

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING PROGRAM 2012 REPORT

equitas
Centre pour l'éducation aux droits humains
Centre for Human Rights Education

College John Abbott, Saint-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec, Canada
June 3-22 June 2012



33rd International Human Rights
Training Program



33e Programme international de
formation aux droits humains

Date: 03 – 22 June 2012

Venue: College John Abbott, Quebec; Canada

Report produced by: Edith January-Musiringofa

Organisation: United Children of Africa (UNICA)



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The IH RTP was a very educative program and appreciation goes to the Equitas family for the provision of the interactive and very informative sessions. My heartfelt gratitude goes to CIDA for the support they rendered to me to be able to participate in the Training Program. Your support will go a long way in shaping my future and to actively advocate for social change. I greatly appreciate your support and assistance that you sow in me.

Many thanks to United Children of Africa for the opportunity they granted me by allowing to release me to attend this great opportunity. I appreciate it and look forward to planting a seed of change within my community and the world at large.



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

INTRODUCTION:

The International Human Rights Training Program brought together approximately 126 participants from all over the world. Participants were divided into eight groups of approximately 15 members for most of the program. The Program comprised two French and six English language speaking groups. Participants were divided according to professional background, types of organizations and groups were made in such a way that members from the same country of origin would be in different groups in order to promote diversity in all the groups. Each group had a facilitator and other groups had a facilitator and a co-facilitator, the facilitators were there to give guidance and to support the IH RTP. The main method which was used during the entire program was the participatory approach method where participants were involved in the establishment of activities, working through the case-studies and above all giving feedback on the improvement of the program.

In certain instances participants were brought together to share their experiences and to share what they had learnt during the IH RTP. This also promoted networking amongst participants.

The entire program was divided into 8 streams. The idea of streams was adopted in order for participants to easily follow the participatory approach system used by Equitas. The streams were divided as follows:

Stream 1: **INTRODUCTIONS**

Stream 2: **STARTING FROM WHERE WE ARE**

Stream 3: **BUILDING A CULTURE OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

Stream 4: **SEEKING COMMON GROUND**

Stream 5: **THE GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT**

Stream 6: **HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS AND MECHANISMS**

Stream 7: **EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION IN HRE**

Stream 8 : **HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING AND ADVOCACY**



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS:

IHRTTP	International Human Rights Training Programme
HR	Human Rights
HRE	Human Rights Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child.
UPR	Universal Periodic Review.



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

STREAM 1 - INTRODUCTION:

On the 1st Stream, participants got to know each other better and to have an understanding on what each person is doing in their respective countries and their understanding on Human Rights issues. Exercises were done as a way of having a clearer picture of each other. After the exercises, pictures which entailed the participant's name, country of origin and what they do in their country were posted on the "wall of Fame" in the Participants' Lounge.



Fig 1: "Wall of Fame"

During the 1st stream, participants learnt about how to build effective group dynamics, conflict management within groups and identification of different needs and offers that participants had. This was done at the beginning of the Training program considering that participants were all from different backgrounds, had differences on religion, races e.t.c and chances of conflicts arising were very high. The main aim of that was to equip participants with best possible ways of dealing with conflicts.

Stream 1 was also a platform for participants to have a broader understanding of what the IH RTP entailed. Participants were introduced to the Learning Spiral and the overview of the Program design by Equitas. Participants also had an appreciation of the Life cycle of groups (4 stages of Groups development) which are:

1. **Forming Stage:** the production of a group where individuals will be having no / little knowledge about the core business of the group. On this stage, each individual has their own agenda and interest.
2. **Storming Stage:** individuals begin to appreciate each other's efforts, personal values and principles are challenged, roles and responsibilities are assumed and/or rejected, and the group's objectives and way of working together are defined.



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

3. **Norming Stage:** the group has settled down and developed a clear identity. Members have begun to understand their roles in relation to one another and establish a shared vision or goal.
4. **Performing Stage:** norms have been established and the group is ready to focus on output. It is in this phase that they work most effectively as a group. The confidence level of the group has reached the point where they are willing to take significant risks and try out new ideas on their own.

Participants shared their understanding on what they understood about the Participatory approach system. This system is fundamental in the Equitas Program since all programs use it in the implementation of their activities and work. The participatory approach in Human Rights Education promotes and values the sharing of knowledge and experiences and encourages critical reflection on others' beliefs and values. It promotes experience sharing and builds a spirit of learning from each other compared to the expert model where the expert "knows-it-all". As Human Rights Educators, it is always ideal to design simple tools which are easy to understand and follow e.g the Learning Spiral which involves everyone's input in a program of activity.

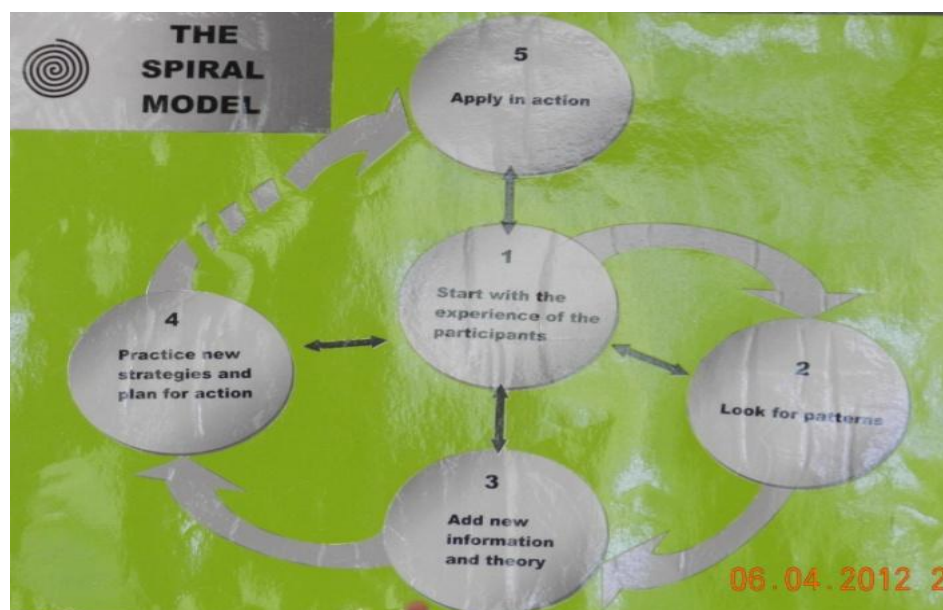


Fig 2: The Participatory Approach used by Equitas has three pillars which are:

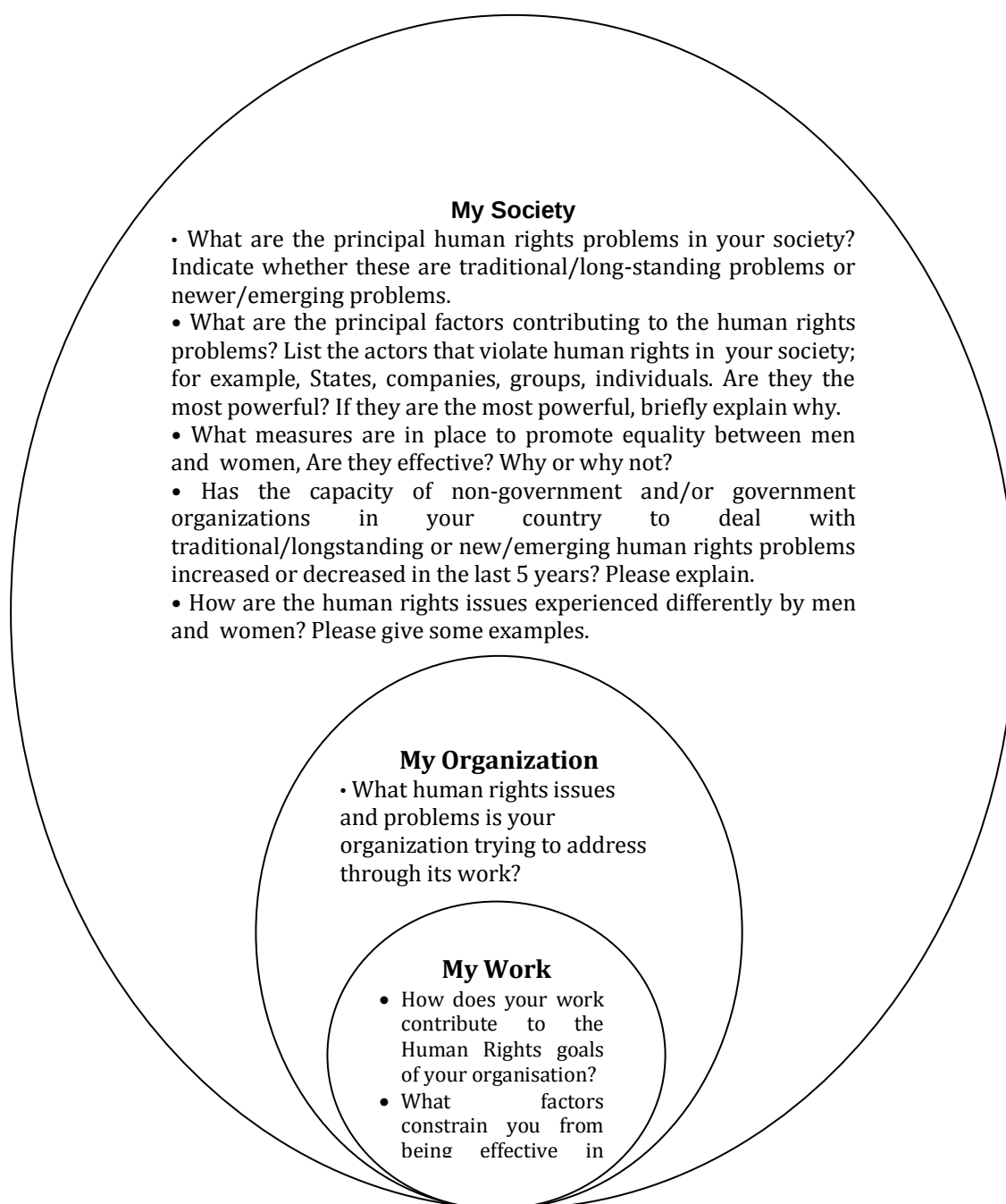
- Starting with the participants' experience
- Critically analyzing and reflecting
- Developing strategies for action



STREAM 2 – STARTING FROM WHERE WE ARE:

In stream 2, participants had an overview of Human rights issues in their communities, organisations and work environments. Participants had discussions on many issues including the global factors that favour / limit Human rights in our communities and the impact on human rights in our communities. After the discussions, participants deliberated on the human rights strategies that should be adopted by our communities in order to counter or limit the negative impacts of HR and the strategies that can help reinforce the positive ones. Participants had a chance of analysing the global context of human rights and to identify the global spheres of influence. The following diagram captures some of the questions which were debated on by participants and the facilitators.

Fig 3:



STREAM 3- BUILDING A CULTURE OF HUMAN RIGHTS:

Stream 3 entailed Human rights principles and concepts where HR concepts were defined and participants had a deeper knowledge and understanding on Human rights issues and the underlying principles of Human rights. The stream also focused on mainstreaming of gender issues in our programs and operations. The stream brought out the role that gender issues bring out change in our communities in the attainment of social change. Social change is derived from an individual despite of being male or female. The gender session gave some clarification of what is meant by gender since in most cases many people assume that gender is about females whereas gender is about the roles and responsibilities related to men and women.

The stream also highlighted the need for our organisations to make use of the systems approach in Human Rights Education. Furthermore, participants had a chance to discuss the role that Human Rights Educators play in the attainment of social change and the challenges or setbacks that HRE face.

STREAM 4 – SEEKING COMMON GROUND

In Stream 4, participants had exercises on construction of webs of connections.

STREAM 5 – THE GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT:

In stream 5 participants were introduced to the Five Human Rights Instruments and Mechanisms which are as follows:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- (ICCPR)International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural
- Rights (ICESCR)Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of
- Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

To increase the understanding of participants on the instruments and mechanisms, participants were given an assignment of working on each of the instrument and present after the group work e.g. the group which focused on the Universal Periodic Review looked on the following:

1. What is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)?
2. What are the objectives of the UPR?



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

3. How does the UPR process work?

- *UPR cycle of reviews and number of States reviewed each year*
- *Who conducts the State review*
- *How the reviews are conducted*
- *Human rights obligations addressed by the review*
- *Documents that form the basis for the review*

4) What is the outcome of the review?

5) What is the duty of the State regarding the outcome of the UPR?

6) How can different stakeholders engage with the UPR mechanism? (i.e., NGOs, grassroots organizations and National Human Rights Institutions)

Stream 5 also focused on the different human rights education methods and techniques that are used by Human rights educators in applying human rights work. We also had an opportunity of analysing the effectiveness of the methods and techniques which were used in the past through use of case studies.

Participants and facilitators identified and discussed the barriers that Human Rights Defenders / Educators face in their communities which included brutality from the police officers, ignorance from the communities etc. From the experience sharing session, the outcome indicated that almost all human rights defenders face the same challenges in their communities though they are working on different strategies of addressing them.

STREAM 6 – HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS AND MECHANISMS:

In stream 6, participants were given different tasks according to the topic in discussion. At the end of the stream all participants were expected to be able to define educational evaluation in the context of human rights. Participants were also introduced to the cycle of continuous improvement which is an evaluation model. Most participants were familiar to this model and it was great to note that participants could follow and explain the stages involved in the model. The cycle involves different stages which include Planning, development, implementation and the follow up process which are outlined in the diagram below. The Planning stage is the beginning stage where people bring up different ideas and inputs for the process to start, then people will start or begin the project in the development stage, in the implementation stage, practical projects begin to be practised and in the follow-up stage, members will be evaluating their work looking at the impacts and looking critically if there are changes which need to be made and whether the project is sustainable or not. This cycle is good when used effectively as it helps projects to be more sustainable and easy to follow.



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

Fig 4: *Cycle of Continuous Improvement:*



In stream 6, participants were tasked to define results in Human Rights Education and were afterwards presented with an opportunity to set objectives deriving them from the results they wanted to achieve and also to identify how objective, indicators, research can lead to the attainment of good results. Participants also had an overview of using different evaluation techniques / methods in order to improve their projects.



STREAM 7 & 8 - HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING AND ADVOCACY, EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION IN HRE:

In stream 7, participants learnt on how HRE leads to the attainment of social change. A presentation was made by a resource person who gave an introduction to a framework for HRE and action. Participants also worked on the culture of the Human rights tree observing the different roles that is played by different stakeholders in the attainment of social change.

Fig 5: *Culture of Human Rights Tree*



In stream 8, participants had a better understanding of how Open space technology can be used as a tool in HRE work. Introduction to different ways of disseminating information e.g. short-messaging, use of social media like facebook, twitter e.t.c in order to reach out to many people were also shared amongst participants. The presenter also explored the risks that HRE face when using the tools as some are hacked. Like any other area in development work, the HRE sector seems more risky and requires people with focus and up to date with current affairs and technology.



Stream 7 and 8 also encompassed advocacy tools that HRE can use in their work and participants were given tasks of coming up with different strategies that they can use in advocating for what they envisage to see. Participants in their respective groups also had a chance of designing advocacy campaigns, it was not easy to come up with the issues to be addressed since participants were from different backgrounds but at the end of the day groups managed to come up with issues to be addressed. After creation of the campaign, participants learnt about the effectiveness of using music (songs) as a tool for advocacy. All groups with help from a group of Canadian grannies managed to identify issues and how they can use music in addressing those challenges.

Fig 6: *Canadian oldies advocating for women's rights through music.*



One of the most interesting exercises was when groups exchanged their key learning from the whole of the IH RTP using different methods of finding out what other groups learnt. The exercise was very interactive since almost all groups used different models to define and outline what they had attained from the program.

Afterwards, all participants were left to work on their individual plans which is an instrument that is used by the Equitas to monitor progress and how participants will deliver what they learnt from the IH RTP in their countries. The Equitas staff will be following up on individuals' work on the progress being made.



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

CONCLUSION:

The International Human Rights Training Programme is an ideal way for Human Rights Activists around the world to interact and share experiences and strategies that work. It was thrilling to note the different cultural diversity from different country representatives yet Human Rights issues or problems seemed universal. The participatory approach used by IH RTP – Equitas is an ideal way of probing for solutions that work and improves the spirit of ownership of such strategies. It is indeed a democratic way of gathering views of people viewing that the programme mainly looked at issues of Human Rights.

Although participants were all from different backgrounds which could have caused eruption of disputes, the sessions on group dynamics silenced the differences between participants by showing that some issues come up as a result of different levels within the group dynamics scale. Viewing the magnitude of the programme and size of the group, the session was of key importance.

KEY OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- There is need for NGOs to contribute to the Universal Periodic Reviews through consultations and formations of consortiums.
- There is need for the IH RTP participants to continue with information exchange and also to come up with joint-projects to be implemented in the country.
- There is need for formation of the Southern Africa regional network so that the program can reach out to many people.
- Through the existing donor partners such as CIDA in Zimbabwe, there is need to establish a network of alumni participants that will champion Human Rights Activities and operate with one voice. National low budget activities and or annual forums could be a starting point.
- A deliberate focus on women, children and youth could also be a sustainable way of dealing with Human Rights issues as these are the most affected as well as the back bone of the future economy. Empowered women, children and youth build an empowered nation.



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international
