

# Teaching Human Rights in Cambodia

DARA YI, HORN PHENG AND JOHN LOWRIE

A survey of 50 moral and civic education teachers in public schools in Cambodia was conducted from 1 January–20 February 2003. Interviews took place in primary and secondary schools in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, and in the provinces of Kampot, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu, Battambang, Sihanouk Ville, and Kampong Chhnang. The Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (more commonly known by its French acronym LICADHO) staff conducted the survey in the provinces, and Yi Dara in Phnom Penh.

The survey originally aimed to determine the impact of human rights teaching in a cross-section of Cambodian schools, based on the curriculum developed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS). However, it became necessary to examine more fully the situation of the education system in Cambodia, including the teaching of human rights in schools. This paper also discusses the difficulty of implementing a human rights education program in Cambodia's formal education system.

## Living Condition of Teachers

Teachers are considered civil servants. Most receive 60,000–800,000 riels<sup>1</sup> (about US\$15–US\$200) per month. Teachers are paid 113,000–190,500 riels<sup>2</sup> (US\$29–US\$49) per month. Their salaries are often delayed by up to 1 month or more. Asked how much they needed to live modestly, all the respondents said at least US\$200 per month.<sup>3</sup> Their low pay is hardly sufficient to pay for food, especially in Phnom Penh, where the cost of living is higher than in the rest of the country. Other expenses that can barely be met are for housing, clothes, electricity, health, water, and children's unofficial school fees.

Because of poor pay, an elaborate system of unofficial charges to supplement income has evolved in the civil service. For example, traffic regulation policemen extract “fines” from motorists. These unofficial charges are widely tolerated. Collection of charges in many areas of public service is based mainly on what can be negotiated between officials and payers. Very little of the revenue goes to the government. Most is taken by officials and their superiors.<sup>4</sup>

Teachers and education administrators have evolved their own system of supplementing salaries: “in-school-business” and “outside-school-business.” Outside-school-business activities include secondary employment, private English teaching, small retail businesses, transport services, etc. In the rural areas, however, instead of cash, teachers collect rice “donations” and then trade it, and with the profit sometimes set up fishponds or other business.

In-school-business includes selling food or collecting irregular fees from students. At first, the scale was small and “socially pardonable.” In time, the irregularities grew in number and size, and became the norm.<sup>5</sup>

Specifically, in-school-business activities include the following:

- Selling of food or candies to students. Teachers prohibit buying of food outside the school. A student who violates this rule is made to suffer in class. This practice is common in primary schools.
- “Forcing” students to take extra classes.<sup>6</sup> Children are made to take special lessons for which they pay. Children who refuse are given low marks, and their class standing suffers regardless of their talent, intelligence, or efforts. Sometimes they are failed and have to repeat the school year.
- Ignoring the student’s poor attendance provided the student pays an incentive. Some children rarely attend classes, but take and “pass” the examinations.
- Leaking answers or altering the final results of exams. The more money a student pays, the better the results of his or her exams.
- Giving false evaluations.<sup>7</sup> Sometimes the school director is involved.
- Arranging for school leavers to complete graduation formalities satisfactorily in return for informal fees. Any student who thinks he or she may not be able to graduate normally can achieve it in exchange for a cash donation ranging from US\$20–US\$150 for lower secondary schools, and US\$20–US\$800 for upper secondary schools.
- Selling school graduation formalities in a “private” but nevertheless open manner. A student who believes that she/he cannot pass the exams or gain a certificate on merit can negotiate with school officials starting with the class teacher to get a passing grade or a certificate for a certain price.

The teachers are expected to share with their immediate superiors the income derived from these activities to show their “gratitude,” which is common in Cambodian culture.

Aside from the daily school fee, there is also a school year or term enrolment fee of US\$10–US\$50, often presented as a contribution to the schools’ resources or maintenance. The govern-

ment, under pressure from the international community, has issued circulars to curb this practice and to raise the enrolment of poor students and girls, but the circulars are widely ignored.<sup>8</sup>

Rural teachers have few alternative sources of income besides farming and many move to Phnom Penh, which has more opportunities for in-school and out-of-school business, more children of wealthier families able to pay for extra-class lessons, and greater scope for private enterprise. As a result, better-qualified teachers are concentrated in Phnom Penh. Rural areas are left with a few teachers who have lesser qualifications and who lack access to information. Teachers in rural areas are more easily suppressed because they are “less” qualified and are under constant threat of dismissal.

### Teaching Methodologies

For most teachers, the basic needs of their family must come first, so they give priority to other jobs. They have no time to prepare lesson plans, follow up work from previous lessons, or conduct reviews or research to improve their next lessons. Some teachers in cities who make extra income try to improve their skills for their extra-class lessons, not necessarily for their regular classes. Such teachers do not even teach their official classes well as doing so would distract them from their more lucrative job. Students who regularly attend extra-class lessons always enjoy preferential treatment, whether or not they attend official classes. Thus, children of wealthy and powerful families are often the “best” students in the class or school. The examination questions are often those derived from extra-class lessons.

The curriculum designed by MoEYS is long and includes new theories and topics, about which teachers are not properly briefed. Time is insufficient to complete all the subjects and topics. Teachers only give an overview of each lesson to complete the full program but provide more details in extra-class lessons. The teaching approach is conventional or teacher-

centered. Teachers dictate from memory, from textbooks, or from their notes. Or they write on the blackboard the contents of the lesson. The students sit passively, listen, observe, and write down details in their notebooks. There is little or no interaction between teachers and students. Most school classes are quiet, except during rote recitals, rare cases of active participation, or breakdown of discipline. Teachers are active while students are submissive, passively absorbing information from their teachers.<sup>9</sup>

Children “learn” by rote, according to the time-honored fashion of elders repeating the information to youngsters. The implication is that external knowledge and methods are alien or inferior.

### The School Curriculum and Actual Teaching

Many teachers are products of the education system. MoEYS started issuing official school curriculums in 1979. Brief documents of four to five pages were issued to each school. Around 1981, they were developed into the first full curriculum. The first major revision was made in 1995. The original school curriculums were heavily political, containing mainly communist doctrine, with criticisms of capitalism, and the genocidal regime of the Khmer Rouge. The curriculums instilled hatred and anger against people of different ethnic origin and the bourgeoisie, creating disunity among teachers. Traditionally, teachers enjoyed high standing as community leaders. After 1979 they were divided. The government set up technical, political, common staff, and “gray area” groups among teachers.

The *technical group* was responsible for the content of teaching and for ensuring that teaching, if not supportive of the ruling party doctrine, would not be a source of dissenting ideas. The *political group* included senior teachers assigned to indoctrinate teachers with the so-called “right ideology.” Members of both groups held senior positions in school—as directors, vice directors, or technical chiefs.

The *common staff group’s* role was to ensure that no political beliefs could prevail if they did not belong to the ruling party. The *gray-area group* consisted of teachers whose conscience and beliefs were doubted, who were considered “outsiders” and excluded from accessing various benefits to which they were entitled.

This systematic division of teachers survives to this day. The political group still has full direct access to the ruling Cambodian People’s Party (CPP),<sup>10</sup> through which it can punish disobedient teachers by, for example, depriving teachers of their official classes and, therefore, barring them from extra-class activities.<sup>11</sup> Besides this most effective punishment, other reprisals are lack of promotion, social exclusion, and unfavorable treatment in salary increase and payment.

MoEYS is supposed to revise school curriculums every 5 years. The ministry made a first 5-year revision, but purely through an internal review without any consultation from practicing teachers. The revision was based on ministry officials’ judgment of what was best for teachers and students, not on the real situation of children and experiences of teachers. The revised curriculum invariably arrived in the schools 3 months late, after the new school year had started. As teachers knew nothing of the lessons in the revised curriculum, they continued with their usual way of teaching, using exactly the same teacher-centered approach. There was no change at all in the first year after the revised curriculum was issued.<sup>12</sup>

However, MoEYS orientated teachers on the new curriculum 3 months after the school year started. Teachers said the orientation was superficial and insufficient. Ministry officials were the “orientation trainers,” not practicing teachers, so the new student-centered approach was based on little or no practical experience.

MoEYS has national and provincial inspectors who visit schools and assess all aspects of operations, including classroom teaching, to maintain standards. However, salaries of inspec-

tors are very low, and their professionalism and living conditions are the same as teachers.’

### The School and Teaching/Learning Materials

The government has built and restored school buildings in some areas, commonly in towns, but the national shortage remains severe. Ordinary people used to living under the control of the ruling party cannot see the difference between “state provision” and “gifts” from the ruling party. This lack of comprehension has been exploited to win votes.<sup>13</sup>

In poor rural areas, children take turns learning in classrooms with broken tables and chairs.<sup>14</sup> Schools have no libraries. The children’s only source of information is “what my teachers say.” Teachers go to class with chalk and a few books supplied by MoEYS.<sup>15</sup> Secondary schools are few and too far away for many students, which is the major reason for the low attendance of girls, who traditionally are expected to stay at home with their parents. (Boys may board out.)

In cities, especially Phnom Penh, the shortage of classrooms is severe. Some classes have as many as 123 children. The average size of each class is 45. The school library, if one exists, functions not as a learning resource center but as a storehouse where books are kept away from children. The only teaching materials are usually a marker pen and white board, or chalk and blackboard. Some aids used to teach mathematics are gambling cards and wheels of fortune, which have considerable social and personal consequences. Teachers and students enjoy gambling for money after class, although they usually gamble separately. Gambling has contributed to truancy.

This kind of school environment accustoms children to antisocial behavior and influences, giving rise to disorder, violence, and gangs.

### Students and Their Learning

In a healthy education system, learning and teaching make up a two-way communication

process. In Cambodia, education is a one-way communication process, from teachers to students. MoEYS prescribes the “student-centered approach.” It appears in manuals and in various workshops organized by the ministry and other organizations. However, MoEYS does not provide the means to implement the approach, so the teachers have little choice but to stick to their usual approach. If a true learner-centered model is applied, class size would have to be reduced, which would affect teachers’ income from unofficial charges. Quantity means income, quality means poverty.

Given the corruption in the school system, students do not need to attend school regularly as required by law. They can buy their school attendance and examination marks with money. Some parents believe that their child is attending school only to discover that he or she has not been attending classes and has been dropped from the list of examinees. Some children have become gang leaders, and with their followers indulge in substance abuse, robbery, prostitution, theft, and even homicide.<sup>16</sup>

Often, the parents of such children are top officials or powerful people. Teachers are intimidated and too afraid to deal with these problems. Children thus do not seek their teachers’ help to settle their differences, resorting instead to violence, and the bullies usually get their way.

Schools, although intended to fashion society in positive ways, are microcosms of society.<sup>17</sup> Some students are prepared to resort to physical violence against their teachers to get what they want. At times school discipline and other requirements are impossible to enforce. In early 2002, a teacher in Wat Koh school was hit on the head from behind and rushed to hospital. He was unconscious for days. The students who hit him have disappeared and have not been apprehended.

Teachers are not supposed to punish students physically, but do. Many children feel that “they should be beaten by a teacher for making a mistake.”<sup>18</sup> Human rights violations, therefore, take place in schools.

School children are introduced to bribery on their first school day, and they participate in it throughout their school life. Bribery is as much a part of everyday school activities as assembly and attendance registration. Students have little choice but to pay their teachers daily for their extra-class courses and lesson papers, school attendance, forgiveness, examination marks, certificates of completion. After leaving school, many go on to pay for a good position in government. In return, the people have to pay them back. This system perpetuates the harm done to the children of poor families and to those who live in remote areas, who are the first to be excluded from the education system. They grow up less qualified, and end up in low-income jobs or cannot find jobs at all. Their children are caught in this vicious cycle.

Some children who cannot afford to pay find other ways to please teachers by working for them, or allowing themselves to be exploited in some other way. Children who cannot pay fine are scorned and ostracized, most likely to be badly treated by teachers, and least likely to be protected from abusive classmates. Schools perpetuate a cycle where the powerful abuse the weak and vulnerable. The most basic human right—equality—is absent. Neither the bully nor the bullied respect human rights.

### Human Rights and Teaching

Human rights have been incorporated into moral and civic education, which is taught 2 hours per week. On average, 20 lessons of the subject are taught each year but only 1 is purely about human rights. During that lesson, children have to pay for the lesson papers and to obtain their marks.

A survey of moral and civic education teachers in Phnom Penh shows that none has ever received guidance on how to teach human rights or to integrate human rights concepts into daily lessons. Those who have gained knowledge—usually from outside sources such as papers, books, radio, and TV—are reluctant

to protect human rights in their own classes, regarding human rights as “eye openers” that could lead students to challenge the status quo, and adversely affect teachers’ income.

The findings of this survey are surprising and disappointing but confirm similar conclusions made during an external evaluation of a major human rights teaching project in Cambodian schools from 1994–2001.<sup>19</sup> This project aimed to install human rights teaching in classes of 70,000 teachers in the country. Records show that 40,000 teachers had been trained by the time the project ceased in October 2001. Every school in Phnom Penh had teacher representatives attending two sessions. Every secondary school and teacher training institution in the country was covered. The project provided 5.5 days training, issued materials, and demonstrated how human rights could be taught as a subject on its own, or, given the congested timetable, integrated into several other subjects. Human rights education had been conducted on a large scale in communities throughout Cambodia, often in schools, by international and local human rights organizations over the past 10 years. This survey shows that few human rights messages have penetrated the education system despite determined efforts by many Cambodian human rights workers.

### Teachers and Human Rights

Under the Khmer Rouge, the intelligentsia were liquidated and few teachers survived. After the collapse of the Khmer Rouge in 1979, the new government called on everyone with reading, writing, or mathematical skills to teach in schools. These people were designated teachers after undergoing some training by MoEYS. Teaching techniques were mainly for indoctrination of children in the “right ideology,” Leninism, and Marxism. Many of those teachers now hold senior positions in the education system.

In teacher training centers, teachers were educated in child psychology, pedagogy, and

school administration. They were provided only one period of actual teaching practice in schools, usually the last 3 months of training. Then the training proceeded under the strict supervision of teachers in schools, complying with whatever official and unofficial customs applied. Training lasts 2 years for teachers in lower secondary school. Student teachers with a bachelor's degree need to study for just 1 year at the Faculty of Pedagogy to be able to teach in upper secondary schools.

New generations of teachers have joined the profession after completing a preparation process that has remained unchanged. They continue to be constantly reminded: "We are the engineers of the soul of Cambodia."

As soon as they set foot in the classrooms, they are asked to fill up forms for membership in the CPP. If they refuse, they are asked to explain why. They may not join any other party. If they do not join the ruling party or are found to have different political views, they are constantly investigated and marked "not to be promoted." The directors, all active members of the CPP, see to it that the teachers toe the party's political line.

The country's 70,000 teachers are divided into groups to make sure that they have the right political views.<sup>20</sup> When salaries are late<sup>21</sup> and teachers complain, they are noted as not having the "right view." When the salaries come, some 5,000–10,000 riels (up to US\$3) are missing every month. If the teachers ask why, they are told that it is for their "party membership" and for their savings scheme.<sup>22</sup> Deductions are made even from salaries of those who have not joined the scheme. Teachers are punished for disagreeing with the ruling party or school director. In January 2003, teachers went on strike for a pay increase and were threatened with dismissal or assignment to remote areas.

Teachers are not allowed to comment on or protest against plans released by the provincial department of MoEYS. If teachers challenge the plan, they are considered unpatriotic and threatened with disciplinary measures such as suspen-

sion, demotion to full-time school work,<sup>23</sup> assignment to remote areas, etc. They are also subject to constant criticism by leaders.

### Conclusion

Human rights teaching now integrates communist dictatorial values into new authoritarian values under the pretext of democracy. The government should be committed to ensure that human rights is properly taught and practiced in schools and communities. Teachers should be conscientious and professional. Payment of unofficial fees by children degrades the educational process and the quality of learning.

An indication of the sorry state of education was the recent violence committed by new graduates at the end of January 2003, when mobs of youths ran wild in Phnom Penh, ransacking and torching the Thai Embassy and many Thai businesses. Ten years of peace, economic development, and concerted efforts by many Cambodians and international partners have yet to produce education and teaching services that can give the nation's children the kind of schooling that respects human rights.

### Additional Remarks and Recommendations by John Lowrie

Those of us who live and work among ordinary Cambodians have our own stories to endorse Yi Dara's and Pheng Horn's findings. I know of one school where the enterprising school staff, in order to supplement their income, operate a "beer garden" adjacent to their school. This is the new name now favored in place of "karaoke bars" after Prime Minister Hun Sen ordered their closure in 2002. Some people stick to the term "brothel." That may be extreme.

Although all teachers suffer from the demotivating factors described so lucidly by the authors, equally and more typically perhaps, we do see very dedicated teachers making enormous efforts in their classrooms. One group

that impressed me consisted of former Khmer Rouge teachers. They were by their own volition once hard-line and indoctrinated. They had no formal teacher training. Their first experience of it was in teaching human rights. Somehow what they learned in just a few days kindled a realization that the ideology they had followed for decades was wrong. Most had instinctively known that it was wrong, but had no means to express it in the over-powering situation that controlled them. Dissent constituted disloyalty and meant death. Once that control was removed, and they were introduced to enlightened universal human rights standards, heart-felt chords were struck, and they took to the new situation with gusto. This example shows the power of good training, well conducted, by inspirational teachers.

This gives us one more lesson for teachers and trainers entrusted with teaching human rights. The lesson applies not just to teachers of school students but also to all human rights education trainers. Every one of them must truly believe in human rights, and abide by them, to “ignite the special spark” that only teachers and few other professionals encounter in their careers. I refer to that special moment and feeling when the teacher knows he or she has witnessed in their protégées a real and lasting transformation in their attitudes, knowledge, or skills. This happens in Cambodia but not as frequently as it could. Why not? One reason is that recruitment of teachers to the profession and selection of teachers for promotion or for in-service training is not based on vocational commitment, or merit, or some other objective assessment of suitability. Too often family connections or political party loyalty count more, and in some cases where international donors pay allowances, participation is only to receive money. Much more care needs to be taken. Education and training is an expensive investment. The right people should be selected to be teachers and human rights educators. When that does not happen, the real loss is never known. No one ever knows how good the per-

sons not selected would have been. But what we do know is that the best teachers, in whatever subject, succeed consistently.

The third lesson must therefore be “quality and not quantity.” Cambodia’s main effort to install human rights teaching, mentioned above, for all 70,000 teachers may have been over-ambitious. The project also aimed to instill it in the 26 teacher training institutions so that all 5,500 newly qualifying teachers every year would be suitably equipped from the start of their teaching careers. Certainly all teachers require basic human rights knowledge, but the project ceased suddenly in October 2001.<sup>24</sup> US\$2 million from more than a dozen international donors had been spent over 8 eight years; 40,000 teachers from every secondary school and half the primary schools had been trained. Yet Yahan Chin barely makes a mention of it, and one independent evaluation in 2000 found little evidence of teachers putting it into practice.<sup>25</sup> Why did a well-intentioned, well-conceived project that had demonstrated good results, as mentioned above, fail? We may never know the full reasons but four are apparent, giving us four more lessons:

- Major changes in concept or scale of activity must command widespread support in all echelons. From the top minister to the novice teacher in his or her first year, there must be a common understanding and a shared commitment. In a politically polarized government and country like Cambodia, the change must transcend political differences.<sup>26</sup> The major human rights initiative described above only enjoyed partial support. Despite personal endorsement of ministers and signed protocols, not all the key educationalists were committed to a national curriculum model that incorporates what the teachers were being introduced to.
- Training that seeks to introduce major change cannot succeed in one-off courses of 5–6 days without a planned series of follow-up and reinforcement sessions (plus

the creation of the cadre of teachers so disposed to the subject of human rights). If 5–6 days is the finite time available within the busy academic calendar, then fewer subjects should be included, and much greater emphasis placed on practice and demonstration. The original design officially approved by MoEYS and donors was up to 40 teachers per session, 3 days theory, 2 days practice with fellow participants, and only a half-day of practice students by the “best” one or two “laureates.”

- Feedback from human rights training participants must be respected and acted upon. An almost-universal criticism from trainees undergoing human rights courses offered by several organizations was “lack of time to assimilate concepts and apply them in practice.” Three days, even 5.5 days of the major program described, are just not enough. Quality time needs to be given through workable trainer-trainee ratios for encouragement, coaching, and mentoring. Training and practice should take place wherever possible in the trainees’ school or a place most similar to it.
- Plans to replicate skills and concepts on a much larger scale must be carefully planned and implemented. “Cascade” methods should be avoided except for simple messages, and even then those must be framed in ways to minimize dilution. Cambodia is a conservative country. The natural tendency is to stick to what is familiar and not to attract attention by being radically different. Only 1–3 teachers per school attended the human rights training, often through a cluster scheme that groups schools. Therefore, all the teachers returned after their training as small minorities among school teaching staff for whom change, however desirable, was not possible. Many, if not most, head teachers had not participated in the same training. This factor, combined with the general

demotivating ones reported by Yi Dara and Pheng Horn, almost certainly explains the lack of impact not only of human rights teaching but also of student-centered learning.

Those general demotivating factors, stemming from poor pay, can only be removed by a substantial increase in the official salaries of teachers. Therefore government efforts must continue to increase national revenue by improved collection of income and countering corruption, and to devote more of the national budget to education. Realistically that will take years to bring the tenfold increase needed in the salaries budget. More pragmatic and immediate would be to regulate official charges now being collected, with proper mechanisms for assessing “ability to pay” to protect the poor and to secure actual payment from senior people whose position normally allows them to escape such obligations.

This change would not only do much to tackle the salaries issue but would also restore the ethical basis that should be the cornerstone of the school in the community and of the teacher in front of the class. Buddhist and other religious principles help form this ethical basis but they are insufficient. A substantial increase in salary must be accompanied by personal acceptance of a new professional code of ethics for teachers and administrators, with strict enforcement and penalties for noncompliance. Most teachers are conscientious. They would welcome such a move.

To conclude, much more careful thought needs to be given to the process of managing change. Sometimes pressures from too many sources force too many changes. Widespread change to be effective can only be incremental. Short-cuts and quick fixes do not normally yield long-lasting results. Government and donors must strive to prioritize change. They must determine the relative benefits of each change, how easily they can be assimilated, how best to



proceed and when, stage by stage. The more fundamental the change—such as bringing universal human rights into a society bereft of them—the more time and effort will be needed.

## Endnotes

1. The riel was at 3,900 per US\$1 during the survey.
2. Based on the payroll of teachers as provided by a finance officer of a school in Phnom Penh. The new payroll for teachers starting 2003 is 113,000 riels (around US\$29) for primary school teachers, 154,000 riels (around US\$37) for lower secondary school teachers, and 190,500 riels (around US\$49) for upper secondary school teachers. This is the maximum amount paid to teachers who have been long in the service and are effective in their job. Officials at the level of Provincial Governor are paid 750,000 riels (around US\$192) per month, based on the provincial payroll provided by a Governor.
3. This figure compares with the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report (HDR) showing the median income per capita of US\$160 per month. Cambodia ranks 137th on the HDR index.
4. Center for Social Development, *Corruption in Cambodia* (Phnom Penh, 1999).
5. Khmer Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Organization (KHRACO), “*Rights to Education and Culture*” (Phnom Penh, 2001) p. 23.
6. In extra-classes, teachers explain lessons to children in great detail, while in official classes, the teachers rush through the lessons.
7. School evaluation is made by the teacher responsible for teaching a class for the whole school year and is based on three grounds:
  - (a) *Academic result*: examination results, homework, assignments, handwriting, and decoration of student’s writing book.
  - (b) *Social morality*: school attendance, relationship with other children and teachers, compliance with school disciplines, social interaction, etc.
  - (c) *Health and hygiene*: clean hands, clean clothes, clean book, clean body, few absences.
8. For example, Circular No. 1820 issued on 3 July 2001.

9. A teacher in Cambodia is a *khruu*, derived from the Indian *guru*, and implies the same master-pupil relationship. Hence, the classical teacher-student relationship is one in which the teacher teaches and the pupil absorbs unquestioningly.

10. The former Communist Party was renamed Cambodian People’s Party. Most international observers maintain that the party never relinquished control even under the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) following the 1991 Paris Peace Accords, nor after the party lost the 1993 elections to the royalist party National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia (known by its French acronym FUNCINPEC). The hold at the local level is even more marked, with 100% appointed commune-level officials, most of whom retained their posts after the February 2002 elections, when only a handful of the 1,621 commune councils was won by opposition parties.

11. Students attend extra-class lessons mainly to persuade their teachers not to give them bad marks in official classes. If a teacher is no longer responsible for teaching in official class, the students immediately lose interest in going to extra-classes.

12. The information was based on a survey among teachers in secondary schools: Tek La-Ok lower secondary school, Indra Devi upper secondary school, Wat Koh high school, and Santomok high school in Phnom Penh. As usual, the reforms first started in the capital and spread down to the provinces.

13. For example, the most common name given to schools in Cambodia is that of Prime Minister Hun Sen, who is personally associated with over 300 projects.

14. The information was given by teachers in Chamkar Andaung village, Kampong Thom province. Based on the survey, teachers claimed that other remote areas like theirs have the same school conditions.

15. MoEYS has produced standard textbooks, the *Student’s Book and the Teacher’s Manual* but the teacher’s manual normally arrives 4–5 months after the new school year begins.

16. “*Youth attitudes about gangs, violence, drugs and theft*,” by Gender and Development NGO (Phnom Penh, 2002).

17. *King’s Monthly Bulletin*: “In today’s Cambodia, the God of Impunity reigns side by side with the King of

Corruption,” per King Norodom Sihanouk, the Royal Palace, Phnom Penh, March 1999. See also “Impunity in Cambodia” by Adhoc, Licadho and Human Rights Watch (Phnom Penh, 1999).

18. Tear Fund NGO Report, “*Comparing adults and children’s perceptions of child abuse in Cambodia*” by Glen Miles (Phnom Penh, November 2002).

19. Report 32, “Evaluation of visions, relevance, role, organizational development and impact of human rights and democracy organizations in Cambodia,” by Experts for Community Research, commissioned by Swedish International Development Agency [SIDA], (Phnom Penh, 2000). See also Report 36, “Impact of Human Rights Activities in Cambodia,” by Experts for Community Research, commissioned by Swedish International Development Agency [SIDA], (Phnom Penh, 2000).

20. Teachers said that the “right political view” is the political line of the ruling party.

21. Besides the small proportion of the national budget accorded to education (18.2%), the nongovernmental organization (NGO) community reported to the government and the international donor community that disbursements from the Ministry of Finance are usually late and can be less than allocated. See “NGO Statement to

the 2002 Donors’ Consultative Group Meeting,” Cooperation Committee for Cambodia [CCC] (Phnom Penh, 2002) pages 24–26.

22. All teachers are required to pay for this scheme if they are members of the Association of Education Staff. When the teacher dies, his or her family will be given 2.5 million riels (US\$641).

23. If a teacher is found disobedient or suspected of activity with political parties other than the ruling party, he or she is assigned to work as a school worker, doing gardening, gate keeping, etc. for 8 hours a day. He or she cannot have other jobs to get more income. If a teacher is allowed to teach in class, he or she only works 2.0–2.5 hours per day. This is a traumatic and effective disciplinary measure.

24. The sponsoring NGO concerned had internal management problems that led to a suspension of operations.

25. Report 32, “*Evaluation of visions, relevance, role, organizational development and impact of human rights and democracy organizations in Cambodia*,” op cit.

26. Cambodia has a coalition government of two ruling parties, with one official opposition. Cross-party cooperation is still in its infancy.