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YOUTH RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ORGANIZATION
YRDP

Response to the Call for Contribution of Ideas of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Court of Cambodia (ECCC) Residual Functions Related to Victims.

Since 1992 YRDP is engaged in promoting peace and justice and sustainable development. Through its project “Youth Engagement in Historical Learning for Peace and Justice” (2007-present), YRDP inspires youth to learn about the Khmer Rouge history through in-house courses and exposure to mass-killing sites while using innovative learning methodologies. Learning about Cambodian history in real-life settings, allows the youth to realize and acknowledge past atrocities and initiates a deep reflection process about the root causes of the conflict. Younger generations then explore avenues to prevent recurrence, acquire critical thinking skills and reflect on their leadership styles.

Learning about Khmer Rouge history naturally leads the youth to question the impact of past events on their families and communities therefore, YRDP’s curricula equip the youth with tools and skills to understand trauma, basic counselling and deep listening to support healing through intergenerational dialogues. This cathartic process strengthens parents-children’s relations and the family dynamics in its entirety.

Besides learning, YRDP also aims at breaking the fear of the young generation to be politically and societally engaged. YRDP wants to give youth the possibilities to actively engage in the country’s process of reconciliation through trainings with youth’s transfer projects, radio talks-show and other critical reflection activities, the organization tackles topics like pluralism, nationalism, stereotypes, and prejudice. Learning through using critical thinking is used to reflect on nowadays socio-political contexts so that youth have the chance to critically rethink and draw the most important lessons from history to promote peace and reconciliation in current Cambodian society.

Against this background and considering the ECCC winding down operations, a residual function that warrants attention to strengthen socio-economic foundation, is the dissemination of information on transitional justice mechanism, its legal proceedings and its achievements to the younger generations. Using the ECCC and the Learning Documentation Center (LDC) as learning platforms for students will be essential to create impactful and holistic peace education courses, highlighting Cambodia’s commitment to peacebuilding and bringing justice to the Cambodian people. Equally, students’ exposure to the ECCC and the LDC will ensure the wider public’s access to archives. This is a critical residual function to foster wholesome reconciliation and reconstruction.

YRDP stands ready to support the dissemination of the ECCC’s work, its legacy and residual functions for the benefice of the victims, survivors and their descendants. Through the residual functions, the ECCC has the opportunity to strengthen cooperation and involvement of the next generation of Cambodian leaders who will inherit the ECCC’s legacy, and ultimately, consolidate reconciliation efforts.

Proposed activities 2022 to 2026

- Provide in house and on-site training on Khmer Rouge History and Reconciliation
- Exposure Trip to Anglong Veng
- Exposure Trip to the ECCC
- Exposure and research to the LDC
- Community Dialogue with the Khmer Rouge Survivors for Reconciliation and Peace
- Truth-Telling: Creative Family Exhibition
- Inter-generational Dialogue on Dealing with the Past
- Radio Talk show on Concerning Issues (Break the Silence)