



Equitas is a global leader in human rights education.  
For over 45 years we've been equipping human rights educators  
and the communities they serve to build a global culture of human rights  
through our transformative human rights education programs.

founded 1967 • head office Montreal • employees 30 • board members 16 • operating budget \$3.9 million (2014-2015)

**mission** - Equitas works for the advancement of equality, social justice and respect for human rights in Canada and around the world through transformative human rights education programs. We equip local human rights defenders and educators to build more inclusive communities and to contribute to social and economic development goals through democratic participation.

**vision** - Our innovative programs equip organizations and the communities they serve to build a global culture of human rights.

**values** - Innovation, integrity, focus and direction, partnership, trust and mutual respect

## Our Programs

### Children and Youth

#### *Play it Fair!*

Helps children aged 6 –12 develop a deeper understanding of human rights values, learn new skills for conflict resolution using games and interactive activities – Provides practical tools to address bullying, racism and exclusion – In use in summer camps and after-school programs in 19 communities across Canada: Victoria, Surrey, Saanich, Kenora, Lillooet, Prince George, Vancouver, Cree Norway House, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Halifax, Charlottetown, Summerside, Moncton, Dieppe, Fredericton, St John's.

#### *Impact of Play it Fair!*

Since 2004, 13,000 camp personnel have been trained in the use of the toolkit. Children have deepened their understanding of the importance of respecting human rights and cultural diversity in 430 sites across Canada. The toolkit has been used with over 500,000 children.

#### *Play it Fair! international*

The program has been successfully implemented by organizations in Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Indonesia, Haiti and Algeria.

#### *Speaking Rights*

A program to equip youth aged 12 -18 to participate in a multicultural society and reinforce human rights values, to understand their human rights and responsibilities and make change in their communities – Builds on our *Play it Fair!* experience and partnerships – Piloted in 2009 and in use by 100 organizations in Montreal, Vancouver, Victoria, Surrey, Lillooet, Chilliwack – Adapted for use in Winnipeg in 25 youth centres – More than 260 youth workers have been trained nationally – over 5,000 youths have been reached.

#### *Young Women, Young Leaders (YWYL):*

YWYL supports community action projects, led by young women that address issues that most affect them in their daily lives, with the collaboration of Equitas and a strong network of community organizations, mentors, municipal leaders and institutional partners. YWYL creates spaces for meaningful dialogue between young women, female role-models in decision-making roles, civil society organizations, government bodies, and the media in order to dismantle barriers to young women's participation in community life.

### Human Rights Defenders

#### **Strengthening Human Rights Education Globally**

The **Strengthening Human Rights Education Globally** program equips educators and their organizations with the skills and knowledge to empower groups to claim their rights and improve the lives of individuals and their communities.

Activities include:

**The International Human Rights Training Program** – a 3-week program held annually in Montreal, Canada, since 1980. Brings together annually over 100 human rights defenders from over 50 countries.

**Advanced** human rights education training workshops in Africa, Haiti and Latin America

**National and sub-regional** human rights training sessions

**Local initiatives** and ongoing support aimed at empowering marginalized individuals and their

communities to improve their living conditions and respect of human rights for all.

Over 3,500 alumni and their organizations are empowering individuals, engaging communities, enhancing participation and quality of life at community, regional and national levels.

**Examples of recent impact by Equitas alumni:**

**Burkina Faso** – Women take up non-traditional professions thus escaping the cycle of poverty and discrimination, and actively contribute to sustainable economic growth in their community

**Cuba** – Creation of the first educational movement for the rights of LGBT persons and action against homophobia

**Haiti** – Haitian youth promote and defend human rights in marginalized neighbourhoods and post-earthquake refugee camps

**Pakistan** – A program alumnus now organizes a yearly participatory program for human rights defenders and educators on Democracy and Human Rights modeled on his experience of Equitas programs.

**Iraq** – Local communities empowered to claim their rights and freedoms through the implementation of local human rights education projects

**Tanzania** – Women living in abject poverty increase their individual and working capital tenfold and actively participate in decision-making in their community

**Ukraine** – Community members in Sloviansk engage with local officials around issues of urban planning and related human rights violations

## The Equitas Community

The online Equitas Community, with more than 1800 registered members from across all regions – representing 98 countries – provides an important tool for enhancing the capacity of Equitas' alumni to design, implement and evaluate human rights education activities. The Equitas Community provides opportunities for networking, exchanges, sharing of lessons learned and on-line training.

## Middle East and North Africa

Since 2006, Equitas has been working with local human rights defenders and educators to increase respect for human rights in the region. The current program Mosharka ("participation") is a three-year project (2012-2015) that will build on the vital role played by youth in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and help integrate youth as more efficient and active participants in the advancement of democracy, equality and fundamental rights and freedoms in their societies. The project will help youth, including young women, understand and use human rights approaches to promote equality, diversity, non-discrimination and access to justice for young people. Mosharka activities will take place in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen. Through training and action-oriented activities involving at least 200 youth per country, the Mosharka Project will work towards developing a common and inclusive regional agenda for youth.

## Our Funders

### **Government Funding**

Canada's Office of Religious Freedom, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, European Union's European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights, Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion (Québec), Ministère des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie (Québec), Ministry of Justice (British-Columbia), Multiculturalism Program of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Status of Women Canada, Ville de Montréal, Ville de Victoriaville

### **Other**

AIMIA, Air Canada Foundation, American Jewish World Service, Arab Human Rights Fund, Brian Bronfman Family Foundation, Christian Aid, Ford Foundation, George Hogg Family Foundation, Ian Boeckh, M.K. Fund for Social Justice, ONU Femmes, Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, RBC Foundation, TD Bank Group, TELUS Montréal Community Board, TELUS Vancouver Community Board, True Sport Foundation, United Way of the Lower Mainland, BC, Victoria Foundation, Winnipeg Foundation and individual donors through our annual campaign and fundraising events

## Awards and Recognition

2014 - Rights and Freedoms Prize from the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse du Québec (CDPDJ) - 2014 - Children's Rights Trailblazer award from the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children for the Play it Fair! program - 2012 - Canadian Race Relations Foundation's Award of Excellence for engaging youth in the fight against racism – 2011 YMCA Peace Medal in the category of International Peace Initiatives – 2009 - Prix de la citoyenneté (Anne-Greenup) recognizing exceptional efforts in the struggle against racism in Quebec