



Survey finds increased confidence in tribunal
Kong Sotharith
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An increasing number of Cambodians in an ongoing survey say they have more faith in the UN-backed Khmer Rouge tribunal, according to new data released Thursday.

According to the authors of a survey by the Human Rights Center of the University of California Berkeley, respondents showed a “positive trend” in their belief in the tribunal.

The UN-backed tribunal, which is heading toward its second trial, of four Khmer Rouge leaders, was designed in part to bring national healing to the trauma of the regime.

But the court has come under increased criticism of political interference and a lack of funding.

However, the Human Rights Center survey, conducted in December 2010 across 125 communes nationwide, found that an increasing number of Cambodians have confidence in the court.

The authors noted that in 2008, in its first survey, only about 2 percent of respondents said they believed the court would provide any justice to Khmer Rouge leaders. After the court’s first successful trial, of torture chief Duch, that number rose to 37 percent.

About 25 percent said the process will help relieve the pain and suffering of victims, compared to 9 percent who disagreed.

“Trust seems to be increasing,” although with some caveats, said Patrick Vinck, a researcher for the Human Rights Center, said Wednesday.

“It’s still, kind of, ‘Well, I trust them, but I do think they take bribes,’” he added, summarizing the findings of the survey. “But the trend is a positive trend.”