GLOBAL WORKSHOP

EVALUATING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION FOR ENHANCED COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania
November 2011

REPORT

Introduction

Background

This workshop was a follow-up initiative to the International Human Rights Education (HRE) Evaluation Symposium - *HRE for Social Change: Evaluation Approaches and Methodologies* organized jointly by Equitas and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in Montreal in May 2007, and the joint Equitas/OHCHR publication, in March 2011, entitled "Evaluating Human Rights Training Activities – A Handbook for Human Rights Educators". It was organized as one of the activities under the Equitas Global Human Rights Education Program (GHREP). Partial financial support for the workshop was provided by CIDA through funding of the GHREP.

One of the key results of effective human rights education, as observed by Equitas, has been empowerment and participation of individuals to take action to defend and promote human rights. The achievement of results seems to be successful when knowledge, skills, and attitudes are transferred from individuals, to their organizations, and to the communities they work with, thereby strengthening respect for human rights and democratic development.

Goal

The goal of the workshop was to build a collective understanding of the impact of HRE at the level of individuals, their organizations or groups and the broader community and of effective means for capturing these impacts.

Objectives

The workshop provided an opportunity to:
- Develop a shared understanding of empowerment as a main result of HRE
- Identify changes resulting from empowerment and participation at the level of individuals, organizations/groups and the broader community in terms of greater respect for human rights
- Explore the connections between a participatory approach in HRE, empowerment and social change
- Develop indicators for measuring results of empowerment as connected with HRE a the level of the broader community

Participants

The workshop brought together 21 participants from 16 countries from Central and Latin America, Anglophone and Francophone Africa, and South and South East Asia who were human rights educators and experts, the majority of whom were alumni of Equitas human rights training activities. (For a list of participants, please see Annex A).

Methodology

The methodology for this workshop was based on a participatory approach to learning. A basic assumption in this approach is that much of the content comes from the participants and that the consultations serve as the framework for drawing out this content. A gender approach is integrated throughout the workshop in order to identify and analyse how certain

policies and practices to promote and protect human rights can affect men and women differently.

The workshop was divided into three sessions as follows:

1. *What is empowerment and what can it lead to?*: The participants examined empowerment and came to a shared understanding of what it looks like as well as what it can lead to in terms of positive changes. These potential changes were examined at three levels: that of the individual, that of organizations and that of the broader community;
2. *The links between HRE, empowerment and change*: The participants discussed the importance of changes resulting from empowerment through human rights education (HRE) in building respect for human rights and improved livelihoods for communities. An emphasis was placed on the links between the practice of HRE and the process of empowerment leading to social change;
3. *Measuring empowerment*. The participants identified key indicators for measuring empowerment as it relates to HRE, in particular at the community level.

Throughout the workshop, particular attention was paid to the empowerment of groups that are marginalized in society, whose voices fail to be heard, and who have limited knowledge of their rights and how to claim them.

1. What is empowerment and what can it lead to?

What is empowerment?

Through role play, participants identified common elements of empowerment which can be observed at the level of the individual, the organisation, and the broader community. Participants pointed in particular to the fact that empowerment led individuals belonging to marginalized groups to be more confident, be able to negotiate, have their voices heard, know their rights as well as to mobilise in order to access and claim them. Through empowerment, marginalized groups were also in a better position to participate through associations and networks, both individually and professionally.

What is the process of empowerment?

The participants discussed the common elements of empowerment, and highlighted the type of process that needs to be promoted in order to achieve empowerment, in particular of marginalized groups. Empowerment was identified as a dynamic rather than a static process which evolves and develops over time. It was mentioned that personal empowerment required an enabling environment which is conducive to being heard, to mobilizing for action, to engaging around strategies for transformation, to challenging power relations including with regard to gender roles in society, to understanding relationships between different sectors of society, as well as with and among marginalized groups, and to claiming rights.

With regard to what empowerment may lead to, participants mentioned that it represented a key element in a just and equitable society. Participants suggested that human rights

education could strengthen empowerment by increasing capabilities and opportunities, enhancing solidarity and the respect of and responsibility towards others, improve participation in public life and decision-making processes, and further the inclusion of marginalized groups. Over the longer term, empowerment could result in the structural change of institutions, improved local and national governance, and thereby contribute to sustainable human development.

The participants arrived at a shared understanding of empowerment which involves expanding people's capabilities and opportunities - through decision making and participation - and increasing people's choices and freedom of action in line with human rights values and standards, aimed towards achieving sustainable human development.

What can empowerment lead to?

In order to identify what empowerment could lead to, participants reviewed four impact stories which captured intermediate outcomes and impact of Equitas HRE activities. These had been drawn up by Equitas on the basis of information received from alumni of Equitas activities, within the framework of its Global Human Rights Education Program[1], in West and East Africa, Asia, and the CEE region. The subjects of the stories covered the following: raising awareness of the rights of women exercising non-traditional professions in Burkina Faso; bringing to light human rights violations of indigenous peoples in India; economic empowerment of rural women in Tanzania; and promoting the rights to information and participation in the Ukraine. They all highlighted the knowledge and skills transmitted to their organisations and the communities these worked with, the contribution of HRE to empowerment, and the role empowerment played in achieving results at the local level.

Through the review of the impact stories as connected to specific HRE activities, participants discussed what empowerment can lead to in terms of positive changes at the level of the individual, the organization/group and the broader community. They established some general types or categories of changes related to empowerment through HRE and pointed to ways in which marginalized groups could benefit.

Participants agreed that empowerment could lead to the following:

At the level of the individual
- ability to use a human rights approach to address issues at local and national levels, including with regard to women's rights and gender, and propose solutions;
- greater awareness of rights, duties and obligations of the different stakeholders;
- increased confidence and leadership capability;
- enhanced ability to use and replicate the participatory HRE methodology;
- strengthened capacity to build alliances and network.

At the level of the organization/group
- increased awareness of common interests and shared identity;

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[1] For more information about Equitas please see the website at: www.equitas.org

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- greater organizational skills for solidarity, networking and joint collaborations;
- increased engagement with stakeholders at all levels of society;
- better understanding of legal procedures and ability to influence respect for human rights.

At the level of the community
- expansion of networks and creation of new associations;
- decrease in the levels of discrimination, including that targeting marginalized groups;
- increased decision-making power of groups such as women;
- increased capacity to use mechanisms at national and international levels to claim rights;
- enhanced coordination among organizations, other stakeholders, as well as regional and international organizations.

In discussing the changes identified at the individual, organisation and community levels, participants agreed on the following general types of changes, brought about through increased empowerment:
- Confidence and capability
- Awareness of rights and responsibilities
- Solidarity and mutual support
- Involvement/participation of individuals in the community
- Informed activism
- Civic engagement

2. The links between HRE, empowerment and change

In this section, participants focused on establishing plausible links between HRE, empowerment and change. In particular, they tried to determine the contribution of HRE to the process of empowerment and to change at the level of individuals, organisations/groups and the broader community in terms of greater respect for human rights and improved lives.

The main questions addressed were:
- How do the changes resulting from empowerment contribute to building greater respect for human rights and improved livelihood?
- Why is participation as an outcome of empowerment particularly important?
- How do we ensure that our HRE initiatives lead to empowerment?
- What is the role of a participatory approach in the process of empowerment?
- How does a participatory approach in HRE ultimately contribute to positive changes in organizations/groups and also filter out into the broader community?

Participants reflected on the importance of changes resulting from empowerment through HRE in building respect for human rights and improved livelihood for communities. With regard to the changes identified above, participation highlighted why such changes constitute an important element for greater respect of human rights and improvement of the lives of individuals and groups.

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CHANGES RESULTING FROM EMPOWERMENT THROUGH HRE

Change	Importance
• **Greater awareness of human rights and responsibilities** (human rights mechanisms, strategies for action)	• Means greater confidence and capability , as claims are based on universal human rights • Leads to demands for the fulfillment of rights • Enables individuals to analyze situations, identify human rights violations, and meet challenges • Enables individuals to identify gaps and influence changes in policies and practices, as well as promote legal reform • Builds a sense of citizenship which allows for a shift from human rights *victims* to human rights *actors*

• **Confidence and capability**	• Fuels hope that change is possible, in particular:
	  - Increased options, choices and opportunities leading to a stronger voice
	  - supports sustainable change
	  - community becomes an entity that is accountable
	  - increases capacity to measure progress in respect for human rights and social change

• **Leadership**	• developing community leadership reduces dependence on outside human rights experts
• **Solidarity and mutual support**	• Results in greater social harmony and cohesion • Provides protection to human rights defenders • Helps build trust in each other and enables collective action to challenge conditions that give rise to human rights violations • Enables the transfer of human rights knowledge and skills from the individuals to their organisations and to the community • Leads to sustained community activism and the development of local mechanisms for human rights protection • Allows individuals to strengthen their collective voice at national, regional and international levels to increase impact • Changes the perspective of organizations from working *for* people to working *with* people

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	• Builds motivation and a sense of responsibility
• **Involvement and participation** of individuals in the communities	• Promotes greater legitimacy and ownership of solutions to challenges met • Allows for the integration of a rights-based approach into policies and actions • Group feels responsible to protect the identity and human rights of its members • Participation supports the realization of human rights
• **Informed activism and civic engagement**	• Ensures human-rights sensitive interventions • Increases the relevance of actions in response to specific community needs

Why would people want to participate?

The participants then focused more specifically on participation as an outcome of empowerment by reflecting on people's motivation and opportunities for participation (both of marginalized groups as well as of local authorities), in order to strengthen HRE strategies and content that leads to results.

The facilitator began by explaining the concept of participation as a process by which people are enabled (i.e., empowered) to become actively and genuinely involved in defining the issues of concern to them, of making decisions about factors that affect their lives, in formulating and implementing policies, in planning, developing, and delivering services and in taking action to achieve change.[2] Marginalized groups usually have the least opportunity to participate and tend to avoid politics, as well as other actors and issues that influence their lives and their future. Their needs are not voiced in ways that real decision-makers can hear, and decisions are all too often imposed upon them. Real social change thus cannot happen when the needs of the marginalized are not addressed.

Participation creates opportunities for the involvement of people at community level in public life as well as in decisions which affect them, leading to greater respect of human rights and democratic development. Furthermore, the participatory methodology in human rights education has been critical in achieving results, whereby participants are equipped with the confidence, skills and knowledge to improve their lives, as agents of change. For the purposes of this workshop, participation is considered a goal in itself[3] and a means to an end[4], both of which are mutually reinforcing.

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[2] Source: Community participation in local health and sustainable development: Approaches and techniques p. 10 http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/101065/E78652.pdf

[3] As a goal, participation is a process by which individuals at community level are empowered through confidence, solidarity and influence. It builds on their collective skills, knowledge and ideas, enabling them to address the particular interests and needs of the community. It allows them to decide, take part and shape decisions that affect them.

[4] As a means, participation involves cooperation and collaboration among people at community level, with a view to achieving a specific goal, leading to the improvement of their lives. Participation as a means is owned

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One of the key results of effective human rights education, as observed by Equitas, is enhanced participation at community level, in particular of people who are marginalized and in a situation of vulnerability. This has been achieved by the empowerment of the individual to take action to defend and promote human rights. Results at community level are observed when knowledge, skills, and attitudes are transferred from individuals, to their organisations, and to the communities they work with.

Drawing on their experiences in different communities, participants explored the motivation for participation of both marginalized groups and authorities, as well as some potential barriers to participation.

Motivation for people and authorities to participate

Participants suggested that the major reasons why marginalized groups want to participate included: the need to realize their individual value; in a common desire to change their reality; in order to be heard; to ensure that their rights are respected; for purposes of collaboration, cooperation, and solidarity; and in order to contribute to social cohesion.

As for authorities, the reasons they would encourage participation include: in order to create a good economic and political image; to obtain votes; for fear of people power; to strengthen their own track record; in response to obligations; to increase their accountability; to improve their image internationally; and to ensure inclusive and democratic governance.

Barriers to participation of people and authorities

Participants identified the following potential barriers for people to participate including: fear of retaliation; limited access to information and resources; limited effective/genuine mechanisms and procedures for participation; extent of isolation of certain population groups; weak institutional settings; lack of awareness about rights; traditions and practices which fail to value participation; conflict with personal interests and other priorities; lack of experience in participation; security risks.

As for the barriers to the participation of authorities, a variety of factors were pointed to, in particular: lack of time and resources; fear of certain issues being exposed; dominant culture of racism, prejudice, discrimination and sexism; limited awareness of potential results; fear of sharing power; lack of experience in participatory processes; wish to maintain the status quo.

Participatory approach, HRE, empowerment and social change

The participants examined how human rights educators could ensure that HRE initiatives lead to empowerment, what conditions need to be present for empowerment to take place, and what elements of HRE are the most likely to lead to empowerment. These were as follows:

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by the people themselves, and achieves results in response to local needs. It may represent a temporary feature in order to achieve the set objectives.

- Understand that HRE is a process;
- Ensure that methodology and content of HRE correspond to the knowledge and skills level of the target group;
- Build the trust of the participants and let them express themselves;
- Value the contribution of participants;
- Structure activities around the individual.

With regard to the link between a participatory approach and the effectiveness of human rights education and expected changes at different levels, participants identified that a participatory approach in HRE:
- Calls for critical reflection of issues and context;
- Demonstrates that human rights education is relevant to various target groups;
- Builds on the recognition that rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent;
- Creates a willingness by participants to share openly and bring forth issues which they themselves can commit to within local contexts;
- Creates a sense of ownership to the community members;
- Allows for resources to be shared;
- Stimulates communities to develop plans for sustainable results;
- Ensures for joint collaboration and collective actions, including through the use of available channels and mechanisms;
- Promotes accountability and delivery of commitments;
- Builds better relationships and networks among the community, and with other stakeholders in society, with the aim of achieving results.

With regard to the contribution of the participatory approach to empowerment, participants agreed that HRE has the greatest potential for empowerment. The reasons are multiple: HRE enables persons to recognize their ability to influence change; HRE ensures that various components, including human rights, duties, obligations and citizenship education are connected and interrelated; and through HRE and the building of democratic citizenship, opportunities are created to take collective action and bring about change in human and power relations.

3. Measuring empowerment – agreeing on key indicators

The objective of this session was to engage participations to:
- Identify indicators for measuring results at the level of the broader community
- Determine effective practices for documenting and communicating results
- Identify next steps in terms of follow-up activities and role of this group

Participants highlighted the importance of developing indicators in the field of HRE as this would considerably professionalize their work and increase the credibility of HRE. This, they mentioned, would also contribute to improving the perception that HRE can effectively act as a catalyst for change. In order to identify relevant indicators, it was necessary to elaborate an assessment framework and ensure that the objectives of HRE are 'smart' in particular clear and measurable, and defined at the outset of any HRE work. Participants also highlighted that there was a need to draw on existing tools to develop indicators, such as for

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example in the field of development, and possibly develop some guides for the use of tools in order to ensure that HRE evaluation tools are accessible to all. Participants added that it would be useful to have some guidelines in order to develop indicators in the field of HRE. These would include clarification on the components of a good HRE indicator, including a component on measuring change in attitudes.

Participants then went on to suggest a number of HRE indicators drawing on the following:
- the changes they identified at the level of the broader community in the impact stories;
- information about results of participants' HRE activities at community level;
- indicators participants provided in their training preparation questionnaire;
- examples of indicators for HRE developed by human rights educators at a workshop in Marrakech in June 2002.

Participants were asked to first group the changes according to the categories listed below and then develop indicators for measuring the changes. They agreed that there were types of changes, and actions against which indicators could be developed to measure change. These are detailed in the table below:

Category of change	Indicators
Awareness of rights and responsibilities	• Frequency of participation • Action taken after the (HRE) intervention • Capacity to express their function / role using correct human rights language • HRE institutionalized (as a result of participants' advocacy)
Confidence, capability, commitment	• Willingness to take action involving risks • Motivated requests for further training • Requests for support to include human rights in institutional curricula • Increase of statements in the media / press releases • Level of consistent and systematic HRE activities • Capacity to articulate contribution to human rights • Ability to apply new techniques and methods acquired during learning • Amount of time dedicated to certain activities
Solidarity and mutual support	• Action taken to benefit others • Number of human rights public advocacy meetings with peers/others • Development of networks for human rights • Number of joint statements/actions with other organizations/local actors • Participation in actions beyond self-interest

Action	• Willingness to take the lead and to participate
Ownership and shared leadership of collective action	• Commitment to contribute resources, time, knowledge, know how, infrastructure
	• Number of organizations doing HRE being established
Informed activism/actions	• Number of public decisions made where participants were involved
Civic engagement	• Number of human rights actions: - Petitions - Submissions to UN - Contributions to public interest issues/documents
	• Demonstrations
	• Compliance of authorities with UN human rights standards
	• More/less reports on human rights violations
Involvement/participation of individuals in the community Political inclusion	• Level of participation of specific groups in the political process (consultation, decisions, representations, influence) - how many? - how? (language, tools, approaches)
	• Influence of decisions taken, support of others, time allocated to discussions
	• Increase in the respect of diversity: language and decisions, media
	• Number of requests for participation
	• References to the principles and values of human rights
Economic and social inclusion	• Greater awareness of economic activities
	• Number of requests, submissions, representations, networking and actions
	• Equality of opportunity in professions and economic activities (men-women, youth, specific groups)
	• Integration of a rights-based approach into policies and programs by interest groups and organisations involved in economic activities
	• Number of initiatives regarding alternative economy
	• Level of capacity to analyse and rally around discriminatory economic policies
	• Availability of, and access to, basic social services
	• Capacity of groups to claim services
	• Existence of change in the politics of social security (traditional or alternative)
	• Level of budgets and their allocation
	• References to the principles and values of human rights in policies

The participants then went on to identify ways in which evaluation results could effectively be communicated to different stakeholders. The main challenges noted included finding convincing arguments that effective HRE leads and contributes to positive social change. Three categories of target groups were identified: funders, other partners and the public. Participants agreed that it was important to tell the story, taking into account stakeholder interests, in order to best highlight impact.

Participants noted that the added value in effectively communicating results included: to celebrate success; share lessons learned; increase accountability and transparency; maintain an institutional memory; keep track of progress achieved and, ensure effective planning in the future.

The participants identified the following points to be taken into consideration when communicating with:

Funders:
- The need to develop an impact story on how the activity contributed to the improvement of the lives of the community;
- The story should be expressly linked to project indicators;
- Quotes/anecdotal accounts from partners provide added value to the results
- The story should bring to light the cost effectiveness of the activity;
- The results should demonstrate major achievements, and highlight both the challenges and the unintended results;
- The relationship between activities, results and objectives needs to be clearly articulated, as well as the significance of the results;
- It would prove beneficial to attach relevant documentation, including press clippings, if available;
- The story should point to ways in which the results are sustainable over the longer term.

Other partners and the public
- use different forms of communication including audio, video, printed materials, art, photos and social media
- popularize the results obtained according different target communities, while ensuring that information is non-discriminatory, respectful and culturally sensitive
- there is a need to ensure that reports are complementary to those prepared by other partners

In the final session of the workshop, participants identified strategies and next steps for further advancing the work in the area of HRE evaluation and research as well as determining mechanisms for sharing the learning from this workshop. The following commitments were identified:

Equitas Commitments:
- Produce a report of the workshop for the participants and other stakeholders (broader alumni, partners, etc.)
  - Workshop participants will be asked for input in finalizing report.

- Continue reflection work around indicators to measure the impact of HRE on empowerment.
  - Develop initial indicators to share with others (next 6-12 months)
  - Development of indicators is an ongoing process, but these could be shared publicly in 12 months time.
  - Workshop participants will be asked:
    - for input and feedback
    - to organize meetings with local partners to share Workshop results and discuss indicators
    - engage with Equitas to plan future activities in this area.
- **Equitas will** be continuing to collect success stories for its reporting and evaluation of the Global Human Rights Education Program (GHREP).

OHCHR Commitments:
- Will include relevant comments made at the workshop regarding HRE evaluation process and content in the revisions of the UN Handbook on Human Rights Training
- A training session is planned for July 2012 with Equitas on evaluating HRE based on the OHCHR/Equitas Evaluation Handbook
- Interested in working with participants to continue documentation of impact stories

Other comments/suggestions
- Continued efforts should also focus on how reflections about for example the role of HRE and the components of empowerment can be integrated into ongoing HRE efforts and strengthen them.
  - The importance of accompanying communities undergoing change was emphasized
- Develop/reinforce a culture in HRE organizations to document results as well as processes (i.e. reinforce recognition of HRE as a discipline)
- Continue to document and share impact stories
  - Should contain lessons learned
- Equitas should plan an Equitas Community discussion on this topic to encourage a broader alumni reflection and participation, as well as identify next steps.
- Equitas could create an Equitas Online Community group of workshop participants to continue dialogue
- The Equitas Online Community could also be used to collect impact stories
  - Importance of having a standard methodology and presentation to allow comparison and analysis
  - Impact stories should also benefit lessons learned and identify good practices
  - Would be good to describe environment before intervention. What enabling factors/challenges existed?
  - Include audio and visual support (ie. videos, photos of participants and beneficiaries)
  - Need to explore objectives and audience for a more general publication on impact stories of HRE – to be discussed as part of overall follow-up to the workshop.

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- Some participants could pilot a process of identifying HRE indicators and document the process
  - Use results of discussions as part of evaluation of past Equitas human rights training sessions (e.g. the networks of alumni in Indonesia plan to undertake a 5-year evaluation, and the alumni network in the Philippines expressed a similar interest)
- Review existing resources on evaluation and empowerment
  - Equitas prepared a bibliography for the OHCHR/Equitas HRE evaluation Handbook of resources in English
  - Share additional resources with Equitas
- In Indonesia, Philippines, Ukraine, East and West Africa participants will share the reflections shared during the workshop with alumni networks working on joint regional/national training programs
- Discussion of connection between HRE and Empowerment would be beneficial in MENA region
  - One of the participants is interested in exploring training on the OHCHR/Equitas evaluation Handbook and activity on Empowerment for the MENA region (possibly in Egypt), and potential partners and funders in support of such an activity such as the OHCHR, the Arab Institute for Human Rights in Tunis, local OHCHR representatives, the Doha Centre and German Development Cooperation (GIZ).