

Conflict mitigation using a human rights-based approach

A guide for taking action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict

Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education

666, Sherbrooke Street West, suite 1100

Montreal, Quebec

Canada, H3A 1E7

Tel. : 514.954.0382

Fax : 514.954.0659

info@equitas.org

www.equitas.org

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Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education is Canada’s most recognized and active human rights education organization. We work for the advancement of equality, social justice and respect for human dignity through transformative education programs. Our tools and methodology are recognized around the world for their quality and innovation. In the last 50 years, our programs have reached over 3.2 million people worldwide.

International Centre for Ethnic Studies is an independent research centre, with a focus on ethnicity, identity politics, conflict resolution, post-war reconciliation, democracy, governance, human rights, and gender. The mission of ICES is to deepen the understanding of ethnicity, identity politics and conflict, and to foster conditions for an inclusive, just and peaceful society through research, publication, dialogue, creative expression and knowledge transfer.

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Introduction

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide was developed in response to an expressed need from partners in Sri Lanka for strategies and tools to better address issues of religious and ethnic conflict in their communities. Whether stemming from armed conflict, criminal activity, civil unrest or economic and social injustices, situations of conflict and violence are invariably linked to discrimination or non-respect for human rights. Therefore attempts to mitigate conflicts and build religious and ethnic harmony must necessarily include the promotion of human rights.

This Guide was developed drawing on:

- Lessons learned from the 2014-2016 joint Equitas/ICES project *Promoting Religious Harmony in Sri Lanka* funded by Global Affairs Canada
- Research on religious violence in Sri Lanka
- A mapping of inter-religious relations in Sri Lanka
- A forum in Jaffna about strategies for promoting religious harmony
- A curriculum consultation workshop on the content of this Guide, with key stakeholders from Sri Lanka
- Feedback from facilitators and resource persons who participated in the 2014-2016 project
- Evaluations and feedback from a workshop on the pilot Guide
- Equitas' own reflections

This Guide offers an overview of a very complex subject matter and therefore does not cover in depth all areas of conflict mitigation or human rights. Experts and practitioners are encouraged to add insights from their years of practice in peacebuilding, inter-faith dialogue, conflict transformation, reconciliation, human rights education, and other related areas.

PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

This Guide is a practical tool to support community and national level actors in their conflict mitigation work. It provides a step-by-step process on how to take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict using a human rights-based approach. Ways to encourage the effective participation of key actors, in particular women and the media, in conflict mitigation is highlighted.

WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR

This Guide is designed for civil society organizations, faith and community leaders, local government and those involved in media, who are engaged in peacebuilding, inter-faith dialogue, conflict transformation, reconciliation, human rights education and other related areas. Users are encouraged to follow the step-by-step process outlined in this Guide to take action to mitigate conflict in their communities and promote religious and ethnic harmony.

EDUCATIONAL APPROACH OF THE GUIDE

The participatory approach is the educational approach that was used in the development of the Guide. As such, the activities are intended to go beyond mere transmission of knowledge and skills and aim towards creating an awareness of human rights and encouraging action by having participating groups critically reflect on their lived experience and determine changes they want to see in their communities.

Building on their lived experience, groups engage in a process where they come to realize that not only do they have the right to participate in their community, but also the responsibility to do so. The approach, therefore, promotes an empowerment process that encourages participants to incorporate human rights values into their daily lives as well as develop appropriate actions that promote these values in their communities.

This approach, which is particularly appropriate for human rights education, promotes and values the sharing of personal knowledge and experience of human rights and encourages critical reflection on individual beliefs and values.

Critical reflection, a key element of a participatory approach, is practiced in each activity in the Guide. Critical reflection is a reasoning process that enables individuals to make meaning of an experience. It enables individuals to challenge their values and assumptions about human rights, and determine how their actions can change as a result.

HUMAN RIGHTS VALUES PROMOTED IN THE GUIDE

The Guide promotes positive values that stem from the fundamental principles of human dignity and equality underpinning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

- Respect
- Equality and non-discrimination
- Inclusion
- Responsibility
- Acceptance

WHAT IS CONFLICT MITIGATION?

Conflict mitigation refers to strategies, processes and actions undertaken to address causes of conflict and to change the way those involved act and perceive the issues. Conflict mitigation strategies can be used for conflict prevention, as well as intervention in conflict and post-conflict.

WHY DOES THIS GUIDE USE A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO CONFLICT MITIGATION?

Using a human rights-based approach (HRBA) increases effectiveness for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict. The following section outlines the evolution of HRBA, the importance of gender equality in HRBA and the added value of using HRBA in your work.

ORIGINS OF A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The field of social development has seen three major approaches to dealing with problems:

- Charity approach which involves giving to people based on needs identified by charity givers (donors)
- Needs-based approach which involves donors bringing about change for people based on needs and means to alleviate those needs, as identified by the people themselves
- Human rights-based approach which involves framing social problems as unfulfilled rights and making the realization of all human rights the objective of social development. It is both a vision and a set of tools for change by people.

Charity approach

The charity approach was the principal model for dealing with social problems for hundreds of years. It was based on the assumption that donors knew the needs of the poor and would satisfy those needs through generosity. It mainly involved the donation of money, food, clothing, shelter and medical care to alleviate immediate hardship. After their immediate needs were provided for, the poor and needy continued to be poor and needy and they became increasingly dependent on donations. In many cases, because the poor did not participate in identifying their real needs, they were not fully committed to changing their lives in the way that donors expected or demanded. The Charity Approach does little or nothing to make systemic changes to fix the causes of the problems.

Needs-based approach

Around the middle of the 20th century, the development sector started to shift into a new model, the needs-based approach. This approach was to base interventions on the needs expressed by the people in need themselves. This approach came with a very important change. The donors did not arbitrarily decide what people needed. Rather, the people participated in the process of identifying their real needs and deciding on the means to alleviate those needs. The needs-based approach to development prevailed for decades and was a huge improvement over the charity model as it helped establish a respectful dialogue between the donors and the needy. Although the needs-based approach included those in need in the process, it stopped short of addressing policies and regulations that could make systemic change. The prevailing view was (and in many cases still is) that NGOs should not engage in local or national politics. Donor agencies did not want to be accused of interfering in governance matters so many of the problems continued to re-surface decade after decade. A major shortcoming of a needs-based approach is that it encouraged people to participate at the community development level, but discouraged them from participating in higher policy-making circles. Moreover, it implied no obligations on political circles and other influential stakeholders.

Human rights-based approach (HRBA)

Since the 1950s developing nations were arguing at United Nations sessions for the need to recognize the right to development as a human right. With a growing globalization process and several political changes around the world, and with increasing pressure from developing nations, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Right to Development in 1986. Article 1 of the Declaration states:

The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.

This declaration gave a strong boost to the human-rights-based approach to development and marked a new era in social development. Core to HRBA is accountability. All people have rights and are called right holders. The people or entities who are obliged to deliver and ensure these rights are called duty bearers.

In general, duty bearers are the governments that are responsible for protecting people's human rights and their access to these rights. Governments are accountable to people and to the international community in terms of what they do to protect and deliver human rights in their countries.*

The following table illustrates the evolution in thought process from a charity approach to a human rights-based approach.

Charity approach	Needs-based approach	Human rights-based approach
What matters is what we do	Both what we do and results are important	Both how we do things and results are important
The goal is to give charity	The goal is to satisfy needs	The goal is to realize rights through empowerment, ownership and participation
The key power relation is between charity-givers and charity-recipients	The key power relation is between assistance-providers and recipients of assistance	The key power relation is between rights-holders and duty-bearers.
Charity is not universal	Needs are not necessarily universal	Rights are universal
Charity-givers establish priorities	Needs can be ranked in hierarchical order	All rights are inalienable, indivisible, and interdependent
Individuals are seen as victims	Individuals are seen as objects of development interventions	Individuals and groups are rights holders empowered to claim their rights
Focuses on manifestation of problems	Focuses on immediate causes of problems	Focuses on structural causes and their manifestations

* www.replace-campaign.org/resources/introduction-to-the-rights-based-approach.pdf

HRBA, GENDER EQUALITY AND CONFLICT MITIGATION

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) links the protection of human rights with the prevention of violent conflict, stating that “it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law” (UN 1948, preamble).

Using a human rights-based approach to conflict mitigation will enable people to deepen their analysis of what is involved in moving from violent conflict to sustainable peace. Using a human rights perspective forces a greater emphasis on structural conditions, especially the role of the State, systems of governance and issues of power in mitigating conflict.

With respect to gender equality, the articles of the UDHR apply equally to women and men as addressed in Article 2 of the Declaration, which specifically states that no one should be discriminated against based on gender. Addressing gender equality, exploring root causes of inequality, and strengthening the ability of women and girls to participate in conflict mitigation in a meaningful way are essential to a human rights-based approach.

Considering human rights in relation to conflict highlights the need to employ a holistic, multi-dimensional understanding of human rights and gender equality that does not reduce these to their legal foundation.*

WHAT VALUE DOES A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH ADD TO CONFLICT MITIGATION?

Although not exhaustive, the following points explain the value of using a human rights-based approach to conflict mitigation. A human rights-based approach:**

Addresses many of the root causes of conflict

Human rights concerns are root causes of conflict, as they relate to the distribution of power, resources, and opportunities, and to issues of security, identity, freedom and participation. Addressing root causes of conflict from a human rights perspective is thus essential to the development of a lasting peace.

Focuses on marginalized groups

HRBA ensures that the most vulnerable members of society, and those that are directly involved in the conflict, have a voice and can participate actively in mitigating the conflict, thus empowering the local populations. Meaningful and lasting change results from this inclusive focus.

Ensures meaningful participation of women in conflict mitigation

Sustainable peace requires equal participation of all citizens, - women and men - in the public life of their community. Women’s participation is essential and has been shown to contribute to more peaceful societies. A human rights-based approach to conflict mitigation ensures meaningful participation of women in all stages of the process.

Institutionalizes interaction between marginalized groups and the State

Human rights help to institutionalize interaction between marginalized groups and the State in a sustainable and non-violent way, for example, through complaint mechanisms. Such mechanisms help to strengthen the accountability of the State and provide rights holders with a channel for

* Parlevliet, Michelle (2011). Human Rights and Conflict Transformation: Towards a More Integrated Approach. The Berghof Handbook of Conflict Transformation.

** GIZ & ZFD & DIMR (2010). Connecting Human Rights and Conflict Transformation Guidance for Development Practitioners. P. 60-61.

raising concerns, thereby reducing the risk that marginalized groups resort to violence or are mobilized to that end.

Provides agreed-upon set of rules for handling and resolving conflict

By framing conflicts in human rights terms, and identifying actors as rights holders and duty bearers, we can move towards de-personalizing conflicts and put the emphasis on realization of human rights rather than on personal or group interests. Thus, human rights standards and principles offer an internationally agreed-upon set of rules for addressing conflicts.

Offers a source of common values that can bridge differences across groups

Human rights values, such as equality, respect, inclusion, responsibility and acceptance, can offer a common set of values that can bridge differences between community, religious and cultural groups.

Provides early warning information on potential inter-group tensions

Human rights violations usually increase prior to the outbreak of large-scale violence. Organizations that monitor and report on violations can hence draw attention to deteriorating situations.

HOW THE GUIDE IS ORGANIZED

The Guide is designed to engage group members in developing actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict in their communities over a period of a few weeks or a few months. Specific activities could also be used independently as a way to address conflict issues and promote human rights and democratic participation.

It is hoped that the users of this Guide will integrate their learnings from the Guide directly into the work they are doing on conflict mitigation and/or for training others who are working on the issue. It is also expected that the Guide be shared with others who are working at mitigating religious and ethnic conflict and that using it will help to make a positive difference in communities.

The Guide consists of three sections that interweave content and process elements aimed at building human rights knowledge, skills and attitudes for effectively mitigating conflict using a human rights-based approach. While the Guide may be used in parts, it is important to note that each section of the Guide builds on the previous section. The Guide is organized as follows:

Section A — Preparations, helps to prepare the user for undertaking action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict with a group. Once the preparations are completed the user is ready to undertake the 5-step process outlined in the Guide.

Section B — Taking action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict: A 5-step process, provides a step-by-step process on how to take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict using a human rights-based approach. The first part of this section offers *dinamicas*, which are short, interactive group activities that can be used before, during or after any of the longer activities outlined in the Guide. Following are activities that are organized step-by-step. Each activity provides practical knowledge and instructions that the user is encouraged to use with group members.

- *Dinamicas*
- **Step 1** Explore motivation and a human rights-based approach
- **Step 2** Explore the context
- **Step 3** Target change and plan for action
- **Step 4** Take action
- **Step 5** Monitor and evaluate

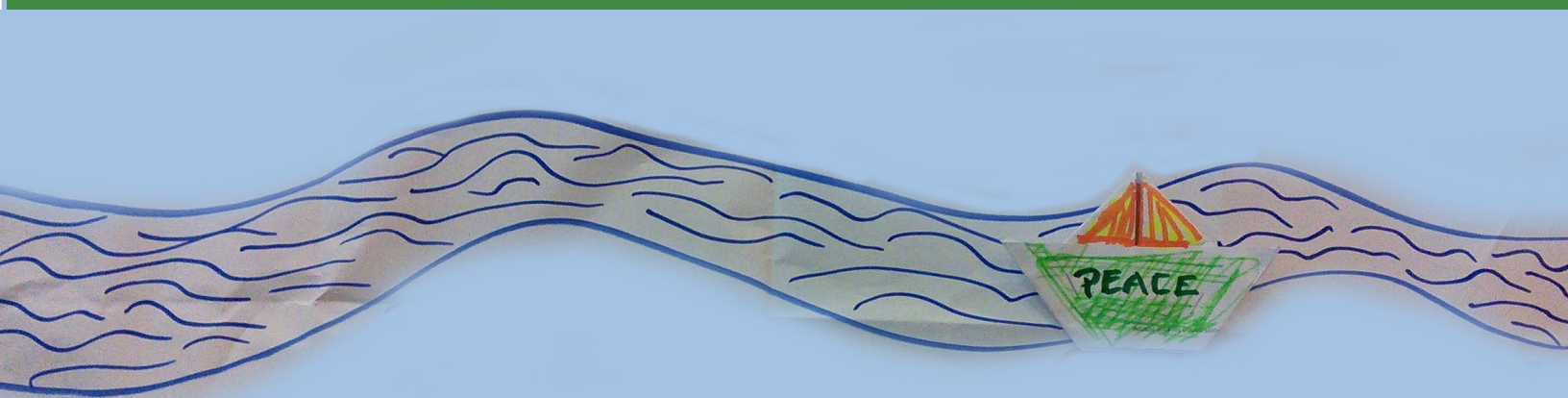
Section C – Resources include a variety of resources to assist with taking action to mitigate conflicts in communities.

Section A

Preparations

Before engaging with a group to take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict it is important to complete the preparations outlined in Section A of the Guide.

1. Understand the 5-step process
2. Reflect on your capacity to lead the 5-step process
3. Identify the main conflict and human rights issues
4. Identify the group you will work with
5. Plan the meeting with your group
6. Prepare for facilitating activities from the Guide
7. Ensure the participatory approach
8. Plan logistics
9. Document and monitor the process



Prepare for the 5-step process outlined in the Guide

Conflict situations, groups, and context vary greatly; therefore, the materials provided in this Guide should be viewed as a tool to assist you in integrating a human rights-based approach (HRBA) into the projects of your respective communities and organizations. Your level of experience as a facilitator, the knowledge and skill-levels of group members, as well as the context, are all factors that you will need to consider when planning your actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict.

The 5-step process outlined in this Guide is a framework for integrating a human rights-based approach into actions for conflict mitigation. By following this process, you will:

- Find motivation for mitigating conflict;
- Address root causes of the conflict from a human rights perspective;
- Ensure participation of rights holders, including women, minorities and other marginalized groups in mitigating the conflict;
- Engage with duty bearers such as decision-makers and media who can influence the conflict;
- Develop a well-planned and sustainable action for addressing conflict using a human rights-based approach;
- Monitor and evaluate your action to ensure sustainability.

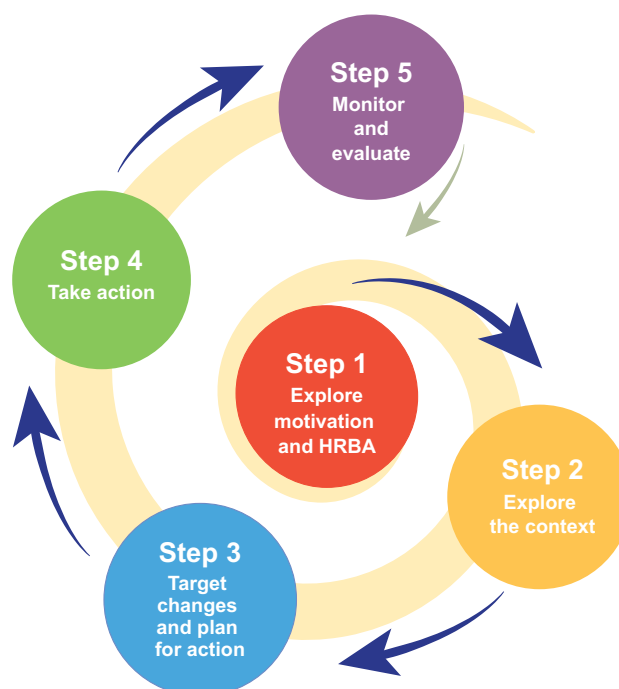
Some guidelines and suggestions for preparing an effective process for using a human rights-based approach in conflict mitigation are provided below.






1. UNDERSTAND THE 5-STEP PROCESS

Below is an overview of a 5-step process for integrating a human rights-based approach into actions for conflict mitigation.

Preparations

Before engaging in the 5-step process, you will need to identify the group with whom you will take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict and plan for the logistics and activities you will carry out.



-  **Step 1: Explore motivation and a human rights-based approach**
Explore why you, and others, want to take action to mitigate conflict and understand the human rights-based approach.
-  **Step 2: Explore the context**
Explore the conflict in your community, the human rights concerned, the root causes and effects, the main actors involved, and frame these in human rights terms.
-  **Step 3: Target change and plan for action**
Determine what the desired situation is in relation to the conflict and reflect on the changes that need to occur to achieve the desired situation. Then, identify a concrete action for conflict mitigation and develop strategies to ensure the participation of rights holders, including women, minorities and other marginalized groups, as well as strategies to engage duty bearers such as decision-makers and media.
-  **Step 4: Take action**
Develop a concrete action plan and implement the action.
-  **Step 5: Monitor and evaluate**
Evaluate your action and measure the changes you have achieved.

How does the process work?

Although it is important to follow the steps involved, the process outlined in the Guide is not meant to be a blue print. You are encouraged to draw on your own expertise and knowledge of the context as you use the Guide in your work. It is however important to adhere to the key elements of a human rights-based approach throughout the process (including participation, accountability, non-discrimination and equality, empowerment and link to rights).

The 5-step process outlined in the Guide should be planned and adapted according to the needs of your community, the context and the time you have available.

Who should participate in the process?

You are encouraged to carry out the activities in the Guide with others involved in taking action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict with you, including colleagues, community members, and other stakeholders. Applying a human rights-based approach also requires efforts to engage a broad range of stakeholders including traditionally marginalized groups such as religious and ethnic minorities, women and youth.

The activities in the Guide are designed for groups of about 6 to 20 people; however, this can be adapted according to the context.

Who should organize and facilitate the process?

This process is designed to be organized and facilitated by a person who has completed the capacity building workshop for this Guide. We encourage a group of 2 organizers/facilitators to lead the process.

How long will it take to complete the process?

The length and time of the process may vary. In order to complete the 5 steps of the process for taking action, you will need to complete several activities from each step with a group. This would take approximately 5 to 7 meetings of at least 3 to 4 hours each.

Alternatively, you may choose to take 3 to 5 full days with a group of people to go through the complete process.

You will also need to allocate a separate amount of time to complete your action. You will need to assess the needs in your community and the time you have available in order to determine the time you allocate to complete your action. Depending on the scope, it may take anywhere from a few days to several months to complete.

Some ideas for actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict could be:

- **Capacity building:** Actions in this area could include human rights education, awareness raising activities about religious tolerance, workshops on how to use social media to promote peace, developing training manuals on non-violent communication.
- **Dialogue:** Actions in this area could include inter-faith or inter-ethnic dialogues, community forums, inter-faith or inter-ethnic exchanges, building relationships between rights holders and duty bearers.
- **Advocacy and practical actions:** Actions in this area could include campaigns to promote peaceful relationships among community members from different religious or ethnic groups and promoting changes in specific laws, policies or practices.

2. REFLECT ON YOUR CAPACITY TO LEAD THE 5-STEP PROCESS

The 5-step process for integrating a human rights-based approach into actions for conflict mitigation outlined in this Guide encourages active participation and engagement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders. As a leader taking action for conflict mitigation, you are viewed as having expertise and experience to share with others and as such, you are also a resource person for others. It is therefore important to be aware your own strengths and challenges so that your efforts are as effective as possible in guiding others through a process for taking action to mitigate conflict.

The following self-assessment tool will help you reflect on your own learning needs as well as the knowledge, skills and experience you can bring to the process.

Please indicate your response by checking (✓) the appropriate box.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am familiar with some of the human rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and I am able to accurately describe them.				
Equality and non – discrimination mean that no one should suffer discrimination on the basis of race, colour, religion, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age, language, political or other opinions, national, social or geographical origin or disability. I am able to adequately promote these principles in my work.				
I am familiar with the key concepts of gender and gender equality and I am able to accurately describe them.				
Democratic principles, accountability and rule of law require the observance of human rights and compliance with the legal norms and standards enshrined in international human rights instruments. I can accurately provide examples of these requirements.				

Please indicate your response by checking (✓) the appropriate box.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<p>Participation and inclusion in a human rights-based approach require a high degree of participation by community members, civil society, women, youth, ethnic and religious minorities, Indigenous peoples, people living with disabilities, LGBTI people and other identified groups.</p> <p>I am able to adequately promote these principles in my work.</p>				
<p>Applying a human rights-based approach in conflict mitigation requires efforts to engage a broad range of stakeholders.</p> <p>I have the capacity to engage rights holders, such as women, youth, religious and ethnic minorities in my work.</p>				
<p>Applying a human rights-based approach in conflict mitigation requires efforts to engage a broad range of stakeholders.</p> <p>I have the capacity to engage duty bearers, such as decision-makers, religious leaders, and government in my work.</p>				
<p>I have the capacity to lead a group through a process to mitigate conflict using a human rights-based approach.</p>				

If you responded “strongly agree” or “agree” to the statements above, you possess the basics for using the 5-step process outlined in this Guide to take action for mitigating conflict in your community. Begin by completing the preparations in this section of the Guide.

If you responded “disagree” or “strongly disagree” to the statements above, you will need to do some preparation. Begin by carefully reviewing the Guide which will provide you with basic information needed to facilitate the process. Also, familiarize yourself with human rights, the human rights-based approach and facilitation skills. Then come back and complete the process outlined in the Guide with a group.

Before you start working with a group to take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict, it is important to identify the conflict and human rights issues that affect your community. Later, when you engage with group members to take action to mitigate the conflict you will need to discuss your ideas with them and validate or change as needed. Some preliminary questions are provided to guide your reflection. You may also do some more research if necessary.

- What is the main conflict issue in your community?
- What are some of the warning signs of potential violence?
- What are some of the root causes of the conflict?
- Is it a longstanding conflict or a newer/emerging conflict?
- Is the conflict manifested daily?
- Who are the main actors involved?
- How is the conflict perceived by the different groups involved?
- Is the conflict experienced differently by women/girls and men/boys?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

1. Reflect on the human rights issues involved

- What are the human rights involved in the conflict?
- Why are the human rights issues important for mitigating the conflict?

2. Explore national and international human rights standards and mechanisms relevant to the conflict you will be mitigating

- What international standards and mechanisms relate to the conflict?
- Are there any national, governmental policies that deal with the conflict you will address?
- Are there any recommendations or comments from institutions in your country concerning the conflict?
- Are there any recommendations from United Nations treaty bodies on the conflict issue?
- Are there any conclusions and recommendations in the Universal Periodic Review that are linked with the conflict?

4. IDENTIFY THE GROUP YOU WILL WORK WITH

Conflict mitigation cannot be done in isolation. Whether you are working within an organization, with a community group or engaging with a newly formed group, you will work through the same process outlined in this Guide with these different groups.

To get started, determine to what extent the members of the groups you intend to work with:

- Share a common interest in conflict mitigation
- Are willing to work together to take action to mitigate conflict in the community

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO ASSIST YOU IN DETERMINING THE INTEREST OF YOUR GROUP

1. What are the priorities of your organization or of the group you are engaging with?
2. What are the interests of your organization or of the group you are engaging with to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict?
3. To what extent are all group members willing to work together to take action to mitigate conflict in the community?
4. What is the profile of the people in the group you are engaging with?
 - Average age
 - Gender
 - Language
 - Interests/motivation
 - Social condition
 - Occupation(s)
 - Education level
 - Knowledge of human rights
 - Experience with human right

Some preliminary work with the group will be necessary in order to build a productive group dynamic for this process.

5. PLAN THE MEETING WITH YOUR GROUP

Once you have established who you will be working with, and their interest you will need consider how often you will meet, which activities from the Guide you will facilitate with the group, and how you will structure your action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO ASSIST IN PLANNING THE MEETING WITH YOUR GROUP

1. How will you invite group members to engage in the process?
2. How will you establish guidelines for how the group will work together?
3. Where will you meet?
4. How often will you meet?
 - Keep in mind that in order to complete the 5 steps of the process for taking action, you will need to complete several activities from each step with a group. This would take approximately 5 to 7 meetings of at least 3 to 4 hours each.
 - Alternatively, you may choose to take 3 to 5 full days with a group of people to go through the complete process.
5. Which activities will you use from the Guide?
 - It is encouraged to facilitate all of the activities from the Guide if they are in line with the needs and interests of the people you will be working with and the specific conflict you are addressing. If not, you can select the appropriate activities for your group.
 - Ensure you use activities from each step of the 5-step process.
6. When will you undertake your action for mitigating conflict?
 - An action can take from several days to several months. You will need to determine with your group a time frame that is sufficient to undertake the action and that is realistic for your group.

6. PREPARE FOR FACILITATING ACTIVITIES FROM THE GUIDE*

After you have established who you will be working with and planned meetings with your group you will need to prepare for facilitating the activities from the Guide. Ensure you create group guidelines before you engage in the process. The following table provides a description of how to facilitate activities.

Get ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully read over the activity and the instructions to make sure that you will be able to explain it clearly to the group members. • Adapt the instructions to your group. You can change the instructions to adapt to the size of your group or to the time you have. • Prepare the materials you will need, by taking into consideration the number of group members who will be present. • Prepare to facilitate the group questions. If necessary, adapt the questions to your group.
Explain the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask group members to place themselves so they can all see and hear you (in a circle, for example). • Make sure that the group is attentive. • Explain the purpose of the activity and how to do it, using your own words. • Speak slowly. Use simple words and short sentences. • Demonstrate the activity or give examples when necessary. • Encourage group members to ask questions. • If you are not sure that everyone understood, ask volunteers to summarize the instructions.
Facilitate the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the activity requires, make small groups. • During the activity remind group members what is needed to ensure there is no confusion. • Take part in the action and show your enthusiasm. Depending on the activity or the group's needs, you may take on different roles, sometimes acting as a participant, leader, observer, etc. • Be aware of group dynamics and how the activity is playing out to discuss during the group discussion.

* Equitas (2012). Speaking Rights, Reference 11

Facilitate the group discussion at the end of the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the activity, invite group members to return to a position where everyone can see and hear each other. • Ask questions such as how did you like the activity? Or how did the activity make you feel? • Encourage everyone to talk. • Remember that group members have a right to their own opinion. Only intervene if ever human rights values are not respected. • Listen carefully to what group members are saying. • Allow a chance for everyone to talk. • Conclude the discussion pointing out 1 or 2 important ideas that emerged. • At the end of the activity, thank everyone for their participation.
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Tips for handling challenging situations when facilitating*

Facilitating activities from the Guide is stimulating, however at times it may also be challenging. Below are some possible challenges the facilitator may face and some guidelines for handling them.

The group is slow to respond to the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether your instructions have been understood. • Restate the purpose of the activity and how it should be carried out.
Participants resist participating because of power issues in the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite group members to participate to the degree they feel comfortable. • Assure group members that the purpose of the process is to share different insights, experiences and personal reflections on the topic.
One or a few members dominate the conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind group members of the group guidelines. • Invite group members to be conscious of each person having time to share their reflections, ideas and insights. • Invite group members have not said much to share their ideas. • Restate the essence of what a domineering individual expressed to demonstrate that you have understood their point of view.

* Adapted from Government of Canada (2013). Community Dialogue Toolkit – Supporting Local Solutions to Local Challenges. Retrieved online: https://ccednet-rcdec.ca/sites/ccednet-rcdec.ca/files/ccednet/pdfs/community_dialogue_toolkit_-_supporting_local_solutions_to_local_challenges.pdf Dialogue

<p>A participant walks out of a group following a heated conflict</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes the conversation may become heated. Other times, group members may seem to be on the verge of fighting, and sometimes they may even walk out. • Confront the conflict directly. Always stop name-calling, personal attacks and threats. • Remind group members of the initial discussion regarding potential conflict that may arise and the agreement to respond respectfully in these situations. • Appeal to the group for support. If they accepted the group guidelines, they will support you.
<p>As a facilitator you may feel strongly about an issue and have trouble staying unbiased</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember to remain on task. • Guard against moving from a discussion facilitator into a “teacher/lecturer.” • Respect the views of others and show interest in their experiences and viewpoints.

7. ENSURE THE PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

This Guide was designed according to a participatory approach to human rights education. The participatory approach is an educational approach based on the belief that the purpose of education is to expand the ability of people to become shapers of their world by analyzing the social forces that have historically limited their options.

A participatory approach in human rights education promotes and values the sharing of personal knowledge and experience of human rights and encourages critical reflection on individual beliefs and values. It is founded on principles of mutual respect and reciprocal learning and seeks out and includes the voice of the participants in the learning process. It enables people with different backgrounds, cultures, values and beliefs to learn effectively together and learn from each other. It encourages social analysis aimed towards empowering participants to develop concrete actions for social change that are in accordance with human rights values and standards.

The three pillars of a participatory approach

The three fundamental characteristics, or pillars, of a participatory approach are:

1. Starting with the participants' experience
2. Critically analyzing and reflecting
3. Developing strategies for action

These three conditions must be met both in the design and in the implementation of human rights education training according to a participatory approach.*

Strategies you can use to integrate a participatory approach

1. Start with the experience of participants...

- Create learning conditions that promote a sense of safety, openness and trust
- Use activities that encourage participants to share their experiences with the rest of the group
- Integrate opportunities that promote autonomy, participation and collaboration

2. Encourage critical reflection and analysis...

- Lead discussions that build knowledge, promote critical thinking and allow participants to come up with their own answers
- Use a variety of tools such as dinamicas, activities, and group discussions
- Encourage feedback from the group

3. Develop strategies for actions...

- Ensure activities lead the group to discuss and strategize about action and build their capacity to do so
- Share power and influence in the group to empower participants to define priorities, make decisions and strengthen leadership skills in action planning

* Equitas. (2011). Evaluating Human Rights Training Activities: A Handbook for Human Rights Educators. Montreal: Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education, 11-12.

8. PLAN LOGISTICS

It is very important to plan and organize logistics well ahead of each activity/workshop. The list below will help you. You can add other items you feel are missing.

Item	Person responsible	Date	Done (✓)	Notes
Organize an activity or workshop				
Send invitation				
Send reminder				
Prepare attendance sheet				
Plan transport (if necessary)				
Meeting location				
Book room				
Set up tables and chairs				
Order snack or meal				
Equipment				
Flipchart				
Markers				
Notebooks				
Pencils or pens				
Scissors				
Masking tape				
Camera				
Materials specified in activities				
Other				

9. DOCUMENT AND MONITOR THE PROCESS

It is important to prepare a simple way to document the information and reflections gathered during the activities, as it is the culmination of this information that will enable your group to take action for mitigating conflict using a human rights-based approach.

In **Section B Integrating a human rights-based approach: a 5-step process** there is a summary table at the end of each step. This table is a tool to enable you to document the main ideas that emerged during the activities. It is the culmination of the summary tables that will enable you and the group you are working with to develop a strong action plan for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict in your community.

In addition to the summary at the end of each step, there is also a sample logbook below. The logbook is a simple tool where you can note your thoughts, ideas, questions, comments or summarize important elements observed during the course of an activity or workshop. It will assist you in monitoring your progress in the process.

It is advisable to take 20 minutes at the end of each activity/workshop to complete your logbook. Record your comments and observations, what you have learned, the various challenges you have faced, and the evolution of the group.

You are not required to answer every question. The important thing is that your comments, your thoughts and ideas are being recorded in order to help you better track changes in the community and the progress of your group following their activities.

You will find a sample logbook template on the next page.

Logbook

Date of the activity/workshop	
Name of the facilitator	
Activity/workshop title	
Total number of group members	

Name of the group member	Sex	Age	Contact information

General reflections

Group members and group dynamics

Indicate the level of participation of the men/women/youth. Who participated more? Why? How did they participate? How are the different people in the group working together? (e.g. elders and youth)

Implementation of activity/workshop

How did the activity/workshop go? Enough time? Too much? Too little? Level of participation? Level of interest? Appropriateness of the activities?

Challenges and what I have learned
What I will do the next time
Logistics <i>Was the setup of the space (organization of chairs, tables, etc.) appropriate? Was the location appropriate? Please explain.</i>
Workshop preparation <i>How did you prepare? How long did it take? What did you learn? What might you do differently next time?</i>
General comments <i>What issues, problems emerged from the activity/workshop? What solutions were discussed to address them? What were the differences of opinion, the most significant ideas? What are visible changes in the group?</i>

Section B

Using a human rights-based approach: A 5-step process

This section outlines a step-by-step process on how to take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict using a human rights-based approach (HRBA).

Dinamicas

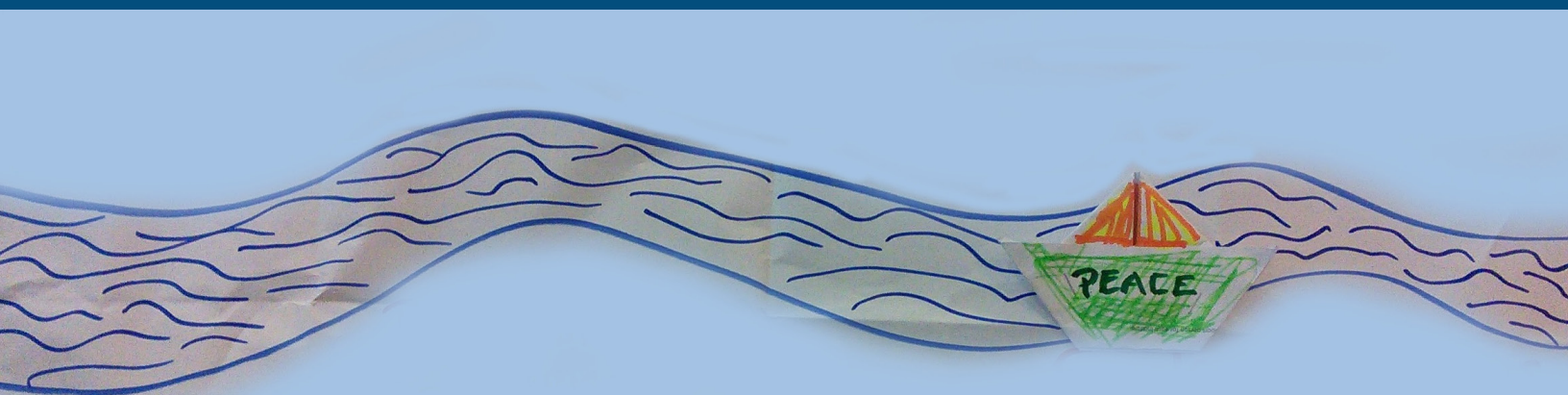
.....
Step 1: Explore motivation and HRBA
.....













Step 2: Explore the context
.....

Step 3: Target change and plan for action
.....

Step 4: Take action
.....

Step 5: Monitor and evaluate
.....



Activities	Page #	Dinamicas	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Dinamicas	39						
STEP 1	45						
01: Introductions	47						
02: Group dynamics	51						
03: What motivates me	53						
04: Thinking about human rights	55						
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Summary of Step 1	64						
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06: Conflict in my community	67						
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08: Tree of conflict	73						
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Summary Step 2	78						

Activities	Page #	Dinamicas	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
STEP 3	79						
I0: Tree of harmony	81				●		
I1: Identify an action	85				●		
I2: Link to human rights	89				●		
I3: Women's participation	93				●		
I4: Engaging key actors	97				●		
I5: Effective communication	101				●		
Summary Step 3	109				●		
STEP 4	111						
I6: Action Plan	113					●	
STEP 5	123						
I7: Monitoring	125						●
I8: Evaluating results	127						●
I9: Next steps	131						●
Summary Step 5	134						●

Dinamicas*

The activities outlined in this Guide follow the 5-step process for using a human rights-based approach to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict. Throughout this process, you may decide to use other shorter activities to introduce a topic, allow participants to get to know each other, or evaluate an activity. The following dinamicas may assist you in doing so.

What is a dinamica?

A dinamica is a short (5 to 15 minutes), energizing and interactive activity that is intended to break the ice or get the group to relax or re-energize. Dinamicas are often used at the beginning of an activity to introduce a group or at the end to conclude an activity, but can be used at any time if the need arises.

Why use a dinamica?

In this Guide, dinamicas are used to:

- Introduce a longer activity
- Get to know each other better
- Create a positive group dynamic
- Relieve tensions
- Create a favourable environment for participation and learning
- Reflect on a topic
- Evaluate an activity

How do you conduct a dinamica?

Explain that you will be conducting a short activity before beginning the main one. Specify that the goal is to have fun and to break the ice.

1. Give the name of the dinamica and explain briefly how it works
2. If necessary, give an example to make sure everyone understands
3. Lead a group discussion after the activity. See more about group discussion below.

Group discussion

Following a dinamica, it is a good idea to lead a brief discussion with the group to explore how the group felt about the dinamica, to draw lessons from it and to suggest concrete ways for improving the group dynamic. Following are some general questions to prompt discussion after a dinamica.

How did participants feel during the activity? For example:

- How did you like this activity? Why?
- How did you feel during the activity?
- What was easy or hard about this activity?
- In one word, how would you describe this activity?

* Adapted from: Equitas (2018) Speaking Rights Toolkit, p. 77-84, Equitas (2017) Ensemble pour l'égalité, p. 51-71, Equitas (2017) Ushiriki Nguvu Yetu Action Guide, p. 48

What did participants learn during the activity? For example:

- What did you learn while doing this activity?
- What strategies did you use to succeed during this activity?
- What lessons can we learn from this activity?
- What did you learn about yourself and/or others during this activity?
- Does this activity make you think of human rights issues in your community?

What can participants do differently now? For example:

- If you were to do this activity again, what would you do differently?
- Can what you learned during the activity help improve our group's dynamic? How?
- How can you apply what you've learned from this activity to your everyday life?

DINAMICAS		
Title	Description	Objectives
My name, my story	To introduce group members to one another, ask them to explain the meaning of their names and why they think their parent(s) and/or guardians chose it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To get to know each other better • To create a positive group dynamic
Group juggling	<p>Ask group members to form a circle. A group member starts by throwing a ball to someone else while calling out their name. The game continues until everyone's name has been called out. Then, the game is played again with more balls.</p> <p>Group members need to work together to keep the balls in the air. If group members already know each other, ask them to name the person and name a quality of the participant they are throwing the ball to.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To get to know each other better • To create a positive group dynamic
Line up	<p>Ask group members to stand in single file in front of you. Ask them to line up in alphabetical order according to their first name. At this stage, group members may talk to each other. Do the activity again, but this time, group members have to line up without talking to each other and need to use different criteria for determining the order.</p> <p>Examples of ways of lining up: according to their birthdays (day and month), the number of letters in their name, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a positive group dynamic • To reflect on non-verbal communication

DINAMICAS		
Title	Description	Objectives
The noisiest game in the world	<p>Clear the centre of the room and choose 2 or 3 participants to be “Messengers.” Invite them to move to one end of the room and ask them to make up a message to send, such as the name of a movie, a song or a saying. The number of Messengers can vary according to the size of the room and the number of participants. Next, choose an equal number of participants (2 or 3) to be “Receivers.” They stand at the other end of the play area, a good distance away from the Messengers.</p> <p>All the other participants stand between the Messengers and Receivers and try to stop the communication of the message by providing interference. To do this, they can shout and call to their friends, trying to distract the Messengers and the Receivers as much as possible. The Messengers must try to get their message across to the Receivers, by shouting even louder, by acting out their message, or by doing both.</p> <p>You can set a time limit for the message to be transmitted (10, 15 or 30 seconds, depending on the complexity of the message). If the message has not been transmitted in the allotted time, the Messengers and the Receivers are replaced by participants who were trying to stop the message from being passed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a positive group dynamic • To reflect on effective communication
My side	<p>Ask participants to place 5 or 6 chairs in the centre of the room.</p> <p>Form 2 groups and have them stand at opposite sides of the room. Then, explain that the object of the game as follows: at your signal, they have 2 minutes to bring all the chairs to one side of the room and each group has to bring as many chairs on their side as possible. Ask the groups to work out a peaceful solution, which means they will need to discuss how to solve the problem.</p> <p>After the 2 minutes are up, explain that the goal was not necessarily to bring all the chairs to your own side of the room, but, rather, to get participants to reflect on conflict and cooperation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reflect on conflict and cooperation

DINAMICAS		
Title	Description	Objectives
Exclusion by numbers	<p>Ask participants to walk around the room. Ask them to walk in different ways: doing the elephant, jumping on one foot, dancing the salsa, etc. After a few seconds, shout out a number smaller than the total number of people present. Make sure that the number you choose doesn't exclude just one person. The participants must then quickly form groups containing that number of people. Those who do not succeed in joining a group are eliminated from the next step of the game.</p> <p>Ask the remaining participants in each group to find one thing they have in common with each other (a sport or a food that everyone likes etc.). Ask the participants who were eliminated to rejoin the large group and continue the game, this time shouting out a different number.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get to know each other better To reflect on inclusion and exclusion
Inclusion... exclusion...	<p>Prepare stickers of different colours. Ask participants to stand in a circle with their backs to the centre of the circle. Tell them that you will be placing a coloured sticker on their back. Use 2 to 6 different colours. Each person will know the colour of the sticker on the other persons' back, but not their own. Ask everyone to walk around the room and to group themselves according to the colour of their sticker but without talking. For example, if you have prepared 3 different colours of stickers (yellow, blue, green), participants must discover as quickly as possible the colour of their sticker and form 3 groups. It is important to make sure that each person is included in a group.</p> <p>Replay the game by placing a new sticker on everyone's back and asking them this time to form groups where everyone has a different coloured sticker. You can play this a third time or a fourth time, preparing stickers where at least two or three people are excluded.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reflect on inclusion and exclusion
Bull's eye	<p>On a flipchart draw a target with a bull's eye and two additional rings. In the bull's eye, write "completely." In the next ring, write "partially." In the outer ring, write "not at all."</p> <p>Distribute post-its to each participant and explain that you will make a statement and participants should respond by placing their post-it on the corresponding place in the target. The closer they place it to the center, the more strongly they agree with the statement, and vice versa.</p> <p>Example: <i>The workshop was what I expected</i></p> <p>Once everyone placed their post-it allow a moment for the group to look at the spread and see the big picture. Ask participants if they would like to share their observations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To evaluate an activity

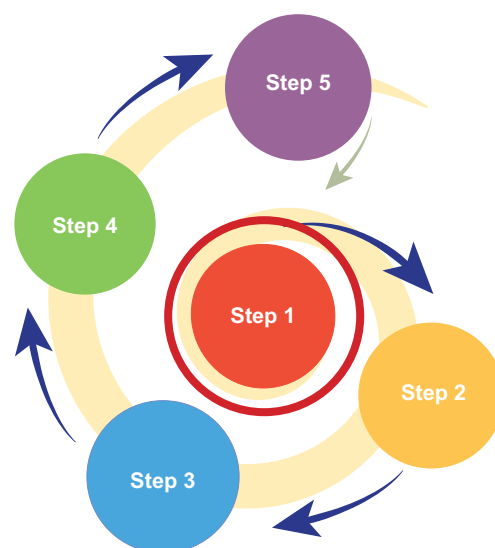
DINAMICAS		
Title	Description	Objectives
Red, yellow, green	<p>Give each participant a green, red and yellow piece of cardboard. Have participants answer questions by holding up the colour corresponding to their answer choice.</p> <p>Example: <i>If you liked the activity, hold up a green card.</i> <i>If you liked the activity a little, hold up a yellow card.</i> <i>If you didn't like the activity, hold up a red card.</i></p> <p>Invite participants to explain why they chose their colour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To evaluate an activity

Step 1: Explore motivation and HRBA

Before you begin your work on mitigating conflict using a human rights-based approach (HRBA), it is important to do some groundwork with the group you are working with. Reflecting on values, motivations for mitigating conflict, and how integrating a human rights-based approach adds value to mitigating conflict, are important foundations that will augment your success.

You are encouraged to carry out the activities in **Step 1** with others involved in taking action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict with you.

Each activity will assist you in laying a sound foundation for conflict mitigation using a human rights-based approach.



Activities in Step 1

01: Introductions

02: Group dynamics

03: What motivates me

04: Thinking about human rights

05: Understanding a human rights-based approach

SUMMARY STEP 1

01 Introductions

Time	45 min
Purpose	To have group members get to know each other and build a group dynamic based on human rights values
Materials	Value posters, Reference Sheet: Human rights values

About this activity

Human rights values such as respect, equality and non-discrimination, inclusion, responsibility and acceptance are at the core of a human rights-based approach. The absence of human rights values creates fertile ground for conflicts to occur.

Human rights values are fundamental to upholding the key principles of human dignity and equality underpinning the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) and therefore need to be incorporated into actions for conflict mitigation. When these values are not well understood or respected, incidents of discrimination and racism become more commonplace and inevitably lead to conflict in communities.

This activity allows group members to get to know each other and explore the importance of human rights values for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict in their community.

Instructions

20 min

Part A Small group work

1. Write the following values on flipchart paper and place them around the room: respect, equality and non-discrimination, inclusion, responsibility and acceptance.
2. Ask everyone to briefly reflect individually on the values and then go and stand next to the value that is most important to them. Form a group with the people who have gathered around the same value.
3. Ask the groups to:
 - Introduce themselves (name and organization or area of work) to the other people gathered around the same value.
 - Discuss their understanding of the value and the reasons why they chose it. Encourage the groups to give examples of how the value is represented in their communities.
4. Have each group select a reporter who will report back to the larger group.

25 min

Part B Whole group discussion

1. Invite the reporter from each group to:
 - Introduce the group members in their small group
 - Name the value they chose, why they chose it and share an example of how the value is represented in their communities
2. After each group presents, read out loud the definition of the values provided in ***Reference Sheet: Human rights values.***
3. Ask everyone if they agree with the definitions.
4. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Why are these human rights values important in our lives?
 - How are these values represented in various religions and cultural practices?
 - Why are these values important for mitigating conflict?
 - What other values are important for mitigating conflict?
 - What can we do to promote these values as we work together to take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict?

End of activity ■

Reference Sheet: Human rights values*

Value	Definition
Respect	Respect is recognizing that every person is important and must be treated with dignity. In the context of human rights, respect does not need to be earned; it is the right of every person in all circumstances.
Equality and non-discrimination	<p>Equality is treating everyone the same without distinction, exclusion or preference of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, sexual orientation, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.</p> <p>Non-discrimination is integral to the concept of equality. It ensures that no one is denied the protection of their human rights based on external factors social such as religion or ethnicity.</p>
Inclusion	Inclusion is recognizing that each person is a full member of society and of the group.
Responsibility	Responsibility is thinking before we act and being ready to accept the consequences of our actions (or inaction).
Acceptance	Acceptance is acting to ensure full participation from everyone, without exception.

* Equitas (2015). Mosharka, Youth Human Rights Project Guide. Human Rights Values, p. 225

02 Group dynamics

Time	30 min
Purpose	To have group members develop group guidelines
Materials	Flipchart, markers, meta cards

About this activity

In order to take action with a group to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict it is important to create group guidelines effective functioning of a group.

Group guidelines provide means for living human rights values within the group. They also enable group members to explore how conflicts can arise and develop strategies as a group to ensure everyone feels safe to express their ideas and feelings.

Instructions

10 min

Part A Brainstorm

1. Distribute meta cards and ask group members to write down what comes to mind when they think of conflict.
2. Post the meta cards in the room and briefly discuss the different understandings of conflict.
3. Share the following definition of conflict with the group and ask groups members for their recommendations.
Conflict emerges when two parties have incompatible goals, attitudes and behaviours. Although conflict is normal, inevitable and natural, it can have very negative and damaging consequences. Conflicts which have damaging consequences are generally rooted in inequalities, discrimination, unequal distribution of resources, and incompatible attitudes and behaviours engrained in cultural traditions.

20 min

Part B Whole group discussion

1. Ask the group what types of conflicts could occur in a group setting.
2. Explain that group guidelines are a means for addressing conflict before it occurs. They also help to create safe spaces for working together.
3. Invite participants to share their ideas for group guidelines. Examples of helpful guidelines include:
 - Listen and “hear” what is being said (active listening)
 - Be willing to learn and be changed by the experience
 - Avoid using negative stereotypes or generalizations
 - Turn off cellphones
4. Agree on a number of guidelines and write them on a flipchart.
5. Post guidelines somewhere they can be seen for the remainder of the time the group is together. Bring back and post the same guidelines each time the group meets.
6. Ensure that everyone is comfortable with the guidelines and is committed to respecting them.
7. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Why is it important to have group guidelines?
 - Who is responsible for respecting the group guidelines?
 - What human rights values do you see represented in the group guidelines?
 - What should we do if someone does not comply with the guidelines?

End of activity ■

03

What motivates me

Time 30 min

Purpose To have group members explore motivations for engaging in conflict mitigation

Materials Flipchart, markers

About this activity

Engaging in conflict mitigation from a human rights perspective is engaging to bring about positive social change in the community that is in line with human rights. Change necessarily begins with the individual who is motivated to make change happen and gradually branches out to encompass the community at large.

Eleanor Roosevelt, the driving force behind the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), when talking about where human rights begins illustrates this very well:

“Where after all do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any map of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person: The neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.” Remarks at the United Nations, March 27, 1958

Exploring your own motivation and that of your group members is key to bringing about the social change that successful conflict mitigation which incorporates a human rights-based approach can lead to.

Instructions

10 min

Part A Individual work

1. Begin by reviewing what conflict mitigation is (see p.7 of this guide).
2. Invite group members to think about what motivates them to participate in actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict.
3. Write the following statements on a flipchart and ask group members to complete each statement individually on a piece of paper:
 - I am motivated to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict in my community because ...
 - The challenges to mitigating religious and ethnic conflict in my community are ...
 - What I personally can do to improve my community is ...

20 min

Part B Whole group discussion

1. Invite group members to share some of the main factors that motivate and some of those that discourage people to engage in conflict mitigation.
2. List in two columns on flipchart the factors that motivate and those that discourage identified by the group members.
3. Ask group members to share examples of what can be done to maintain a high level of motivation and engagement of those working with them in mitigating conflict.
4. Write the examples on flipchart.
5. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Were you surprised by the factors that motivate or discourage people from engaging in conflict mitigation?
 - Do you think that the factors that motivate men and women are the same?
 - How can we help each other to stay motivated to engage in conflict mitigation?

End of activity ■

04 Thinking about human rights

Time	1 hour
Purpose	To have group members explore the basic concepts of human rights
Materials	Flipchart, markers, meta cards, Copies of <i>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i> (available in Section C: Resources)

About this activity

In this activity, group members are introduced to the basic concepts of human rights. They also learn about the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and the concepts of rights holders and duty bearers.

Instructions

25 min

Part A Small group work

1. Divide group members into small groups of 4-6 people. Distribute a piece of flip chart paper and markers to each group.
2. Invite group members to draw a person (they can choose to draw a man, woman, youth or child).
3. Explain to group members that they are going to reflect on what individuals need to live well and with dignity.
4. Explain human dignity as follows:
Human dignity affirms that all people deserve to be respected simply because they are human beings. Regardless of age, culture, religion, ethnic origin, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, ability, social status, civil status or political convictions, all individuals deserve equal respect.
5. Ask each small group to reflect on the question below.
What does this person need to live well and with dignity in your community?
6. Invite each group to write their answers in the figure they drew.
7. Ask each small group to share their ideas with the whole group.

20 min

Part B Whole group discussion

1. Explain what human rights are using the definition provided below.
Human rights are the rights and freedoms that belong to all people simply because they are human beings. Human rights are based on the principle that every human being is born equal, in dignity and rights. All human rights are equally important and they cannot be taken away under any circumstances.
2. Next introduce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as follows.
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is the founding document of human rights. Adopted on December 10, 1948 by the United Nations, the UDHR stands as a shared reference point for the world and sets human rights standards to achieve.
3. Invite each small group to look at the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (p. 138) and find rights which relate to the needs they identified on their figure.
 - For example, if a small group posted “religion”, they would write Article 18 -- Right to freedom of religion.
4. Synthesize the responses, emphasizing that many of the needs are basic human rights, contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

15 min

Part C Individual work

1. Next draw group members' attention again to the flipchart images they drew in **Part A** and explain that in human rights language these are rights holders. Also explain that those who are responsible for ensuring that rights are fulfilled are duty bearers.
2. Hand out 2-3 meta cards to each group member and ask the following question:
Who has the obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of these individuals? I.e. who are the duty bearers?
3. Invite group members to identify individuals or groups, write their answers on the meta cards and place them around the flipcharts.
4. Review the responses and explain rights holders and duty bearers, using information on the following page in ***More about...rights holders and duty bearers.***

End of activity ■

More about...rights holders and duty bearers

Who is a rights holder?

A rights holder is entitled to rights, is entitled to claim rights, is entitled to hold the duty bearer accountable, and has the responsibility to respect the rights of others

Who is a duty bearer?

A duty bearer has the obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of the rights holders

The overall responsibility for meeting human rights obligations rests with the State. This responsibility includes all organs of the State such as parliaments, ministries, local authorities, judges and justice authorities, government employees, police and teachers. All of these are legal duty bearers and the people within its territory are rights holders.

Every rights holder has the responsibility to respect the rights of others. In this sense you can say that every individual or institution that has the power to affect the lives of rights holders is a moral duty bearer – the greater the power, the larger the obligation to fulfill and especially to respect and protect the human rights of others. In this sense religious and community leaders, civil society organizations, international organizations, private companies, the media, heads of households, and parents, and in principle every individual are moral duty bearers. You should remember that the State as a legal duty bearer also has a duty to regulate the actions of moral duty bearers – e.g. parents, companies.– to ensure that they respect human rights.*

*Equitas. (2017). International Human Rights Training Program. Facilitator's Manual. p.5-18-5-19.

05 Understanding a human rights-based approach

Time	1 hour
Purpose	To have group members explore the elements of a human rights-based approach
Materials	Flipchart, markers, copies of <i>Reference Sheet: What is a human rights-based approach?, Elements of HRBA</i> (to be copied and cut)

About this activity

Using a human rights-based approach in your work in conflict mitigation will allow for a deeper analysis of the conflict and more effective strategies to address the conflict.

In order to integrate HRBA in conflict mitigation, the key elements of the approach should be present in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of your action for mitigating conflict. The key elements are: participation, accountability, non-discrimination, empowerment and direct link to human rights

In this activity group members explore the elements of a human rights-based approach and reflect on how HRBA can increase their effectiveness in mitigating conflict.

Instructions

20 min Part A Whole group discussion

1. To introduce a human rights-based approach (HRBA), begin by asking the group the following question:

What is the difference between a right and a need?

2. Reproduce the table below on a flipchart and record the group members' ideas in the appropriate columns. Refer back to **Activity 04 – Thinking about human rights** if required.

Rights	Needs

3. Add any important elements that the group members may have left out. Key points to highlight include:
 - A need is an aspiration. It can be legitimate; however, it is not necessarily associated with a government obligation.
 - A right entails a government obligation and can be legitimately claimed.
 - Rights are associated with “being”. Needs are associated with “having”.
4. Provide an explanation of a human rights-based approach by presenting the key elements on **Reference Sheet: What is a human rights-based approach?**

20 min Part B Small group work

In advance, photocopy and cut out the 5 elements of a HRBA approach (**Elements of HRBA**)

1. Divide group members into 5 small groups and distribute 1 element per group.
2. Ask the small groups to discuss their assigned element by answering the questions below.
 - In your opinion, why is this element important?
 - How can this element contribute to conflict mitigation?

Part C Presentations

1. Invite the groups to present their element to the whole group including their ideas on how it can contribute to conflict mitigation.
2. Record the main points on a flipchart and fill in missing information, using the points below.

A human rights-based approach is essential in conflict mitigation because HRBA:

- Addresses many of the root causes of conflict
- Focuses on marginalized groups
- Ensures meaningful participation of women and other marginalized groups in conflict mitigation
- Institutionalizes interaction between marginalized groups and the State
- Provides agreed-upon set of rules for handling and resolving conflict
- Offers a source of common values that can bridge differences across groups
- Provides early warning information on potential inter-group tensions

End of activity ■



Reference Sheet: What is a human rights-based approach (HRBA)?

A human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework that sets the achievement of the full range of human rights as an objective of social actions. It is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed towards respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights. A human rights-based approach also must enable the empowerment of women and girls. “Empowerment implies that women are powerful in the face of adversity and approaches must build on [this strength].”*

The overall responsibility for respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights rests with the State. By becoming parties to international treaties, States assume obligations and duties under international law to respect, to protect and to fulfil human rights. The obligation to respect means that States must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights. This responsibility includes all the organs of the State such as parliaments, ministries, local authorities, judges and justice authorities, police and teachers. All of these are legal **duty bearers** and the people within its territory are **rights holders**.

Every rights holder has the responsibility to respect the rights of others. In this sense you can say that every individual or institution that has the power to affect the lives of rights holders is a moral duty bearer – the greater the power, the larger the obligation to fulfill and especially to respect and protect the human rights of others. In this sense religious and community leaders, civil society organizations, international organizations, private companies, the media, heads of households, and parents, and in principle every individual are moral duty bearers. You should remember that the State as a legal duty bearer also has a duty to regulate the actions of moral duty bearers – e.g. parents, companies. – to ensure that they respect human rights.**

A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH:

- Is founded on the conviction that every human being, by virtue of being human, is a holder of rights
- Assumes that all human beings should have equal opportunity to realize their full developmental potential
- Involves a process of empowering those who do not enjoy their rights to claim their rights. It does not involve charity or simple economic development
- Supports the concept that all people, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, social status or any other difference, have a basic right to life with dignity
- Identifies rights holders (and their entitlements) and corresponding duty bearers (and their obligations)
- Integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into the plans, policies and processes of development programs, social programs and other programs

* UN Women. Rights-based approach. Retrieved from: <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/1498-rights-based-approach.html>

** Equitas. (2017). International Human Rights Training Program pp.5-18-5-19

✂ Elements of HRBA

Participation

HRBA creates channels for the participation of a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including, poor and disadvantaged people, minorities, Indigenous peoples, women, children and youth. HRBA promotes active, meaningful and continuous voluntary participation; it stresses that developing capacities for participation is an important result in itself.

- Who should participate?
- How should they participate?
- In what decisions?

Accountability

HRBA in programming demands that duty bearers be identified and held accountable for the violation or neglect of human rights. In this sense, one of the fundamental contributions of HRBA is the emphasis it places on challenging the power imbalance between duty bearers and rights holders.

- Who is accountable? And to whom? How?
- Who are the rights holders and duty bearers?

Non-discrimination

HRBA gives particular attention to non-discrimination, equality, equity and marginalized groups (which may include women, minorities, Indigenous Peoples, prisoners and the poor). HRBA requires that the question of who is marginalized be answered locally. From this perspective, people are not seen as beneficiaries but as rights holders.

- Who are the marginalized and vulnerable?
- Who should be included?
- How should they be included?

Empowerment

HRBA aims to give rights holders the capacity and the power to claim their human rights and hold duty bearers accountable. (UNDP 2005).

- Who should become empowered? How?

Direct links to human rights

The goal of HRBA work is to use human rights standards as the foundation for all development work in all sectors and in all phases of programming, from planning to implementation, with the goal of promoting human rights and human dignity for all.

- What human rights are involved?
- What are the applicable human rights standards, instruments and mechanisms (national, regional, international)?

Summary Step 1

In **Step 1** you reflected on what motivates people in communities to work mitigating religious and ethnic conflict. Here are some of the key questions that addressed. We invite you to summarize the responses in the spaces provided.



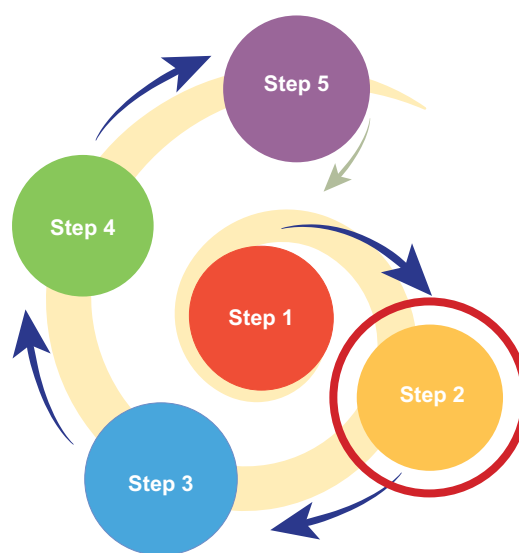
Reflection Questions	Responses
What human rights values, or other values, are important for you and your group for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict?	
Why are you motivated to take action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict? How can you maintain your motivation?	
What are the interests and motivations of others involved?	
What are some human rights affected by conflict in your community?	
How will a human rights-based approach help you to mitigate conflict?	

Step 2: Explore the context

Analyzing the context by doing a conflict analysis using a human rights lens is essential for mitigating conflict.

Each activity in **Step 2** will assist you and your group in exploring the context by:

- Analyzing the conflict and its root causes
- Exploring various identities and how they relate to conflict
- Understanding the effects of the conflict on women and other marginalized groups
- Analyzing the actors involved.



Activities in Step 2:

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06: Conflict in my community
.....

.....
07: Gender and discrimination
.....

.....
08: Tree of conflict
.....

.....
09: Spheres of influence
.....

SUMMARY STEP 2

06 Conflict in my community

Time	1 hour
Purpose	To have group members analyze the conflict in their community from a human rights perspective
Materials	Flip chart, markers, Copies of <i>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i> (available in Section C: Resources)

About this activity

In order to take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict using a human rights-based approach, we must do a thorough analysis of the conflict situation and understand how it relates to human rights.

What are the links between human rights and conflict?

The denial of human rights, or failure to protect human rights, increases the potential for the outbreak of violence. When individuals or groups find that they cannot realize their human rights, they are likely to express discontent. If they cannot do so peacefully, they may resort to physical violence.*

Warning signs of conflict

They are signs that indicate that conflict is growing or that the risk of violence is increasing. Inter-religious tensions can be related to things such as religious extremism, unequal distribution of resources, and real or perceived dominance of one religion over the other and hate speech. These can create tensions in communities and can easily result in violence triggered by random events. In this activity, group members identify the conflict and think about how it relates to human rights.

* GIZ & ZFD & DIMR (2010). Connecting Human Rights and Conflict Transformation Guidance for Development Practitioners. p. 14-16.

Instructions

30 min

Part A Small group work

1. Invite groups members to work in small groups of 4 or 5.
2. Ask each group to select a reporter who will record the discussion.
3. Invite each member of the small groups to describe the principal problems they are aware of in relation to religious and/or ethnic conflicts in their community. Specifically, they should discuss:
 - What is the main conflict issue in the community?
 - What are some of the warning signs of potential violence?
 - Who are the main actors involved?
 - Is the conflict manifested daily?
 - Is it a longstanding conflict or a newer/emerging conflict?
 - How is the conflict perceived by the different groups involved?
 - Is the conflict experienced differently by women/girls and men/boys?
4. Distribute the copies of the summary list of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) to each group.
5. Ask the groups to identify the human rights involved in the conflict and to discuss if the rights are respected or not.

30 min

Part B Whole group discussion

1. Invite the reporter from each group to present a summary of the group's discussion to the larger group.
2. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Was it easy to identify human rights affected by the conflict? Why or why not?
 - Why is it important to consider the different experiences of women/girls and men/boys?
 - Why is it important to consider how the different groups involved perceive the conflict?
 - What are some changes you think are important for your community?

End of activity ■

07 Gender and discrimination

Time	45 min
Purpose	To have group members reflect on gender and discrimination in society and how they relate to the conflict in their community
Materials	Role cards (to be copied and cut), Statements

About this activity

The specific experience of women and girls in conflict is linked to their status in societies. Discrimination against women can be further compounded based on grounds such as language, religion, ethnicity, political or other opinion, birth or other status.

As noted in the Beijing Platform for Action, “while entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict and terrorism, women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society and their sex”. Women do not enjoy equal status with men in any society. Where cultures of violence and discrimination against women and girls exist prior to conflict, they will be exacerbated during conflict. If women do not participate in the decision-making structures of a society, they are unlikely to become involved in decisions about the conflict or the peace process that follows.

In this activity, group members will reflect on the inequalities that exist in society, and in particular issues of gender and discrimination.

Instructions

30 min

Part A Dinamica

1. Give a role card to each group member and explain that two people may receive the same role.
2. Ask group members to read their cards to themselves without showing them to anyone else and to imagine they are the person on their card.
3. Invite group members to stand in line facing you.
4. Read a statement from **Statements** on following page.
5. Explain that if group members believe that the statement applies to the person on their card, they take one step forward. Otherwise, they stay where they are.
6. Continue on with the other statements. At the end, some group members will be way out in front, while others will not have moved at all.
7. Ask group members to describe who they were.

15 min

Part B Whole group discussion

Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:

- What do you think about this activity?
- How did you feel when you could not move? Or, when you stepped forward?
- What is discrimination?
- Who is discriminated against in your community? Why?
- Do you feel that you would have advanced more if your character had been a man or a woman? Why?
- How do girls/women and boys/girls experience conflict differently?
- Do certain groups of people suffer from multiple forms of discrimination? Why?
- How does discrimination related to religious and ethnic identity affect how people experience conflict in your community?
- How can you consider gender issues and discrimination when are taking action to mitigate a conflict?

End of activity ■

Statements

- You have never been in serious financial difficulty.
- You live in an apartment with a telephone and TV.
- You believe that your language is respected.
- You believe that your religion is respected.
- You feel that your culture is respected.
- You feel that your views are really listened to.
- You have never been discriminated against.
- You can go on holidays once a year.
- You have an interesting life and feel positive about your future.
- You can celebrate important religious holidays with your family and close friends.
- You feel that your competence is appreciated and respected in the society where you live.
- You can vote in national elections.
- Other people consult you about different issues.
- You can fall in love with whomever you wish.
- You have access to the Internet.
- You have adequate social and medical protection.
- You are not afraid to walk alone at night.
- You have never had your decisions questioned because of your ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation or religion.



Role cards

You are a Buddhist male living in a community that is predominantly Muslim	You are a young person studying to be a monk
You are a woman from an ethnic minority. You live in a medium size town	You are a widow with 4 children. You work as a cashier in a grocery store
You are a man who was injured during the conflict and use a wheelchair	You are a 16 year old female orphan who quit school to work
You are a 45-year-old man and are the President of a bank	You are a female migrant worker who just returned from a 2-year contract in the Middle East
You are a male journalist covering human rights issues	You are from a linguistic minority and you are female. Your first language is not the majority language
You are a young women and live in a big city with your parents who are devout Catholics	You are a male three-wheeler driver in a large city
You are a female teacher in a Hindu Sunday school	You are a woman from a rural area and from an ethnic minority group. You live by yourself in a city far away from your home town
You are a 30-year-old female government official	You are a male Director of a non-government organization in the capital city

08 Tree of conflict

Time 1 hour

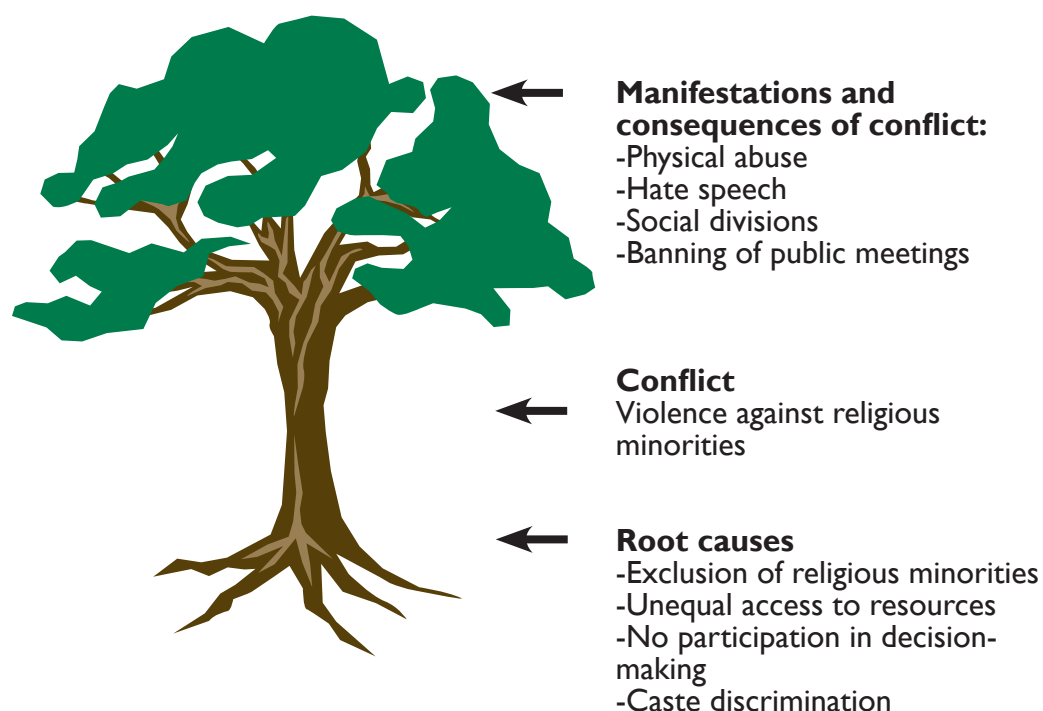
Purpose To have group members analyze the root causes of the conflict from a human rights perspective

Materials Flipchart, markers, conflict issue identified in **Activity 06**

About this activity

Root causes of conflict are generally related to unequal power relations, injustices, repression, discrimination, exclusion, and exploitation and stem from violations of human rights. Addressing root causes of a conflict can lead to more sustaining, long-term peace.

The Tree of conflict is a method for exploring underlying causes of conflict. Using the tree metaphor where the tree trunk represents the conflict, the roots are the underlying causes and the branches the manifestations of the conflict, enables us to visualize the conflict more concretely. Below is an example of a Tree of conflict



Instructions

30 min

Part A Small group work

1. Explain to the group that we will now go into a deeper analysis of the conflict issue identified in activity **06: *Conflict in my community***
2. Draw a tree on a flipchart and inform group members that the tree is the *Tree of conflict*.
3. Explain that the trunk of the tree represents the conflict, the branches represent the manifestations of the conflict on the broader community and the roots of the tree represent the root causes.
4. Divide group members into small groups (same groups from activity **06**).
5. Invite each small group to draw their own tree on a flipchart and write the conflict issue (identified in activity **06**) in the trunk of the tree.
6. Ask each group to reflect on the human rights issues they identified in relation to the conflict issue and discuss if they are manifestations/consequences or root causes of the conflict.
7. Invite the group to identify the manifestations and the consequences of the conflict in the community and write their answers in the branches of the tree.
8. Ask group members to identify the root cause for the conflict and write the answers in the roots of the tree.

30 min

Part B Whole group discussion

1. Invite a group member from each group to present the tree to the whole group.
2. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Did the groups identify the same manifestations and root causes for conflict? What are some similarities and differences?
 - Are there certain causes that are more important than others? Which ones and why?
 - Why is it important to address the root causes of conflict?
 - How do the root causes relate to human rights?
 - How do the root causes affect women/girls and men/boys differently?

End of activity ■

09 Spheres of influence

Time 1 hour 15 min

Purpose To have group members analyze the actors involved in the conflict and determine which are rights holders and which are duty bearers.

Materials Flipchart, markers, *Reference Sheet: Spheres of influence*

About this activity

An array of actors at the international, national, and community levels exert different degrees of influence on conflicts in a community and a country. From a human rights perspective, we want to understand, not only who the actors are, but also which actors are **rights holders** and which are **duty bearers** in order to enable rights holders to claim their rights and duty bearers to fulfill their obligations to respect and protect human rights.

In order to mitigate conflict, we need to identify the rights holders and analyze their capacity to claim their rights. We must also identify the duty bearers involved and analyze their capacity and motivation to promote, protect and fulfill rights.

Instructions

30 min

Part A Group work

1. Present the **Diagram: Spheres of influence**, which maps out some of the main categories of actors who have an influence on shaping the current religious and/or ethnic conflict in the community.
2. Divide group members into small groups of 4 or 5.
3. Invite group members to write down on their diagram the following elements:
 - Specific global, local, and community actors that influence religious and/or ethnic conflict in their community
 - Classifications for the actors: mark with a (RH) if the actors are rights holders in the conflict and (DB) if they are duty bearers in the conflict
 - Discuss each actor and determine the following:
 - how they are affecting the conflict. Mark (+) if they are positively affecting the conflict (i.e. working to bring about peace) or (-) if they are negatively affecting the conflict.
 - whether they have the capacity to address the conflict. Mark (Yes capacity) if they have the capacity and (No capacity) if they do not have the capacity to address the conflict

30 min

Part B Group presentations

1. Invite a person from each group to present the results of their discussions to the whole group.
2. Summarize the information provided and point out similarities and differences.

15 min

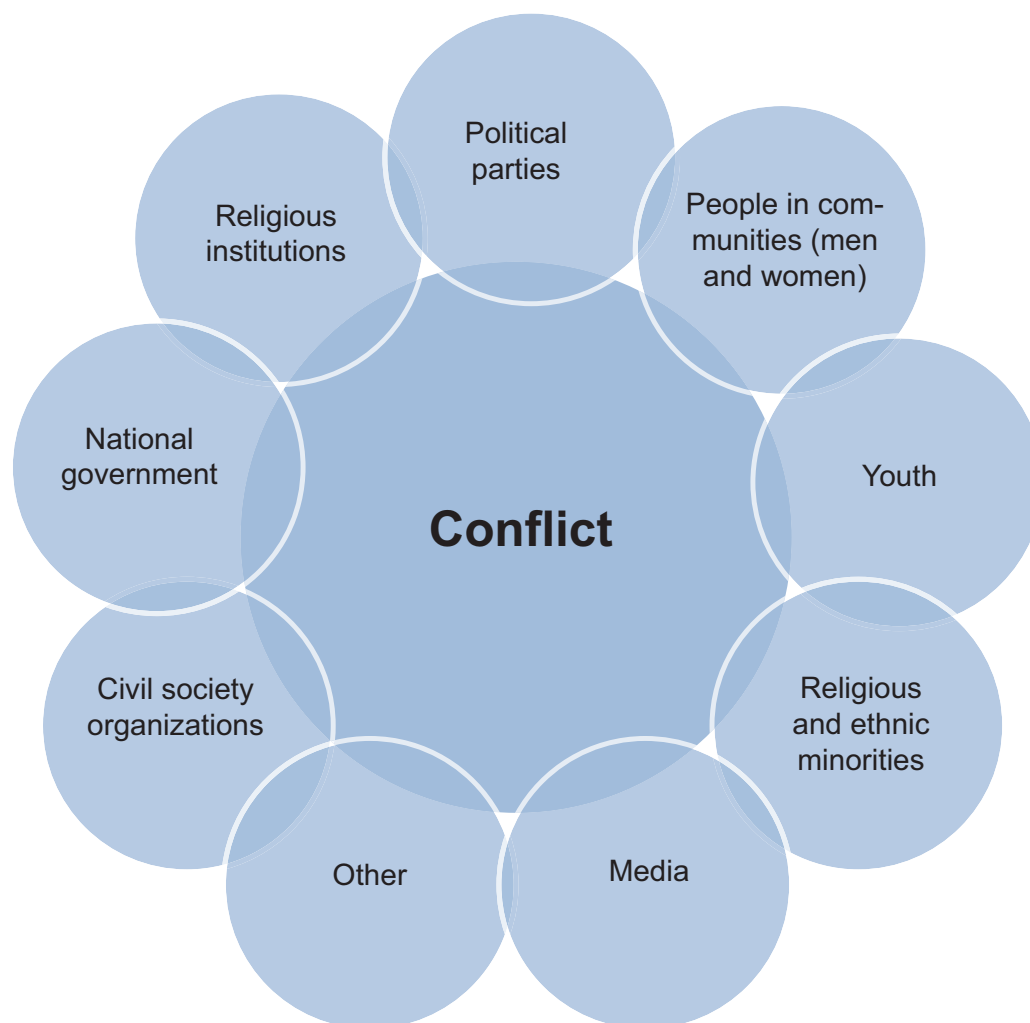
Part C Whole group discussion

Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:

- What can we do to increase the capacity of rights holders to claim their rights in the conflict? What can we do to encourage duty bearers to fulfill their human rights obligations?
- Are some of the actors you identified more accessible than others? Which ones and why? What methods can be used to approach them?
- What could be some common motivating factors for the actors to work together to address the conflict?

End of activity ■

Reference Sheet: Spheres of influence



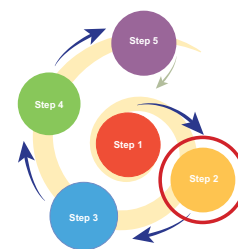
Rights holder	Duty bearer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is entitled to rights Is entitled to claim rights Is entitled to hold the duty bearer accountable Has the responsibility to respect the rights of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of the rights holders

Every rights holder has the responsibility to respect the rights of others. In this sense you can say that every individual or institution that has the power to affect the lives of rights holders is a moral duty bearer – the greater the power, the larger the obligation to fulfill and especially to respect and protect the human rights of others. In this sense religious and community leaders, civil society organizations, international organizations, private companies, the media, heads of households, and parents, and in principle every individual are moral duty bearers. You should remember that the State as a legal duty bearer also has a duty to regulate the actions of moral duty bearers – e.g. parents, companies. – to ensure that they respect human rights.*

* Equitas. (2017). International Human Rights Training Program. Facilitator's Manual. p.5-18-5-19.

Summary Step 2

In Step 2 you reflected on the context of religious and ethnic conflict in your community. Here are some of the key questions that were addressed. We invite you to summarize the responses in the spaces provided.



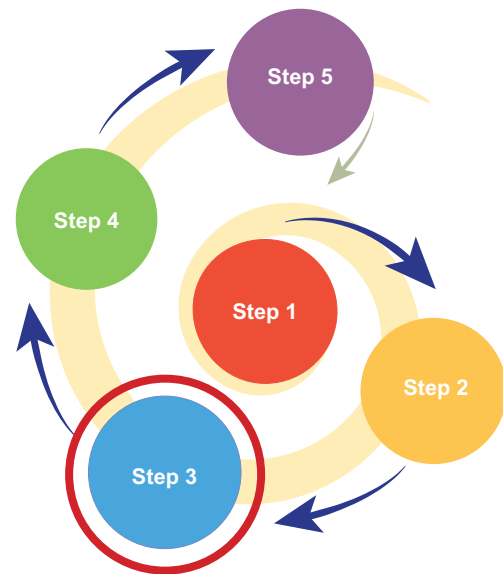
Reflection questions	Responses
What is the main conflict issue in your community?	
What are the human rights involved in the conflict?	
What are some of the warning signs of potential violence?	
What are the root causes of the conflict?	
Who is discriminated against in your community? Why?	
How do girls/women and boys/girls experience conflict differently?	
Who are the rights holders in the conflict? What is their capacity to claim their rights?	
Who are the duty bearers? What is their capacity to promote, protect and fulfill human rights?	

Step 3: Target change and plan for action

In **Step 2**, you analyzed the conflict from a human rights perspective. In **Step 3**, you will envision specific changes, in line with human rights, you would like to see in relation to the conflict you are working on.

Each activity in **Step 3** will assist you and your group in targeting change and planning for action by:

- Identifying the change you want to see
- Identifying a specific action to take
- Linking your action to human rights
- Ensuring the participation of women
- Engaging key actors and
- Using effective communication skills to mitigate conflict



Activities in Step 3:

.....
I 0: Tree of harmony
.....

.....
I 1: Identify an action
.....

.....
I 2: Link to human rights
.....

.....
I 3: Women's participation
.....

.....
I 4: Engaging key actors
.....

.....
I 5: Effective communication
.....

SUMMARY STEP 3

10 Tree of harmony

Time	1 hour 15 min
Purpose	To have group members develop a vision for religious and ethnic harmony in their communities
Materials	Flipchart, markers, papers cut into fruit shapes

About this activity

In order to be effective in our efforts at conflict mitigation aimed at building more harmonious communities, we need to envision changes that are in line with human rights.

In this activity the group will determine possible changes they envision in their communities.

Instructions

20 min Part A Group work

1. Divide group members into small groups of 4 to 5 people (Same groups as in activity **08: Tree of conflict**).
2. Ask group members to reflect on the following question:
What does religious and ethnic harmony look like in your community?
3. Invite each group to discuss what religious and ethnic harmony looks like in their community and come up with a freeze frame (participants create an image using their bodies – with no movement) or a drawing of what it looks like to them.

20 min Part B Presentations

Invite each group to present their freeze frame or drawing to the whole group.

20 min Part C Group work

1. Building on **Part A**, ask each group to think about specific changes they would like to see in their community as a result of their efforts in conflict mitigation.
2. To have group members share their ideas for changes, write the following statement on a flipchart and ask them to complete it.
As a result of our efforts to mitigate conflict, we see...
3. Explain to group members that they need to be realistic. You can give a few examples of results to help the groups:

For example, a vision for change may be:
 - As a result of our efforts to mitigate conflict, we see... more women actively participating in peacebuilding processes.
 - As a result of our efforts to mitigate conflict, we see... improved attitudes towards minority groups
4. Invite each group to come up with 1 to 3 ideas for desired changes in their community and write the change on the papers cut into fruit shapes.

More examples of change are provided in the table below:

Level	Changes in...
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness (e.g., of religious diversity) • Willingness or motivation (e.g., to include women in decision-making) • Knowledge (e.g., of human rights) • Skills (e.g., dialogue) • Attitudes, behaviour (e.g., towards minority groups)
Organization / Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of participation (e.g., of women in peacebuilding) • Power relations (e.g., women influence decision-making) • Access to resources (e.g., land titles for minority groups) • Access to information (e.g., unprejudiced news reporting)
Broader Community / Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws and policies which reflect principles of human rights • Government services (e.g., equally accessible to all citizens) • Reported number human rights violations (e.g., reduction in hate speech against religious minorities) • Respect for and fulfillment of specific rights: (e.g., religious freedom, participation) • Citizen and civil society participation and collaboration with government (e.g. including youth) • Cultural norms and practices that impact positively on human rights (e.g., changing gender roles)

15 min

Part D Group discussion

1. Draw a tree on a flipchart and inform group members that rather than a tree *Tree of conflict* (Activity 07), we are now working on a *Tree of harmony*.
2. Invite each group to present the changes they would like to see in their community. As the group presents they will place the fruit on the **Tree of harmony** to symbolically represent the changes.
3. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Was it easy to identify specific changes that can occur as a result of your work in conflict mitigation?
 - What are the similarities and differences between the vision for change between the different groups?
 - Does the change you envision affect women/girls and men/boys differently?
 - How will you know that the changes occurred?
 - What types of actions could you carry out to attain your vision for change?

End of activity ■

11 Identify an action

Time	1 hour
Purpose	To have group members identify an action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict that uses a human rights-based approach
Materials	Flipchart, markers, Role Cards (cut out) , Summary of Step 2, Activity 10: Tree of Harmony

About this activity

Taking action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict using a human rights-based approach requires identifying actions that address human rights issues and the root causes of the issues.

In this activity group members will generate ideas of actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict and identify an action they will undertake together.

Instructions

25 min

Part A Dinamica - Let the expert talk

1. Copy and cut out the role cards provided.
2. Hand out a card to each group member.
3. Ask group members to reveal their identity to the rest of the group and stick their role card on their chest so that it is visible to everyone.
4. Explain to group members that they are all experts in their roles. Inform them that as the 'experts', they were brought together for a conference on peacebuilding for the country.
5. Ask them to reflect on the conflict they are working on and to identify 1 to 3 actions that they, as experts, would like to suggest to the group, to mitigate the conflict.
6. Remind the group that the actions should enable rights holders to claim their rights and duty bearers to fulfill their obligations.
7. Invite them to walk around the room and talk with 3 to 5 other experts about their ideas and answer questions other experts might have about their solutions.
8. Ask group members, in their role as experts, to present their ideas for actions to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict to the group.
9. Note their ideas on a flipchart.
10. Lead a discussion based on the following questions:
 - How did you feel in your role as an expert?
 - Do you think the actions suggested were realistic? Why or why not

35 min

Part B Whole group discussion

1. Have the groups review the ideas for actions generated in **Part A** of this activity, taking into account the analysis of actors in activity **09 Spheres of influence** and in line with the change you identified activity **10 Tree of harmony**.
2. Drawing from this information, have the group add any other ideas for actions they may have. See some ideas in the below.
 - **Capacity building:** Actions in this area could include human rights education, awareness raising activities about religious tolerance, workshops on how to use social media to promote peace, training manuals on non-violent communication.

- **Dialogue:** Actions in this area could include inter-faith or inter-ethnic dialogues, community forums, inter-faith or inter-ethnic exchanges, building relationships between rights holders and duty bearers.
 - **Advocacy and practical actions:** Actions in this area could include campaigns to promote peaceful relationships among community members from different religious or ethnic groups, promoting changes in specific laws, policies or practices.
3. Use the metaphor of the tree of Harmony and explain that the actions are the roots of the tree, they will feed the tree to make the fruits.
 4. From the actions suggested, the group should then identify one action that they feel would be most effective in achieving the change they envisage. Stress to group members that other actions may very likely be necessary to fully achieve the desired changes. Therefore, they should view their action as a starting point and mutually reinforcing to other actions and programs aimed at mitigating religious and ethnic conflict.
 5. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - How do you feel about the action we selected to work on?
 - Was it difficult to come to an agreement on the action? Why?
 - Will the action selected help us in achieving our vision for change?
 - Is the action realistic and achievable for us?
 - Which “experts” can we consult to assist us in achieving our action?
 - Who else in the community is working on a similar action? How can we work together to achieve common goals?
 - What are the domestic, national, or international policies or recommendations that can support our action?
 - What are the risks involved in the action? What can we do to mitigate the risks?

End of activity ■

Role cards

Religious leader (male)	Journalist (female)
Police officer (male)	A local government authority (female)
Teacher (male)	Human rights activist (female)
Community elder (male)	University student (female)
Community development officer (male)	Director of a big organization (female)
International human rights organization employee (male)	University professor (female)

12 Link to human rights

Time	2 hours
Purpose	To have group members identify some human rights standards and mechanisms that relate to the issue their action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict will address
Materials	Copies of relevant pages from Section C: Resources - Human rights standards and mechanisms , flipchart, markers, Worksheet: Link to human rights

About this activity

Linking human rights to religious and ethnic conflict requires a holistic and multi-dimensional understanding of human rights. Using a human rights perspective forces a greater emphasis on structural conditions, especially the role of the state, systems of governance and issues of power in mitigating conflict.

While keeping in mind the structural and root causes of conflict, we can frame conflicts in human rights terms by identifying actors as rights holders and duty bearers. This provides a common frame of reference for addressing the conflict. Doing so requires us to identify the international and domestic human rights standards and mechanisms that relate to the conflict. This will help further the analysis of rights and responsibilities of rights holders and duty bearers. It will also inform you on which rights are morally and legally binding in your context.

In this activity group members will look at human rights standards and mechanisms related to the issue the action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict will address.

Prior to the activity, you will need to identify the major domestic and international human rights standards and mechanisms related to the issue that the group's action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict will be working on.

Summarized versions of some relevant human rights standards and mechanisms are available in **Section C: Resources - Human rights standards and mechanisms**.

Instructions

45 min

Part A Presentation

1. Present, or invite a resource person, to present the main elements of major domestic and international human rights standards and mechanisms related to the issue the action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict is addressing.

Summarized versions of some relevant international human rights standards and mechanisms are available in **Section C: Resources - Human rights standards and mechanisms**

30 min

Part B Group work

1. Explain that in this part of the activity, we will use international human rights standards and mechanisms, as well as domestic mechanisms, related to the issue our action for mitigating conflict is addressing.
2. Divide group members into small groups and provide each group with relevant copies of different human rights standards or mechanisms related to the conflict issues (see **Section C: Resources - Human rights standards and mechanisms** for some of the documents)
3. Ask each group to fill in **Worksheet: Link to human rights**.
4. Circulate and provide guidance as required.

45 min

Part C Whole group discussion

1. Invite each group to present their work.
2. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Was it easy to identify specific human rights that are related to our action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict? Why or why not?
 - Do men and women enjoy the same rights? Boys and girls? Why or why not?
 - How can human rights standards and mechanisms support our action for mitigating religious or ethnic conflict?
 - How can our action support duty bearers in fulfilling their human rights obligations?
3. After the discussion, ensure it is clear that international human rights standards and mechanisms offer agreed-upon rules for addressing conflict. For example:
 - By framing conflicts in human rights terms, and identifying actors as rights holders and duty bearers, we can provide a common frame of reference for addressing conflict.

End of activity ■

Section C: Resources - Human rights standards and mechanisms can assist you in answering some of the following questions.

1. What human rights standards or mechanisms relate to the issue you are addressing? For each one, list the specific human rights that are relevant.
2. Are the human rights you listed in *Question 1* respected in your community? Explain.
3. How can your action support duty bearers in better ensuring these rights are respected?
4. Do you know of any national policies that can support your action for mitigating conflict? Which ones?
5. Do you know of any recommendations from other institutions, international organizations or United Nations that can support your action? Which ones?

13 Women's participation

Time	1 hour 15 min
Purpose	For group members to explore women's participation in conflict mitigation
Materials	Flipchart paper, markers

About this activity

While conflict mitigation efforts need to target all relevant stakeholders, a human rights-based approach ensures efforts are made to promote equality through encouraging participation and empowerment of traditionally excluded groups, including women.

Women's participation in conflict mitigation

Women are among the most vulnerable victims in conflict situations, yet they are also pivotal for mitigating conflict and building lasting peace. It is important to pay special attention to the different experience of women and men in conflict and ensure that women are included in all stages of peace negotiations and post conflict reconstruction. The United Nations formally expressed in a Security Council Resolution that there could be no sustainable peace without women's participation in the process.

In this activity a resource person will engage group members in a discussion on the importance of women's participation in conflict mitigation.

Instructions

15 min

Part A Dinamica

1. Explain to group members that they will do a dinamica called continuum to reflect on women's participation in conflict mitigation.
2. Group members will indicate their response to each question or statement by placing themselves along an imaginary line or "continuum" extending from one side of the room to the other. The position they choose along the line will indicate their position with regard to the question. One side of the room will represent a strongly positive response; the other side will represent a strongly negative response; while the middle of the room is for responses somewhere in between the two extremes.
3. Ask group members to stand and do an example with them. After each question, invite a few group members to share why they have chosen to place themselves where they are on the continuum.
 - How is your day so far?
Great – So-So – Terrible
 - Young women in your community can express their views and be heard.
Agree – Not Sure – Disagree
 - Women take leadership positions in conflict mitigation in your community.
Agree – Not Sure – Disagree
 - Women from religious and/or ethnic minority groups take leadership positions in conflict mitigation in your community.
Agree – Not Sure – Disagree
 - Women and men have the same opportunities to engage in conflict mitigation
Agree – Not Sure – Disagree
4. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Why is it important for women to participate in our action for conflict mitigation?
 - How do experiences of women's participation differ according to their age, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic class etc?

60 min

Part B Presentation

1. Present, or invite a resource person to present some of the following points related to women's participation in conflict mitigation.

*Refer to the following resources in Section C of this Guide **CEDAW and Security Council Resolution 1325, Tips for engaging key actors** for further information on the topic.*

- What are some of the effects of conflict on women? (e.g., gender-based violence)
- What is gender equality and why is it important in conflict mitigation?
- What are some relevant human rights standards and mechanisms to support gender equality? (e.g. CEDAW, UN Security council resolution 1325)
- What progress has our community made with regards to gender equality?
- Some examples of ways women are involved in conflict mitigation.
- Some ideas/strategies to increase women and girls' participation in conflict mitigation

2. Follow the presentation with a question and answer period.

End of activity ■

14 Engaging key actors

Time	2 hours
Purpose	To have group members identify strategies for engaging key actors in their action for mitigating conflict
Materials	Flipchart, markers

About this activity

Applying HRBA to conflict mitigation requires efforts to engage a broad range of stakeholders. HRBA aims to give the capacity to rights holders to claim their human rights and to hold duty bearers accountable. It also aims to build the capacity of duty bearers to fulfill their human rights obligations.

Media, both mainstream and social may, at the same time, trigger conflict or may be allies in spreading messages of peace, unity and reconciliation.

Women must also play a key role in the process of conflict mitigation.

In this activity, group members will identify strategies for engaging a broad range of actors in their action. If possible, invite one resource person for each category of actors (e.g. women, youth, media, decision makers).

Instructions

15 min Part A Whole group discussion

Begin by explaining the importance of engaging a broad range of actors in actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict. Use the following as a guide:

Engage rights holders

HRBA creates channels for the participation of a broad spectrum of rights holders, including women, religious and ethnic minorities, youth and poor and disadvantaged people. Your action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict should promote active, meaningful and continuous voluntary participation of rights holders.

Engage duty bearers

HRBA stresses that duty bearers be accountable for fulfilling human rights. Engaging duty bearers in your action such as decision-makers, religious and community leaders and local government, will enable you to hold them accountable to their responsibility to fulfil the human rights associated with the conflict.

Engage the media

Media, both mainstream and social, can be used to escalate or to de-escalate conflicts. For example, media can be a central factor in propagating hate speech and spreading misconceptions about religious and ethnic minorities; therefore, triggering conflicts. On the other hand, mainstream media, and particularly social media can be allies in spreading messages of peace, unity and reconciliation. In order to counter negative messages, and to spread our messages in our actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict, we should engage with the media.

For more information on how to engage actors, see **Section C Resource-Tips for engaging key actors**

60 min Part B World cafe

1. Explain the purpose of the world café:

It is a creative process for collaborative dialogue, and sharing and building knowledge. The purpose of this world café is to identify effective strategies for engaging various actors in actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict based on what has been learned in the workshop and drawing on the experience of the participants' work in their communities.

2. Divide the group into 4 small groups and indicate at which table each group should begin this activity. Assign a resource person to the relevant table, if available.

3. Explain that each group should answer the question on the flipchart provided at the table, keeping in mind the use of HRBA for engaging actors.

Table 1: What are some effective strategies to ensure **women's** participation in our action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict? Please provide examples.

Table 2: What are some effective strategies to engage in **youth** in our action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict? Please provide examples.

Table 3: What are some effective strategies to engage with the **media** in our action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict? Please provide examples.

Table 4: What are some effective strategies to engage duty bearers, including **decision-makers** in our action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict? Please provide examples.

Variation: You may select other relevant actors depending on your issue and context. Some other actors to consider may include: religious leaders, representatives of religious and/or ethnic minorities, government officials, teachers, children, etc.

4. Invite each group to begin discussions. Each group should identify a “café host” who will take notes of all the ideas on the flipchart and will remain at the table for the whole activity while the others from the group travel to the other tables.
5. Each group has 10 minutes to discuss. The “café host” takes notes of all the ideas on the flipchart. Upon completing the initial round of conversation, the other members move to the next table (see the table below for guidance). The “café host” stays at the table.
6. Upon completing the initial round of conversation, the members move to the next table (see the table below for guidance).

Table 1 (e.g. women)	Table 2 (e.g. youth)	Table 3 (e.g. media)	Table 4 (e.g. decision makers)
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 1
Group 3	Group 4	Group 1	Group 2
Group 4	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3

7. The “café host” welcomes the new guests and shares the main ideas, themes and questions of the previous conversations. The “café host” encourages guests to link and connect ideas coming from their previous table conversations, listening carefully and building on each other's contributions.
8. On the fifth round, each group returns to the table where they synthesize the findings for their table. (15 min)

45 min

Part C Whole group discussion

1. Ask each group to report their synthesized findings to the whole group. (max 5 min reporting/group).
2. Record the findings for use when planning the action.
3. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Do you think we have the capacity to engage the various actors?
 - How will engaging rights holders build their capacity to claim their rights?
 - How will engaging duty bearers build their capacity to fulfill rights?
 - How can we gain visibility in order to have an influence on engaging actors to promote religious and ethnic harmony?
 - Which actors will be easier to access? Which will be more difficult?
 - Who could help us in accessing and engaging with actors?

Note: If you have been able to invite resource persons, have them comment on the results of the discussion.

End of activity ■

15 Effective communication

Time	1 hour 30 min
Purpose	For group members to practice effective communication and dialogue skills
Materials	Flipchart, markers, <i>Reference Sheet: Point of view</i> , <i>Reference Sheet: Effective communication tips</i> , <i>Case Study: Church attacked for disturbing neighbours</i> , <i>Worksheet: Dialogue preparations</i> , <i>Worksheet: Observer's checklist</i>

About this activity

Effective communication and dialogue skills, guided by human rights values such as respect, equality and non-discrimination, inclusion, responsibility, and acceptance are essential when bringing together actors to engage in conflict mitigation using a human rights-based approach.

In this activity, group members will practice effective communication and dialogue skills.

For information about planning a dialogue, see ***Section C: Resources-Essentials for inter-religious/ethnic dialogue and events.***

Instructions

20 min

Part A Whole group discussion

1. Ask the group to look at the image in **Reference Sheet: Point of view**, then ask participants the following questions:
 - What do you see in the image?
 - Does anyone have the “right” or “wrong” answer?
 - How can different points of view lead to conflict?
2. Point out that, like with the image, people often see situations from different perspectives. Conflicts happen because people interpret situations differently and have different points of view. In order to address a conflict, it is important for all sides to communicate effectively so as to have a common understanding of a situation.
3. Ask the group to describe effective ways to communicate in conflict situations and note the ideas on a flipchart.
4. Ask the group to take a few minutes to read the **Reference Sheet: Tips for effective communication**.
5. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following question:

How can effective communication, guided by human rights values, help address conflict?

50 min

Part B Dialogue

1. Explain that the group will practice using effective communication skills to address a conflict through a non-adversarial and constructive dialogue.
2. The dialogue is about the conflict in **Case study: Church attacked for disturbing neighbours**
3. Divide the group into two small groups: congregation members and community members.
4. Ask the congregation group and the community members group to prepare for the dialogue.

Preparation (20 min)

1. The groups each prepare for the dialogue by responding to the questions in **Worksheet: Dialogue preparations**.
2. Remind the groups that this is a dialogue to explore strategies for successfully mitigating conflict and to frame their interactions using the tips for effective communication.
3. Each group will appoint 2 or 3 people who act as observers. The observers

should not speak during the dialogue; but rather monitor the communication and fill out **Worksheet : Observer's checklist**.

Dialogue (30 min)

1. The congregation group and the community members group engage in a constructive dialogue about the conflict.
2. Organize the congregation group members to sit facing the community group members.
3. Throughout the dialogue, the observers from each group will fill out **Worksheet: Observer's checklist**, to indicate which effective communication skills have successfully been applied during the dialogue.
4. Signal the beginning of the dialogue and have each group in turn express their group's point of view about the conflict for a period of 2-3 minutes. During this time, the other group is not allowed to interrupt. They must practice active listening.
5. After each group has presented their point of view each group presents options for peaceful solutions to the conflict for a period of 2-3 minutes. During this time, when one group is speaking, the other group is not allowed to interrupt. Again, they must practice active listening.
6. Finally, the groups will have 4-5 minutes to respond to the suggested options of the other group and to decide on a solution that both groups can accept. Remind group members that this dialogue should be guided by human rights values. It is not a debate where one group wins and one group loses. Arriving at a solution that both groups accept means both sides win.

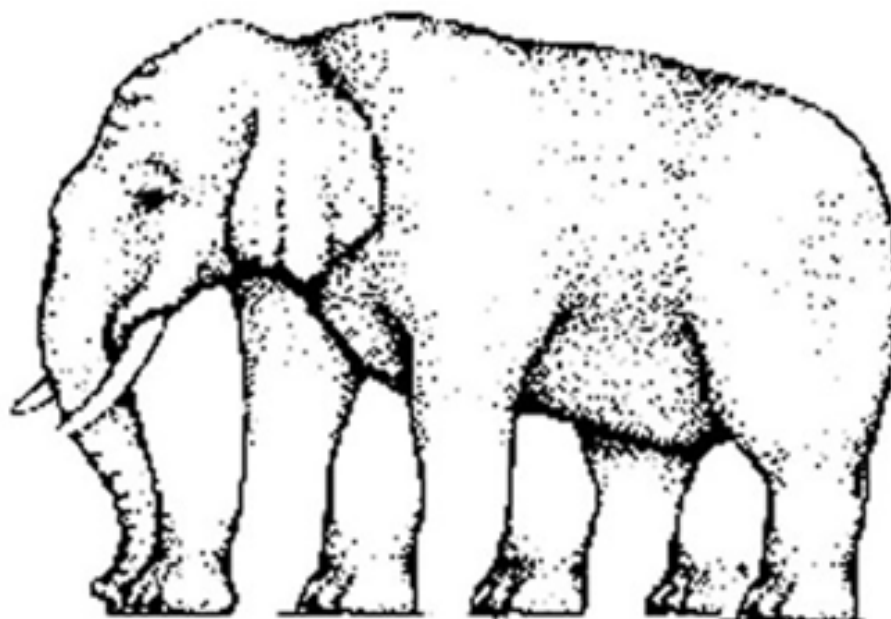
20 min

Part C Whole group discussion

1. After the dialogue ask the observers to report on how successful the groups were in using effective communication.
2. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Do you feel satisfied with how you communicated with the other group? Why or why not?
 - How would you communicate differently if you did this again?
 - Do you feel satisfied with the solution(s) the groups came to? Why or why not?
 - How can effective communication, guided by human rights values, help us in our action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict?
 - How will we ensure to use effective communication and dialogue in our action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict?

End of activity ■

Reference Sheet: Point of view*



HOW MANY LEGS DOES THIS ELEPHANT HAVE?

*National Geographic Channel. <http://natgeotv.com.au/tv/brain-games/gallery/optical-illusions.aspx>

Reference Sheet: Tips for effective communication

Effective communication and dialogue skills, guided by human rights values such as respect, equality and non-discrimination, inclusion, responsibility and acceptance are essential when bringing together actors to engage in conflict mitigation using a human rights-based approach.

Authentic communication and dialogue involve the skills outlined below.

Active listening is hearing and understanding the truth of the experience of others. It involves:

- Giving the speaker your full and undivided attention
- Listening to learn, not to verify existing assumptions or expectations
- Listening with empathy, to see the problem from the other person's point of view, to walk in their shoes
- Asking questions to clarify or expand your understanding, not to challenge or engage in debate

Authentic speaking is telling the truth of your own experience. This involves:

- Speaking for yourself, not for a group or position
- Speaking to communicate your own experience, not to persuade others
- Distinguishing your opinion or belief from fact or 'truth'
- Acknowledging the experiences and assumptions that have shaped your views and opinion
- Speaking from your heart*

* Karuna Center for Peacebuilding - www.karunacenter.org, p. 22

Case Study: Church attacked for disturbing neighbours

There are tensions within a neighbourhood in the capital city of Country E, after some residents raised angry complaints that music and praise during the congregation's late night programs kept them awake.

According to congregation leader, Mr. G, the first signs of difficulty surfaced during a monthly prayer vigil held from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. About 60 members of the congregation meet on the first Friday of each month, starting their vigil with singing outside the building where it is cooler. After midnight they move inside. A woman living in an adjacent house came and said they were preventing the neighbourhood from sleeping. According to Mr. G, she said she would raise the issue with the community and threatened to burn down the meeting house. At the next prayer vigil two weeks later, she returned to the church and, calling the believers "undisciplined," repeated her threat to set the building on fire. She then started to enlist neighbourhood backing with a petition against the congregation, which was eventually signed by 54 families.

The first violent attack on the church took place two days later, during the first of a series of weekend praise concerts during the month of August held from 5pm to 8pm. At about 7:30pm as a band was playing just outside the meeting house, a group of about 50 young people started throwing stones at members of the congregation, Mr. G said. Two women aged 16 and 45 were hurt. When the violence started, Mr. G went to the nearby police station, but he was told there were no available officers to send.

The second violent attack occurred the following weekend. A group of young men burst into the church grounds around 7:30 pm, tearing down part of a fence. Sticks and stones rained down from adjacent buildings, smashing a windowpane and sending people running for cover.*

* University Of Minnesota Human Rights Resource Center. *Lifting the Spirit, Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief*. p. 95

Worksheet: Dialogue preparations

Your group:
What is your group's point of view on the conflict?
What are the human rights of each group in the conflict?
What are possible options for resolving the conflict?
How can the options suggested respect the human rights of both groups concerned?

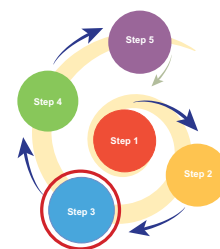
Worksheet: Observer's checklist

Please check the boxes if you think the groups are using the following effective communication skills.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS GROUP	Yes	No
Listens to the truth of the experience of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gives the speaker full and undivided attention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listens with empathy, to see the problem from the other person's point of view, to walk in their shoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tells the truth of his/her own experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaks for himself/herself, not for a group or position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaks to communicate his/her own experience, not to persuade others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distinguishes his/her opinion or belief from fact or 'truth'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses non-aggressive body language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
CONGREGATION GROUP	Yes	No
Listens to the truth of the experience of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gives the speaker full and undivided attention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listens with empathy, to see the problem from the other person's point of view, to walk in their shoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tells the truth of his/her own experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaks for himself/herself, not for a group or position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaks to communicate his/her own experience, not to persuade others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distinguishes his/her opinion or belief from fact or 'truth'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses non-aggressive body language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		

Summary Step 3

In **Step 3** you reflected on the changes you want to see and you planned for action to mitigate conflict. Here are some of the key questions that were addressed. We invite you to summarize the responses in the spaces provided.



Reflection questions	Responses
What is the desired situation in your community?	
What action will you take to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict that will enable rights holders to realize their rights and/or duty bearers to fulfill their obligations?	
What international human rights standards or mechanisms can support your action?	
What domestic laws and policies can support your action?	
Which rights holders will you engage in your action? What strategies will you use to engage with them?	
Which duty bearers will you engage in your action? What strategies will you use to engage with them?	
How will you engage with the media?	
What strategies will you use to ensure women's participation?	
How will effective communication and dialogue be used in your action?	

Step 4: Take action

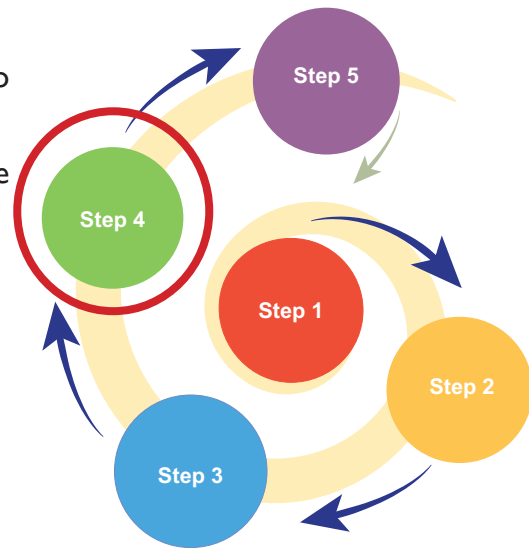
Step 4 builds on the previous steps and involves compiling the information and putting it together to prepare an action plan.

A clear action plan is essential in order to maximize the effectiveness of your action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict.

To complete the action plan ensure you:

- Include others involved in your action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict, as well as colleagues, other community members and stakeholders;
- Integrate a human rights-based approach;
- Draw on your own knowledge and experience.

Once you have completed a comprehensive plan you will be ready to **take action!**



Activities in Step 4:

.....
 | 6: Action plan



16 Action plan

Time	3 hours
Purpose	For group members to develop their action plan
Materials	Flipchart paper, markers, Reference Sheet: Case studies, Worksheet: Action Plan, Worksheet: SMART

About this activity

In this activity, group members will bring together the information from the previous three steps to build an action plan.

It is important to ensure the selected action is SMART (Specific, measurable, agreed-upon, realistic and time bound).



Instructions

20 min Part A Whole group discussion

1. Review the examples of actions that use HRBA provided in **Reference Sheet: HRBA in action** with the group members.
2. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:
 - What similarities or differences do you see between these examples of HRBA in action
 - How can these examples be a source of inspiration for us?

20 min Part B Whole group work

1. As a whole group, review the action you selected in activity **11: Identify an action** in light of SMART criteria. As a group reflect whether the action is:
 - S- Specific: does the action target a specific area for change?
 - M-Measurable: will we be able to measure if a change occurs?
 - A-Agreed-upon: do we all agree on the action?
 - R- Realistic: is it realistic within our resources and capacities?
 - T - Time bound: can we complete our action in the time available?
2. Make necessary adjustments to the action and finalize the choice of action to plan for.

2 hours Part C Whole group work

Complete **Worksheet: Action plan** as a group.

20 min Part D Whole group discussion

Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:

- Are we satisfied with the action plan?
- What can we do if someone does not complete the task they were assigned?
- How can we use our group guidelines to ensure we work together effectively as a group?
- How will we know that we have been successful in our action?

End of activity ■

Reference Sheet: HRBA in action

The following case studies provide examples of ways in which human rights-based approaches can provide a framework for mitigating conflict.

Panzagar, Myanmar

Responding to rampant public calls to hate and even kill Muslims, a group of Myanmar activists, including former political prisoners, has started an ingenious campaign against dangerous speech. Their “Panzagar” (flower speech) campaign uses social media and public events to urge others to “watch what we say so that hate between mankind does not proliferate.”

Nay Phone Latt, a leader of Panzagar, stated that “during the military regime, we fought for freedom of expression and now we can say that we have freedom of expression to some extent,” but with free speech comes hate speech. “...some of the hate speech becomes dangerous for society and the country. One word can destroy the whole country. I believe that not only the tight restrictions and unfair laws but also hate speech, dangerous speech and irresponsible speech challenge and threaten freedom of expression,” he added.

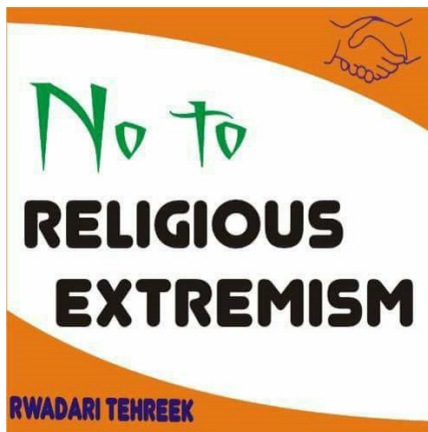
The Panzagar Facebook page obtained 9,000 likes in its first three weeks – quite an achievement in a small country where most people are not yet online. Panzagar’s symbol (and Internet meme) is a person holding a flower in his or her mouth, representing spreading peace through positive speech.*



Rwadari Tehreek, Pakistan

In 2010 the Centre for Human Rights Education-Pakistan, or CHRE was launched. Its trainings brings together students, journalists, lawyers, NGO staffers—people from Pakistan’s minority and majority communities—to help change the nation’s concept of human rights. The chairman of CHRE, Samson Salamat, describes their message “human rights are not against any religion or culture, but protect the rights of all humans, without discrimination”

CHRE’s initial offering, “Participatory Course on Democracy and Human Rights,” was introduced in 2010 as an annual program. A second course, “Participatory Course on Peace and Tolerance” covers non-discrimination principles and advances nonviolence. Upon finishing the training, participants create a plan to spread human rights and non-discrimination concepts to their particular communities—whether as students, workers, children, women, religious minorities (Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Ahmadis), persons with disabilities, or transgender.



The hundreds of CHRE-trained activists have now launched Rwadari Tehreek, a social movement for religious tolerance and interfaith harmony. Its 15,000 members promote pluralism by advocating for action against militant groups and holding rallies and educational programs to end intolerance and religious discrimination. Members work

*Retrieved from: <https://dangerousspeech.org/myanmar/> Illustration by Thet Paing Kha for the Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO)

with the government to protect educational institutions from extremism, demanding that school syllabus be stripped of hate material. They also seek an end to all forms of torture, reminding the government through letters, rallies, protests, and meetings that it is responsible for all people in Pakistan.

Rwadari Tehreek use a human rights-based approach to address issues of discrimination and religious intolerance. The capacity building ensures marginalized groups, including religious minorities and women are empowered to claim their rights. They also work with decision-makers, politicians and other religious leaders to ensure they are accountable to the human rights they are obliged to protect and fulfil. Finally, the importance of linking their actions to human rights and promoting non-discrimination are at the core of the work they do. As Samson Salamat clearly articulated, “Pakistan is a multi-religious, multi-linguistic and multicultural society, and there is beauty in this diversity. We have thousands of people working voluntarily to create awareness and respect difference, especially of religions, bridging the gap between Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and people from other faiths working together, challenging the extremist mindset. That’s a success.”* *For more information about Rwadari Tehreek visit: <https://www.facebook.com/Rwadari-Tehreek-871126582973168/>*

Artlords, Afghanistan

Since its recent creation in 2014, Artlords has strived to ‘give a voice to the voiceless,’ by painting messages of anti-corruption and hope on the blast walls of Kabul. 150 murals have already been painted around Kabul, with plans for more. Alongside its core team of 25 staff members and 10 volunteers, Artlords prides itself on its inclusive nature and encourages ordinary citizens and passers-by to contribute to the murals. In doing so, the organization hopes to empower local communities and create a grass-roots movement for social change. Omaid Sharifi, president and co-founder, explains how this participatory approach not only promotes critical thinking while harnessing a sense of community, but also shows the people’s appreciation for the work of Artlords.

“When I am painting in the streets of Kabul and people pass by, a taxi driver or just a street vendor, they call me and they say thanks for doing this. This is the moment that makes me happy and makes me feel that we are creating this art for a social cause, bringing the art to ordinary people.”

Through its artwork, Artlords has addressed a plethora of human rights topics, ranging from women’s rights to calls for further transparency. Its aim is to “open up people’s minds to new prospects,” by using “the soft-power of art and culture” as a non-intrusive form of approach. Previous mural designs include the Local Heroes series, which glorified the unsung-workers including police-woman Fariba Hami, as well as illustrated, poignant messages such as “I see you” and “A brave man supports women.”



The use of a human rights-based approach throughout the design and implementation of the activities has brought about an important impact in Afghanistan. Furthermore, although art is not necessarily seen as the conventional tool for spreading education, Artlords have proven that with determination and creativity, it could rapidly become an efficiently inclusive and emotive platform for peace building.** *For more information about Artlords visit: <https://www.artlords.co/>*

* Equitas 50 stories. <https://equitas.org/50-stories-of-change/>

** Equitas 50 stories. <https://equitas.org/50-stories-of-change/>

Worksheet: Action Plan

Develop your plan for using a human rights-based approach to take action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict in your community.

Complete the following template together with the members of your group. To help you, refer back to the information in the summaries of the previous steps.

Part A is an overview of the Action. **Part B** are the tasks involved and responsibilities for those tasks.

PART A: OVERVIEW OF THE ACTION

What is the conflict we are addressing?

What are the changes we would like to see in our community?

How will we know we have succeeded?

What action will we undertake to achieve the changes we expect to see?

Who will we engage in our action? (i.e. rights holders and duty bearers)

How will we engage rights holders in our action?

How will we engage duty bearers in our action?

How will we engage the traditional and/or social media in our action?

How will we ensure participation of women?

How will we ensure participation of other marginalized groups?

What are the main human rights issues related to our action?

What domestic and/or international laws or policies will we refer to in order to support our action?

What is the timeframe for the overall plan and for the different tasks?

What are some potential risks? How will we mitigate the risks?

PART B: TASKS AND RESOURCES*What are the tasks involved in implementing the action?*

Task and resources <i>What needs to be done? What financial, human, and other resources are needed?</i>	Person(s) responsible <i>Who will do it?</i>	Communication <i>What individuals and organizations should be informed?</i>	Date <i>By what date?</i>

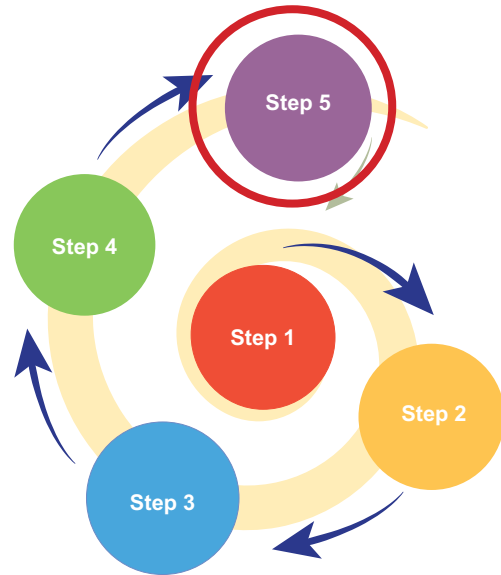
Step 5: Monitor and evaluate

As you take action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict, it is important to step back and consider to what extent your action is on track and contributing to the desired change in the community.

Observing, asking for feedback, and reflecting with others on your achievements are easy ways to monitor and evaluate if you have achieved your results.

Reflecting on what did or did not work well will help you identify good practices for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict and improvements for the future.

The activities in **Step 5** will assist you in monitoring and evaluating your action for mitigating conflict and determining next steps for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict.



Activities in Step 5:

.....
| 7: Monitoring
.....

.....
| 8: Evaluating results
.....

.....
| 9: Next steps
.....

SUMMARY STEP 5

17 Monitoring

Time	1 hour
Purpose	To have group members assess progress made so far
Materials	4 ropes (each about 1 meter long), post-its, paper, flipchart paper, markers

About this activity

Monitoring and evaluation should be done regularly during your action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict. Doing so helps troubleshoot and informs next steps.

In this activity, group members will assess progress made so far.

Instructions

45 min

Part A Individual work

1. Hang 4 ropes across a wall. Write “yes” at one end of the 4 ropes and “no” at the other end.
2. Write each of the 4 statements below on a large piece of paper:
 - I am satisfied with the action so far
 - We are implementing the action plan and it is going well
 - The activities we have implemented so far are contributing to achieving the change we want to see
 - Other stakeholders involved in the action seem satisfied about the action so far
3. Tape 1 statement above each rope. Each rope corresponds to 1 statement.
4. Give 4 post-its to each group member. Everyone must “vote” as to whether he/she thinks each statement is true or not. Group members can answer “yes” or “no” or nuance their responses by hanging their post-its wherever they want along the rope.
5. Ask group members to explain their answers and to give examples. Encourage them to share any solutions they may have to address difficulties they have surfaced.
6. Draw some conclusions about the overall process so far.

15 min

Part B Group discussion

1. Review with group members the key steps of monitoring provided below
 - Monitor the tasks you complete as you go along
 - Formally assess your progress at least once midway through your action
 - Use what you learn to make appropriate changes.
 - Ensure that during all stages you consider how your action has affected women and girls and men and boys.
2. Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions and **record** the information for your final evaluation:
 - Do you think that the action is contributing to the desired changes?
 - Should we continue to implement our activities as described in our action plan or make adjustments? If yes, what are they?
 - How can we use what we learned in this activity moving forward in our action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict?

End of activity ■

18 Evaluating results

Time 1 hour 30 min

Purpose To have group members assess results achieved

Materials Flipchart, markers, copies of ***Worksheet: Evaluation***

About this activity

In this activity group members will evaluate the results of their action.

Instructions

75 min

Part A Group discussion

1. Begin by reviewing the information from **Activity 17: Monitoring**.
2. Ask group members to share their overall impressions about the process and about the results achieved.
3. Note their reflections on a flipchart.
4. Next use the **Worksheet: Evaluation to evaluate the action**.
5. Invite group members to evaluate the results of the action in the community. Use the information provided below to guide group members in the process.

How to evaluate your action

1. Gather information on reactions, learnings, and changes in attitudes from community members and other stakeholders involved in the action. For example, you can:

- Organize meetings to discuss the action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict
- Talk to individuals from the community to get feedback about the action
- Conduct interviews or distribute questionnaires to different stakeholders concerned to assess if the results were achieved

2. Analyze information: Once you have gathered the evaluation information you will need to analyze the information. This involves:

- Assess whether the action addressed the original issue identified
- Compare intended results with actual results
- Determine changes that have occurred in individuals and in the community connected to the action
- Identify areas for improvement

3. Share results: After an evaluation you should share results with the community and other relevant stakeholders.

15 min

Part B Group discussion

Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:

- How effective was this activity in helping to evaluate the action? Why?
- Are you satisfied with the results of the action?
- How can we use what we learned in this activity for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict in the future?
- How are we going to ensure the sustainability of the results of the action?

End of activity ■

Worksheet

Answer the following questions with the members of your group.

What was our action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict?
What was the desired change? Did we achieve the desired change? Why/why not?
Did we use strategies to promote the participation of women and other marginalized groups? Please explain.
Did we enable the empowerment of women, and other marginalized groups throughout our action? Please explain.
What was most useful in the process used to design and implement our action?
What was less useful?
What can we do to ensure a longer term impact of our action?
What changes would we recommend for next time?

19 Next steps

Time 1 hour

Purpose To have group members determine next steps

Materials Flipchart, markers, ***Worksheet: Next steps***

About this activity

Mitigating conflict using a human rights-based approach requires actions that are sustainable and target longer-term change. Therefore, it is important to act on your learning from the evaluation of your action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict to support the results achieved.

Identifying successes, as well as some of the challenges will help you plan next steps. Documenting and sharing this information will serve as an important record of what you have accomplished with your action. This can be done for example, through video, media, social media, public events, poster presentations, written reports.

In this activity will enable group members to determine next steps.

Instructions

45 min

Part A Group work

1. Ask group members why it is important to determine next steps.
2. Ask them for their ideas on appropriate for next steps for their action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict.

Some examples of ideas for next steps can be to:

- Celebrate the success of your action with the community
 - Share your results so that others can learn from the work you have done (e.g., with community members, decision-makers, religious and community leaders)
 - Integrate your recommendations into a subsequent action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict
3. Note the ideas on a flipchart.
 4. Next use the **Worksheet: Next steps** to determine what you can do following the action.

15 min

Part B Group discussion

Lead a whole group discussion based on the following questions:

- How did you feel about planning the next steps?
- Are you satisfied with the plans for moving ahead?
- How can we continue to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict in our communities?

End of activity ■

Worksheet: Next steps

Answer the following questions with the members of your group.

What were the results of our action?

Who will we share the results of our action with? Explain rationale.

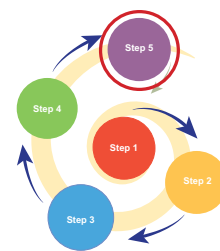
How can we share the results of our action with others? For example, through video, media, social media, public events, poster presentations, written reports?

What could we do to celebrate or acknowledge the success of the action with the community concerned? How will we plan and organize for this?

What are some other actions we will work on to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict? How will we integrate what we have learned into these future actions? How will we plan and organize for this?

Summary Step 5

In **Step 5** you reflected on evaluating your action for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict. Here are some of the key questions that were addressed. We invite you to summarize the responses in the spaces provided.



Reflection questions	Responses
What was the desired change for your action to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict? Did you achieve the change? Why or why not?	
Did you use strategies to promote the participation of women and other marginalized groups in your action? Please explain.	
Did you enable the empowerment of women and other marginalized groups throughout your action? Please explain.	
What can you do to ensure a longer term impact of your action?	
Who will you share the results of your action with? How?	
What will you do to celebrate the success of the action with the community concerned?	
What are some other actions you will work on to mitigate religious and ethnic conflict?	

Section C

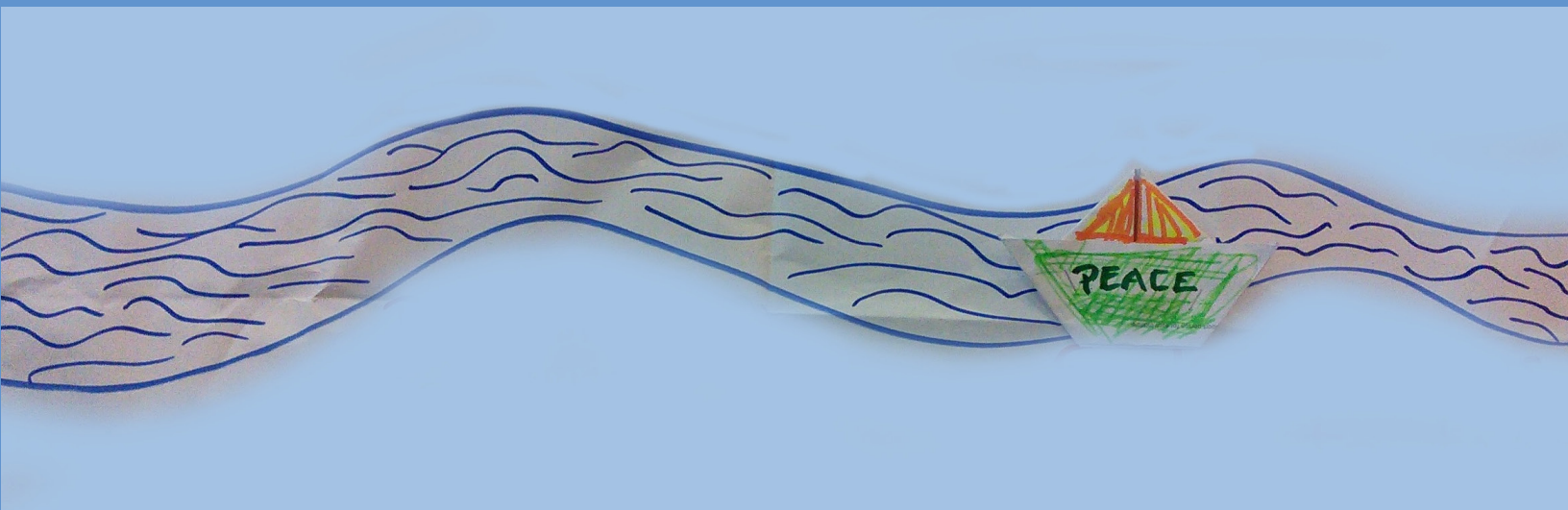
Resources

This section provides additional references to support actions for mitigating religious and ethnic conflict

1. Human rights standards and mechanisms

2. Tips for engaging key actors

3. Essentials for inter-religious dialogue and events



1. Human rights standards and mechanisms

1.1 The main UN human rights mechanisms and bodies

Human Rights Council: (Subsidiary organ of the General Assembly established in accordance with the UN Charter, composed of State representatives)

Special Procedures: Independent experts

Thematic Mandates: Freedom of expression, Freedom of Religion and Belief, Freedom of Assembly and Association, Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism, Human Rights Defenders, Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Racism, Extrajudicial and Summary Executions, International Solidarity, Torture, Health, Food, Housing, Education, Hazardous Substances and Toxic Wastes, Extreme Poverty, Foreign Debt, Water and Sanitation, Cultural Rights, Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Promotion of truth, justice and reparation, Internally Displaced Persons, Minorities and Forum on Minority Issues, Slavery, Migrants, Sale of Children, Trafficking in persons, violence against Women, Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, Working Group on Mercenaries, Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice, Working Group on people of African descent, Working Group on Human rights and transnational corporations

Country Mandates: Burundi, Cambodia, Democratic, People's Republic of Korea, Haiti, Myanmar, Occupied Palestinian Territories since 1967, Sudan

Universal Periodic Review: Peer review among States

Others: Complaint Procedure; Advisory Committee, Forum on Minority Issues, Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Working groups, etc.

Treaty Bodies: Established by treaties; composed of independent experts

- Human Rights Committee (CCPR)
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
- Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- Committee against Torture (CAT)
- Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT)
- Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)
- Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: Part of the UN Secretariat its mandate also includes providing the Secretariat to the human rights mechanisms and bodies like the Human Rights Council and the treaty bodies

1.2 The universal declaration of human rights, 1948

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) is a declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. The Declaration arose directly from the experience of the Second World War and represents the first global expression of rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled, without distinction of any kind.

The UDHR recognized that the inherent dignity of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, peace and justice in the world. Today, the UDHR is widely recognized as forming part of customary international law.

Summary of articles

The UDHR consists of a Preamble and 30 articles:

1. Right to equality
2. Freedom from discrimination
3. Right to life, liberty, personal security
4. Freedom from slavery
5. Freedom from torture and degrading treatment
6. Right to recognition as a person before the law
7. Right to equality before the law
8. Right to remedy by competent tribunal
9. Freedom from arbitrary arrest, exile
10. Right to a fair public hearing
11. Right to be considered innocent until proven guilty
12. Freedom from interference with privacy, family, home, and correspondence
13. Right to free movement in and out of any country
14. Right to asylum in other countries from persecution
15. Right to a nationality and freedom to change it
16. Right to marriage and family
17. Right to own property
18. Freedom of belief and religion
19. Freedom of opinion and information
20. Right of peaceful assembly and association
21. Right to participate in government and free elections
22. Right to social security
23. Right to desirable work and to join trade unions
24. Right to rest and leisure
25. Right to adequate living standards
26. Right to education
27. Right to participate in cultural life and community
28. Right to social order assuring human rights
29. Community duties essential to free and full development
30. Freedom from state and personal interference in the above rights *

* To consult the full UDHR visit: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

1.3 International covenant on civil and political rights (ICCPR), 1966

This Covenant was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966 and entered into force on 23 March 1976. As of May 18, 2011, the Covenant had been ratified by 167 states. It was ratified by Sri Lanka on June 11, 1980.

The Covenant elaborates further the civil and political rights and freedoms listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Preamble to the Covenant recognizes the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. And recognizing that these rights derive from the inherent dignity of the human person...

Summary of articles

Article 1 of the Covenant, the states commit themselves to promote the right to self-determination and to respect that right. It also recognizes the rights of peoples to freely own, trade and dispose of their natural wealth and resources.

Article 2: These rights will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 3: Men and women are equally entitled to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights

Article 4: In times of public emergency a state may derogate from these rights except for articles 6, 7, 8, 11, 15, 16 and 18 may be made under this provision.

Article 5: Nothing in this covenant implies for anyone the right to destroy any of the rights or freedoms herein.

Article 6: Every human being has the inherent right to life. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.

Article 7: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 8: No one shall be held in slavery; slavery and the forced labor shall be prohibited.

Article 9: Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person, and freedom from arbitrary.

Article 10: All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for their dignity.

Article 11: No one shall be imprisoned for being unable to fulfil a contractual obligation.

Article 12: Everyone has the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence.

Article 13: A non-citizen may be expelled from a state only following a legal decision unless national security dictates otherwise.

Article 14: All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals.

Article 15: No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence which was not an offence at the time it was committed

Article 16: Everyone shall have the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 17: Everyone has the right to freedom from interference with his privacy, family, honour or reputation.

Article 18: Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Article 19: Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference, and freedom of expression

Article 20: Any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law.

Article 21: The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized.

Article 22: Everyone has the right to freedom of association with others, including joining trade unions

Article 23: The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection.

Article 24: Every child has the right to protection from the state.

Article 25: Every citizen has the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, and to vote freely in fair elections.

Article 26: All persons are equal before the law

Article 27: In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.

Articles 28-47 concern the Human Rights Committee through which States have to submit reports on their adherence to the clauses of this treaty.

Articles 48-53 concern mechanisms for signing onto the treaty.

The Covenant is legally binding; the Human Rights Committee established under Article 28, monitors its implementation.*

*To consult the full ICCPR visit: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

1.4 International covenant on economic, social and cultural rights (ICESCR) (1966)

ICESCR (1966), together with the UDHR (1948) and the ICCPR (1966), make up the International Bill of Human Rights.

Summary of articles

Article 1: All peoples have the right of self-determination, and to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources.

Article 2: These rights will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 3: Men and women are equally entitled to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights

Article 4: These rights may only be limited if they conflict with other rights in this covenant and only to promote the welfare of society in general.

Article 5: Nothing in this covenant implies for anyone the right to destroy any of the rights or freedoms herein.

Article 6: Everyone has the right to work and to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts.

Article 7: Everyone has the right to just conditions of work including fair wages, equal pay for equal work, and rest and leisure

Article 8: Everyone has the right to form trade unions, the right to strike,

Article 9: Everyone has the right to social security, including social insurance.

Article 10: The family should be protected as natural and fundamental group unit of society, with special protection for mothers during childbirth and children

Article 11: Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. States Parties shall take measures to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.

Article 12: Everyone has the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Article 13: Everyone has the right to education, including compulsory primary education

Article 14: Each state undertakes to provide compulsory, free primary education within 2 years

Article 15: Everyone has the right to take part in cultural life of his/her state.

Article 16 -31 are mostly about the process of reporting to ECOSOC, and signing onto this treaty.*

* The Minnesota Human Rights Resource Center, based on UN Centre on Human Rights, The International Bill of Rights, Fact

1.5 Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), 1979

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) sets out in detail both what is to be regarded as discrimination against women and the measures that have to be taken in order to eliminate this discrimination.

The Convention was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 18 December 1979. It entered into force on September 3, 1981. As of May 5th, 2014, the Convention has 188 Parties and 99 Signatories. The Convention has one Optional Protocol.

Summary of selected articles

Article 1. Discrimination. Defines discrimination against women to cover all facets of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Article 2. Country duties. Countries must eliminate discriminatory laws, policies, and practices in the national legal framework.

Article 3. Equality. Women are fundamentally equal with men in all spheres of life. Countries must take measures to uphold women's equality in the political, social, economic, and cultural fields.

Article 5. Prejudice. Countries agree to modify or eliminate practices based on assumptions about the inferiority or superiority of either sex.

Article 7. Political and public life. Women have an equal right to vote, hold public office, and participate in civil society.

Article 10. Education. Women have equal rights with men in education, including equal access to schools, vocational training, and scholarship opportunities.

Article 11. Employment. Women have equal rights in employment, including without discrimination on the basis of marital status or maternity.

Article 13. Economic and social life. Women have equal rights to family benefits, financial credit, and participation in recreational activities.

Article 15. Equality before the law. Women and men are equal before the law. Women have the legal right to enter contracts, own property, and choose their place of residence.

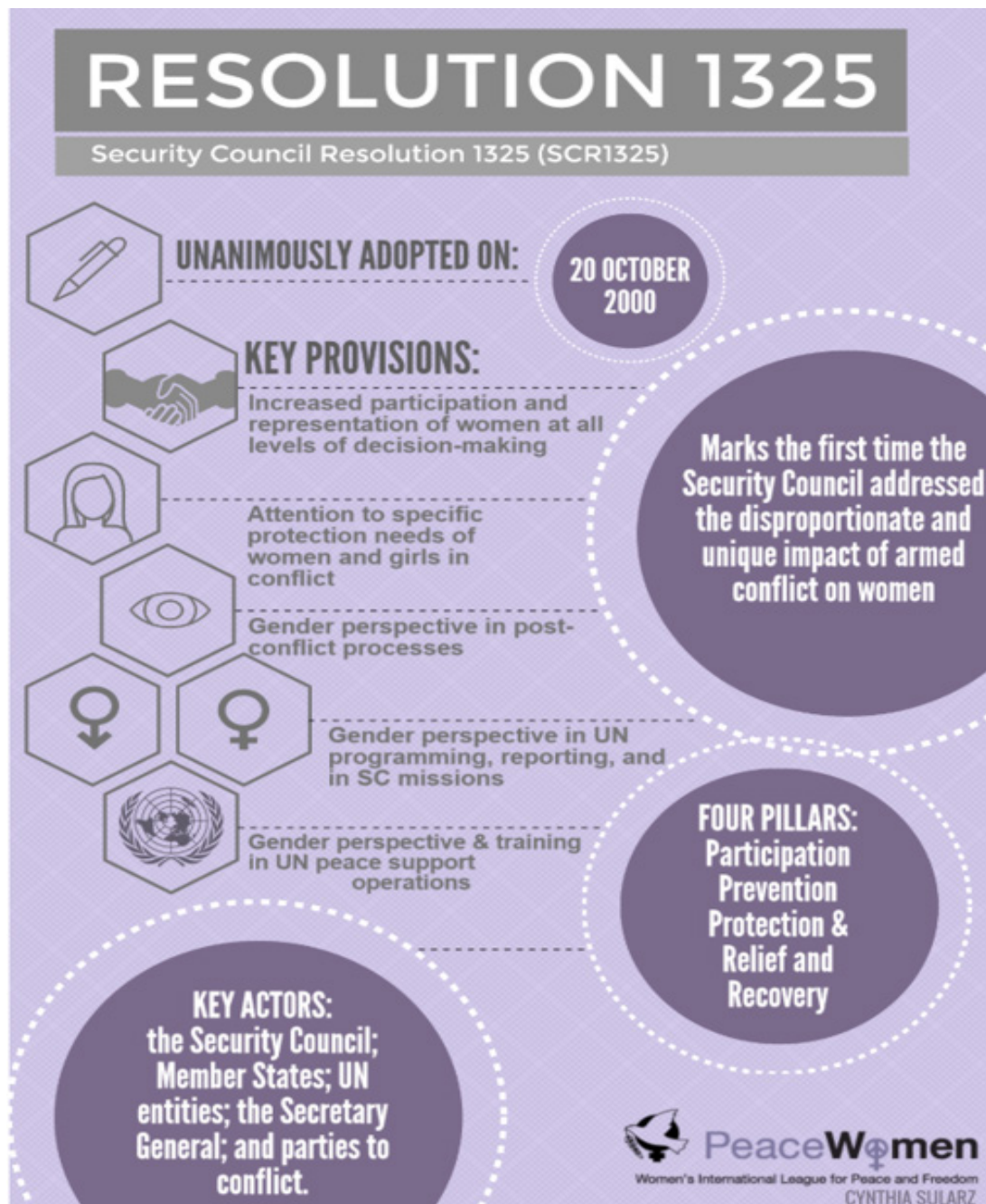
Article 16. Marriage and family. Women have equal rights with men in matters related to marriage and family relations.*

Sheet #2 and CARE Human Rights Initiative Basic Introduction to Human Rights and Rights-Based Programming Facilitators' Guidebook

*Sources: Equitas. (2014). International Human Rights Training Program. Facilitator's Manual. Pp. 5-102, Women's Treaty. (2014). Treaty Summary. Retrieved Online :<http://www.womenstreaty.org/index.php/about-cedaw/summary-of-provisions>

1.6 UN security council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, (2000)

UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 recognizes women's roles and perspectives in all stages of war, armed conflict, and peace building. Women are fully recognized as agents of change; inextricably linked to conflict management and sustainable peace. The Resolution mandates that women should be included in all stages of peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction, and also that their human rights are respected in all conflict and post-conflict situations. According to UN Security Council, there will be no sustainable peace without these provisions.*



* <http://www.peacewomen.org/SCR-1325>

1.7 UN declaration on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief (DROB), 1981

The General Assembly in 1981 adopted without a vote the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. While the Declaration lacks any enforcement procedures, it remains the most important contemporary codification of the principle of freedom of religion and belief.

Summary of articles

Article 1: Defining the Freedom, defines freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief, its manifestations, prohibition of coercion and the limitations a state can place on a religion or belief to protect public safety, order, health, morals or fundamental rights and freedoms.

Article 2: Classifying Discrimination, categorizes who might be capable of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief by four types; state, institution, group of persons or a person.

Article 3: Link to Other Rights, links freedom of religion or belief to all other rights under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two International Covenants.

Article 4: Effective Measures., encourages states and others to promote effective measures to prevent discrimination based on religion or belief and promote tolerance, understanding and respect for freedom of religion or belief.

Article 5: Parents and Children, promotes the rights of parents to bring up a child in their own religion or belief, and the rights of the child to religious education and protection against discrimination, including limits on religions or beliefs to protect the physical and mental health of the child.

Article 6: Specific Manifestations, enumerates (a) the right to worship and assemble, (b) to establish charitable institutions, (c) to acquire and use materials for religious rites, (d) to write and issue publications, (e) to have suitable places for teaching, (f) to solicit contributions and gifts, (g) to train and appoint leaders, (h) to observe days of rest and holidays and (i) to establish and maintain communications.

Article 7: National Legislation, encourages states to enact or rescind national legislation where necessary to protect freedom of religion or belief.

Article 8: Existing Protections, ensures that nothing in the 1981 Declaration shall restrict any rights to religion or belief already defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants.*

* University of Minnesota Human Rights Center (2003). Study guide: Freedom of Religion or Belief, p. 115-117

1.8 Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, 1992

The Declaration sets essential standards to ensure the rights of persons belonging to minorities and as such is a key reference for United Nations work. It offers guidance to States as they seek to manage diversity and ensure non-discrimination, and for minorities themselves, as they strive to achieve equality and participation.

Article 1

1. States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity.
2. States shall adopt appropriate legislative and other measures to achieve those ends.

Article 2

1. Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (hereinafter referred to as persons belonging to minorities) have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination.
2. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life.
3. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in decisions on the national and, where appropriate, regional level concerning the minority to which they belong or the regions in which they live, in a manner not incompatible with national legislation.
4. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to establish and maintain their own associations.
5. Persons belonging to minorities have the right to establish and maintain, without any discrimination, free and peaceful contacts with other members of their group and with persons belonging to other minorities, as well as contacts across frontiers with citizens of other States to whom they are related by national or ethnic, religious or linguistic ties.

Article 3

1. Persons belonging to minorities may exercise their rights, including those set forth in the present Declaration, individually as well as in community with other members of their group, without any discrimination.
2. No disadvantage shall result for any person belonging to a minority as the consequence of the exercise or non-exercise of the rights set forth in the present Declaration.

Article 4

1. States shall take measures where required to ensure that persons belonging to minorities may exercise fully and effectively all their human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law.
2. States shall take measures to create favourable conditions to enable persons belonging to minorities to express their characteristics and to develop their culture, language, religion, traditions and customs, except where specific practices are in violation of national law and

contrary to international standards.

3. States should take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities may have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue.
4. States should, where appropriate, take measures in the field of education, in order to encourage knowledge of the history, traditions, language and culture of the minorities existing within their territory. Persons belonging to minorities should have adequate opportunities to gain knowledge of the society as a whole.
5. States should consider appropriate measures so that persons belonging to minorities may participate fully in the economic progress and development in their country.

Article 5

1. National policies and programmes shall be planned and implemented with due regard for the legitimate interests of persons belonging to minorities.
2. Programmes of cooperation and assistance among States should be planned and implemented with due regard for the legitimate interests of persons belonging to minorities.

Article 6

States should cooperate on questions relating to persons belonging to minorities, inter alia, exchanging information and experiences, in order to promote mutual understanding and confidence.

Article 7

States should cooperate in order to promote respect for the rights set forth in the present Declaration.

Article 8

1. Nothing in the present Declaration shall prevent the fulfilment of international obligations of States in relation to persons belonging to minorities. In particular, States shall fulfil in good faith the obligations and commitments they have assumed under international treaties and agreements to which they are parties.
2. The exercise of the rights set forth in the present Declaration shall not prejudice the enjoyment by all persons of universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms.
3. Measures taken by States to ensure the effective enjoyment of the rights set forth in the present Declaration shall not prima facie be considered contrary to the principle of equality contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
4. Nothing in the present Declaration may be construed as permitting any activity contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, including sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence of States.

Article 9

The specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system shall contribute to the full realization of the rights and principles set forth in the present Declaration, within their respective fields of competence.*

* Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Retrieved from: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Minorities/Booklet_Minorities_English.pdf

1.9 Convention of the rights of the child, 1989

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international treaty that recognizes the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children. This treaty was adopted by the United Nations on November 20, 1989.

In July 1991, Sri Lanka ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and thus committed itself under international law to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights of children in Sri Lanka.

Convention on the Rights of the Child in Child Friendly Language

Selected articles:

Article 1: Everyone under 18 has these rights.

Article 2: All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

Article 3: All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

Article 8: You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.

Article 11: You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.

Article 12: You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

Article 13: You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

Article 14: You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.

Article 18: You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

Article 25: You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.

Article 23: You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion – or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

Article 37: You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.*

*To consult the full Convention on the Rights of the Child or for more information about children's rights, visit UNICEF's website: <http://www.unicef.org/crc>.

1.10 UN security council resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security, (2015)

On 9 December 2015, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2250. This is the first resolution that deals specifically with the role of young people in issues of peace and security. The resolution is an important landmark for the recognition of the positive role young people can play in conflict and post-conflict setting. Resolution 2250 has 5 main action areas:

Participation

Resolution 2250 asks governments to increase the participation of young people in decision-making at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and in mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict.

Protection

Resolution 2250 requires governments to ensure the protection of civilians, specifically including youth, at times of armed conflict and post-conflict, including protection from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence.

Prevention

Resolution 2250 calls on governments to support youth's engagement by creating spaces in which young people are recognized and provided with adequate support to implement violence prevention activities. The document also stresses the need to create policies for youth that would positively contribute to peacebuilding efforts, including for their social and economic development.

Partnerships

Resolution 2250 urges governments to establish and strengthen partnerships with relevant actors by:

- increasing support to UN bodies engaged in promoting peace, development and equality;
- considering the Peacebuilding Commission's advice and recommendations on how to engage young people during and after conflict when developing peacebuilding strategies;
- engaging community actors and empowering local people(s) - including youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders - in countering violent extremism and promoting social cohesion and inclusion.

Disengagement & Reintegration.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration are strategies used in the aftermath of an armed conflict as a way to achieve sustainable peace. Resolution 2250 encourages all actors engaged in DDR to consider the impact of these processes on youth as well as the needs of young people affected by armed conflict.*

* UNOY. A guide to UN security council resolution 2250. Retrieved from: <http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-SCR-2250.pdf>

2. Tips for engaging key actors

2.1 Engaging decision makers

For the purposes of this guide, decision makers (duty bearers) are defined as people who are in positions of power at various levels, and who are involved in decision making affecting religious or ethnic harmony at the local or the national levels. Decision makers can include elected representatives, heads of organizations (e.g., NGOs, schools), heads of government agencies, religious leaders.

It must be acknowledged that getting decision makers involved is a challenge. This is due to the perceived or real barriers encountered when first engaging with some decision makers or when trying to pursue a relationship with them over the longer term. In certain communities, for example, people do not trust particular decision makers or the decision makers themselves take a negative view of getting involved in projects. Despite the barriers, it is important to put effort into developing relationships with decision makers in order to ensure long-term success at promoting religious and ethnic harmony.

The following outlines strategies to engage decision-makers in your action:

1. Creating contact

- Identify who is responsible for the conflict/human rights issue you are focusing on. In some cases the information you need might be available from different government entities
- Check with other organizations or individuals involved in your initiative if anybody has contacts with the relevant authorities. Based on others' experience with the government, this can also be useful in terms of getting an initial idea of how receptive the decision makers in question might be to your ideas
- When you contact the people you want to meet with, be humble and friendly, and make sure to emphasize that you want to work on the issue in a spirit of collaboration
- Preparing an agenda and sharing it with the decision makers before the meeting is a good way to summarize the main points you would like to discuss and for everybody to show up prepared

2. Meeting with decision-makers

- A first meeting could be more informal, e.g. over lunch, where you can introduce your initiative and establish the officials' level of interest
- Recognize the work the decision-maker is already doing in this area – emphasize that what you are proposing is an effort to strengthen their work, not to criticize or undermine it
- Emphasize what you base your suggestions on – prepare data, figures, quotation, examples. A short document synthesizing the information is a good way of complementing your presentation
- If you are talking on behalf of a group, it is important to get authorization from people involved beforehand. Some people involved in the initiative might not necessarily want to have their names mentioned during a meeting with government officials

- It can be beneficial to have a second person accompany you to a meeting to show that persons/organizations are involved and to get additional ideas on how to interact with the government
- Be open to questions and criticism from government officials you meet with.
- Establish which next steps you will take to keep the dialogue going after your meeting

3. Following up

- Write a letter to thank the decision-makers for meeting with you
- Share the discussion points and outcomes of the meeting with the group involved in your action to get ideas on how you can take the action forward in light of the new information you have acquired
- Continue to monitor decision-makers' actions related to your initiative and follow up with them when developments are observed, both positive and negative
- If appropriate, invite local decision-makers to meet with the group you are representing to sensitize them further to the issue you are concerned with

2.2 Engaging the media

The media play an important role in informing the public of what is happening in the world especially in areas where the public does not have direct access or lacks the knowledge. It is encouraged to use the media in order to broaden the reach among the public.

To effectively engage with the media, it is important to:

- Know the players in the field, e.g., which side the journalists or media organizations you would like to engage with are on, to be able to have good coverage and avoid misinterpretation of the facts.
- Have press releases or briefing kits ready to help pave the way to good reporting.
- Ensure that people in the community using social media such as Facebook and Twitter have the necessary capacity to effectively use these tools and be prepared to provide support if required to develop or strengthen their capacity.
- Be aware of the vulnerabilities and risks faced in using different media platforms and develop strategies for safety

Social Media

In order to counter negative messages that are often conflict triggers, social media can be very effective in spreading messages for peace, unity and reconciliation. The following outline strategies for using social media.

- Put yourself in the shoes of your target audience: A successful social media strategy is mainly about targeting the right people with the right messages. To do this, you need to understand who is your audience, and what you want to say to them. For instance, if you want to reach youth in your community, you will know that they are a young population that will likely not respond to the type of information or same type of media, you would send to decision-

makers.

- Developing an appropriate message for an appropriate audience.
- Select the right social media network: Knowing your goal and objectives will facilitate decisions about which social media platform will be most effective. Knowing that you're managing sensitive social and/or economic issues will influence the decisions you make about how you want to engage decision-makers and stakeholders online and also determine the type of engagement online you would like to do (e.g., blogging, web-conference, sharing of information, etc.) *

2.3 Engaging women

Women should be engaged in all aspects of conflict mitigation. There are many ways to ensure women's meaningful participation in conflict mitigation. The following are some ideas:

- Provide capacity building opportunities for women to engage meaningfully.
- Raise awareness about the important role women can play in conflict mitigation.
- Advocate for women to take on leadership roles.
- Document success stories of women's involvement in conflict mitigation and communicate this in forms that are accessible to both women and men.
- Take into consideration intersecting factors that create hierarchies and discriminate among women. Ensure women from various socio-economic, religious, ethnic and other groups are engaged.
- Ensure women's voices are heard:
- Ensure activities are held at times that allow women to participate. For example, some women may not be able to leave the house early in the morning because they are caring for their families. Women may also not be comfortable walking back home in the dark.
- Provide child care if necessary so that women can participate
- Promote awareness for women and girl's rights and the need to achieve equal opportunities for women and men, girls and boys**

* Equitas, 2016. Engaging Stakeholders Offline & Online Using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Jousour Regional Workshop Manual

** Adapted from Equitas 2016. Action Guide Ushiriki Nguvu Yetu, Participation is our strength.

2.4 Engaging children and youth

The entry into force of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990 brought with it changes in perceptions and effective ways of engaging with children and young people. These included among others, better listening (hearing with understanding) and consultation processes and the inclusion of children and young people as active participants in matters that affect them.

Encouraging meaningful participation of children and youth is important in their growth and development. Through their participation, they also play a role in their personal development as well as development in their communities. In the process they develop their confidence, learn life-skills, and develop an appreciation of volunteerism and civic engagement.

To effectively engage children and youth, it is important to:

- Introduce the subject of values, rights and responsibilities to teachers, educators and school children within the formal and non-formal education systems, such as Sunday schools. This creates spaces and opportunities for teachers and children to engage with the values that directly underpin the discussions on religious and ethnic tolerance. It also equips teachers and children with the appropriate language and framework to address the problems.
- Engage youth in discussions on dignity, equality and tolerance.
- Create a space for youth to make decisions, develop social activities and engage in community life in a constructive manner.
- Develop leadership skills among youth so they can address religious and ethnic intolerance in an informed and constructive manner.*

* Equitas 2016. Promoting religious harmony in Sri Lanka: Lessons Learned and Good Practices

3. Essentials for inter-religious dialogue and events

3.1 Ideas and strategies for organizing inter-religious events

Below are some ideas and strategies for effective organization of inter-religious events.

1. Respect all religions present at all events by ensuring that any one cultural or religious practice is not given priority over the others. In this way, you are creating an environment of inclusion, equality and dignity for all present.
2. When making arrangements, accommodate the religious practices of the community members. This also contributes to an inclusive environment and sets an example of inclusion and accommodation. For example:
 - Be mindful of dietary restrictions. These must be considered as many community members for personal, religious, medical or other reasons may have restrictive diets. For example, for community members of the Hindu faith may require vegetarian food and Muslim community members may require Halal food.
 - When scheduling sessions, be mindful of the religious practices that community members must engage in. For example, Buddhist priests may time a required time to have their lunch and Muslim community members will need time and space to engage in prayer.
 - It is important to choose a date for activities that is suitable to all religious communities. This can be done through discussions with religious leaders and community members (e.g. Sundays would be inconvenient for Christians, Poya days for Buddhists and so on).
 - Ensure that the time, space and logistics are appropriate for all religious communities and inclusive of all people.
3. One important aspect of the participatory approach is that it enables people with different backgrounds, cultures, values and beliefs to learn effectively together and learn from each other. One way of ensuring that this process is smooth when bringing people together from different faiths, is to agree on guidelines for discussion. The group should identify points that could trigger conflict within the group and then establish guidelines to address these. The guidelines will help create an environment where community members feel safe in sharing their ideas and anticipate difficulties that the group may face and how to deal with them. Examples of group guidelines are:
 - Listen and “hear” what is being said
 - Avoid put-downs (of yourself or others)
 - Give everyone a chance to speak

4. Be respectful of community members' individual needs, especially around their privacy. Ask community members' permission if they can be included in photos or videos taken during the activity. This can be done through the registration sheet or individually by asking them prior to a group photo session.
5. Ensure that all materials to be used during the activity are translated into national languages (In Sri Lanka, Tamil and Sinhala).
6. Holding activities in various religious places is an enriching experience. Having said this, the activities should only occur where all people are allowed to enter and participate. Some religious institutions will not allow women, for example, and therefore, this excludes community members. These places should not be used for the activities.

3.2 Moderating inter-faith dialogue

The main responsibility of a moderator is to create, protect, and maintain a safe space for open communication throughout the phases of a dialogue. Moderating requires especially good listening skills, knowledge and ability of when not to talk.

This can be achieved by doing the following:

1. Setting the stage

- Clarify purpose of the dialogue
- Describe agenda and time schedule

2. Establish and monitor group guidelines

- Help group members to develop and follow group guidelines
- Model observance of group guidelines through own behavior

3. Model effective group behavior and communication

- Respect all perspectives
- Provide verbal and non-verbal support
- Listen actively and empathetically
- Learn and use participants' names
- Encourage hesitant participants

4. Oversee Process

- Manage the time; monitor individual speaking time and the overall schedule
- Keep group focused on the topic
- Encourage full participation
- Monitor emotional tones. Challenge if too safe; protect if too intense
- Watch for power dynamics within group. Prevent dominance of a single view or faction
- Co-moderating (moderating in pairs) is a good strategy for optimal management of the process.*

3.3 Opportunities for building bridges among four major world religions

Major religions of the world advocate for peace and call for solidarity with the “other”. In this section we explore 4 major religions, however we should note that similar calls for solidarity exist in various religions around the world.

Although it may seem self-evident, it is not always easy to bring people from different religions together. Different religious groups have not necessarily been exposed to each other in a meaningful way. The concept of “the other” is often heard when people speak about someone from a different religion. Tensions are easily created when people are not exposed to different religious practices and do not understand each other’s traditions and customs.

To successfully bring together people from different religious communities, it is important to find commonalities to build bridges. Peace is central to each of these religions. One way we can build bridges among the four main religions is by looking at how each religion “welcomes the other”:

The 9th assembly for Religions for peace provide a summary which is outlined below.

Buddhism

Buddhism teaches that the very distinction between one group and another, between insider and outsider, between citizen and alien, is a dangerous illusion. The renowned Buddhist teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh, teaches that in Buddhism there is no such thing as an individual self.

His point is that we are so profoundly interconnected by history, culture and biology that the very notion of a separate individual is a false illusion. Radical awareness, understood as awakening or enlightenment, reveals authentic human existence in the selflessness of the Buddha.

In the Buddhist tradition, our connections are meaningful; our separations are an illusion. When we believe in the illusion of separation, not only do we deceive ourselves, but we follow a path that will bring us great suffering. If you and I are ultimately awakened, we recognize that you cannot be the “other.” You cannot be an alien, a foreigner. When we are awakened, there is “no self” to be separated from the “other.”

* Source: Adapted from Karuna Center for Peacebuilding (2013) “A trainer’s guide to inter-faith peace building in Sri Lanka”

** Religions for Peace. 9th World Assembly. Workbook. p 17-20. Retrieved from https://rfp.org/sites/default/files/publications/rfp_9th-assembly-workbook%2011-5-13.pdf

Hinduism

Hinduism “welcomes the other” by advancing the virtue of respecting all religions that includes embracing a notion of citizenship, striving for Peace and gender equality. Hindu teachings include:

- Sarvadharmasambhava (“Equal attitude toward all religions.”) This implies religious tolerance.
- Ahimsa paramo dharmah (“Non-violence is the highest religious duty.”) This means that we must renounce violence and instead follow the path of Peace.
- Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (“The whole of the earth/globe is a family.”) This means that all the people living in all parts of the globe are a big loving family.
- Yatra Narayana tu pujiyante ramante tatra Devata /Yatraiva tu na Pujayante Sarvas tatraphalah Kriyah (“The gods reside at the place where the female is worshipped and all activities are unsuccessful where no respect for females exists.”) This means that women should enjoy equal rights with men and be given the full freedoms, rights and respect that that entails.

In Hindu culture, interdependence and interconnectedness are considered the foundation of well-being. The world is to be seen as one family and the implication here is that there is a collective responsibility for community and societal issues.

Actions that weaken the community diminish the individual. Equally, the community is strengthened by the contributions of the individual. People work together to care and provide for each other, rather than focus on individual needs

Christianity

In the New Testament, Jesus tells us to “Welcome the Other” for “What you do to the least of my brothers and sisters you do unto me.” “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God We love because God first loved us.”

Affirming the paramount Jewish imperative of “love of God and love of neighbor,” Jesus taught in the Parable of the Good Samaritan that the religious “other” (the Samaritan) was a true neighbor when he assisted a man found beaten and bleeding on the road. In the teaching, Jesus tells his interlocutor (a Jewish lawyer) to “go and do the same yourself.”¹⁹

Jesus told his followers that when they fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger, clothed the naked, and visited the sick and those in prison, they were doing it to him. When they failed to do those things, they failed to serve him.

Islam

In the Holy Qur’an, the importance of “Welcoming the Other” is clearly stated: “O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made “you nations and tribes that ye may know one another.”²¹ The Qur’an teaches that believers should “serve God ... and do good to ... neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer that you meet, [and those who have nothing].”²²

In 662 AD, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) fled persecution in Mecca and sought refuge in Medina. This hijrah, or migration, came to symbolize the movement of Muslims from lands of oppression to those of Islam. Moreover, the hospitable treatment of Muhammad by the people of Medina embodies the Islamic model of “Welcoming the Other” contained in the Qur’an. This responsibility is formalized in the fourth surah of the Holy Qur’an, which states that: “He who emigrates in the path of God will find frequent refuge and abundance.”