 b. Samdech Sihanouk
 c. Samdech Hun Sen
 d. Other

3. From which year did the Khmer Rouge come to power? (There is only one correct answer)

- a. 1970 - 1974 b. 1973-1975 c. 1975 - 1979

4. Who was the supreme leader in the era of Democratic Kampuchea? (There is only one correct answer)

- a. Nuon Chea b. Pol Pot c. Khieu Samphan d. Kaing Guek Eav

5. How did the Khmer Rouge come to power? (There is only one correct answer)

- a. Support from the Communist Party of Vietnam
 b. US bombing
 c. Military failures and corruption during the Khmer Republic
 d. The above three answers

6. What were the reasons of the collapse of the Khmer Rouge era? (There is only one correct answer)

- a. weak of the population
 b. Purification
 c. War with Vietnam
 d. All three answers

7. What did the Khmer Rouge era impact the current society?



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8. Is the study of Khmer Rouge history important? Why?

.....
.....
.....

II. Understanding "History of S-21"

9. Have you ever visited Tuol Sleng Museum?

- a. Yes b. Never

10. What is S-21?

- a. School
 b. Detention Center, interrogation, torture and murder
 c. Khmer Rouge Army Accommodation

11. What does the word S-21 mean? (There is only one correct answer)

- a. "S" means to kill
 b. "S" is an acronym for security and 21 is a password.
 c. "S" means school

12. Who is the director of S-21? (There is only one correct answer)

- a. Son Sen b. Kaing Guek Eav (Duch) c. Ieng Sary

13. What is the operation of S-21 from year to year?

- a. 1974-1976 b. 1975-1979 c. 1976-1979

14. Where is S-21 located?

- a. Sisowath High School b. Toul Svay Prey High School c. Preah Yukanthor High School

15. What kind of victims were arrested and detained at S-21?



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16. Please describe the sequence of the detainees at S-21.

- Photography
- Killing
- Interrogation
- Arrest

17. What is the current location of S-21?

- a. National Museum
- b. Tuol Sleng Museum
- c. Choeung Ek Genocide Center

18. In what month and year did S-21 become a museum? (There is only one correct answer)

- a. August 1979
- b. September 1979
- c. October 1979

19. After the fall of Democratic Kampuchea, how many victims survived S-21? (There is only one correct answer)

- a. 7 people
- b. 4 people
- c. 12 people
- d. 10 people

20. What does understanding the history of S-21 mean for humanity?

.....
.....

21. In which case did the Khmer Rouge tribunal convict Duch?

- a. 001
- b. 002/01
- c. 002/02

Questionnaire for teachers

Name..... Sex.

School. Age



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Phone number

1. Have you ever visited Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum?

A. Yes B. Never

2. What did you teach the history of S-21 to students?

.....
.....
.....

3. Is the history of S-21 enough in Khmer Rouge history curriculum? Why?

.....
.....
.....

4. What is necessary to bring students to explore the historical site of S-21?

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5. How important is the history of S-21 for 12th grade students?

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6. What kind of education program do you provide for the history of S-21?

A. At the national level or in education, what kind of program should be organized?

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B. Institutional level or non-formal education What kind of program should be organized?

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GIJTR

Global Initiative for Justice,
Truth & Reconciliation

