

2019-2024

Strategic Plan Summary

equitas

educate. empower. change.





Overview

Over the past five years, Equitas' programs have been tested and shown their capacity to shape positive social change. Combining three pillars - the systematic application of participatory human rights education (HRE) methodologies with the principles of a human rights-based approach (HRBA) and a strong grounding in gender-based analysis – Equitas has demonstrated significant capacity to change attitudes and behaviours and provide the type of learning experiences that empower people to emerge as human rights changemakers.

During the next 5 years, Equitas will continue to apply HRBA, gender-based analysis and an intersectional approach to deliver human rights education activities that address systemic discrimination, exclusion and other forms of human rights violations.

In doing so, Equitas will:

- Strengthen our capacity to **support human rights changemakers** in bringing about transformational and sustainable changes for rights-holders experiencing human rights violations, in particular women, children and youth
- Prioritize an **intersectional approach** to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in our programs
- Document and **share lessons learned and good practices**, contributing to the development of innovative solutions to entrenched patterns of discrimination and exclusion
- Further **diversify our financial partnerships** and sources of revenues to ensure a sustainable future and a greater capacity to be innovative and responsive to our partners' needs and the changing global context
- **Consolidate our organizational structure** and systems to ensure we are getting the maximum return from our resources and are prepared for future growth
- **Invest in our team** so that they can realize their full potential in contributing to Equitas' mission

Our Mission

Equitas advances equality, social justice and respect for human dignity through transformative human rights education programs in Canada and around the world.

To deliver on our mission, Equitas’ programming contributes to the empowerment of individuals and groups that are subject to discrimination, exclusion and other forms of human rights violations to challenge inequality and discrimination and take action to respect, protect and defend human rights.



Our Vision of the World

Equitas is working towards a world in which:

- **Human rights education** is a process of lifelong learning for all
- Positive values, such as non-discrimination, respect for diversity, gender equality, inclusion and solidarity, are shared and contribute to a sense of **common humanity**
- Individuals and groups are **empowered with knowledge and skills** to take action to claim and defend their own human rights and the rights of others
- Barriers to **meaningful participation** are removed and **collaboration and equitable partnerships** are encouraged so that individuals and groups, particularly women, children and youth, have opportunities to reach their full potential
- **Intersecting forms of discrimination and exclusion** are understood and addressed
- **Local leadership** capacity emerges to influence decision-makers and hold governments **accountable** for their actions or inaction in respect of human rights

Our Values

Equitas’ values speak to the way we approach our work and how we intend to go about achieving the results outlined in this plan. They represent our collective will to live and work in a way that is consistent with human rights values and are rooted in the values which motivate and inspire members of the Equitas team. They challenge us to constantly reflect upon and improve our practice.

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|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Equality & Non-discrimination | • Mutual Respect and Trust |
| • Meaningful Participation | • Equitable Partnership |
| • Accountability | • Innovation |

Our Strategic Approach

Our new Theory of Change adopts a **holistic approach** to advancing human rights and gender equality through **knowledge & capacity-building, movement building, and influencing decision-makers**. During the next five years, Equitas will continue to provide knowledge, skills and tools to support the empowerment of groups that are subject to discrimination, exclusion and other forms of human rights violations, particularly women, children and youth. In order to do so, we will further sharpen our methodological tools and approaches to ensure that we remain on the leading edge of human rights education and that our capacity-building programs are benefitting the people who are most in need.

Our programming will evolve so that we can play a greater role in supporting our partners and the alumni of our programs to connect with key stakeholders and participate in **broader social movements** that are advancing human rights and gender equality. We will also be more deliberate in ensuring that the combination of capacity-building and movement building is directed at influencing decisions and policy-making which favour human rights.

We will continue to reinforce our capacities as a **knowledge organization** so that we can play an even more active role in documenting and sharing knowledge and good practices linked to our mission and programs. In doing so, we will reinforce our positioning as a leader in human rights education, and more specifically **the links between HRE and HRBA, gender-based analysis and evaluation**. We will apply an **intersectional approach** to understand and address the multiple and reinforcing forms of discrimination and exclusion which create barriers to participation and contribute to the marginalization of many. Our commitment to knowledge will drive innovation within the organization.

Equitas remains committed to working for sustainable change and developing lasting and mutually beneficial **partnerships**. Nevertheless, as the pace of change in the world is getting faster, Equitas must become **more agile** and capable of responding to emerging challenges and seize new opportunities as they arise.

To succeed, we must also **invest in our team**, putting in place the conditions to recruit and retain high calibre staff and providing opportunities for them to grow within the organization and contribute to their full potential.

Having lived through a period of significant growth, we must also take time to invest in **consolidating our management and administrative systems** before taking on significant new growth. This will require investing energy and resources to further strengthen our communications capacity and ability to raise revenues from a diversity of sources. Our information management systems and human resources practices must also be updated to reflect our new size and meet the needs of our new strategic plan.

equitas THEORY OF CHANGE

ULTIMATE OUTCOME

Equitas human rights education programs contribute to the empowerment of groups subject to discrimination, exclusion and other forms of human rights violations, in particular women, children and youth

RESULTS



Strengthened leadership in community life



Strengthened human rights movements



Improved practice of human rights educators to engage and influence decision-makers

ACTIONS

KNOWLEDGE & CAPACITY BUILDING



FACILITATING COLLABORATION

POLICY DIALOGUE & ENGAGEMENT WITH DECISION MAKERS

PRINCIPLES & APPROACHES

Human rights are universal & indivisible

Human rights-based approach

Intersectional approach

Gender equality

Participation

Partnership



Our Strategic Goals & Results

Goal 1 Program Delivery

In targeted countries and regions, Equitas will deepen the impact of its programming to empower individuals and groups that are subject to discrimination, exclusion and other forms of human rights violations, in particular women, children and youth.

Results

- 1 Increased local leadership and mobilization of groups** experiencing exclusion and discrimination, particularly women, children, and youth
- 2 Strengthened human rights movements** to promote and protect human rights and gender equality
- 3 Improved practice of human rights educators** to engage and influence decision-makers to fulfill state human rights obligations
- 4 Increased capacity of strategic partners** to lead implementation of initiatives contributing to the empowerment of women, youth and children



Goal 2 **Knowledge and Communications**

Equitas will be recognized in Canada and internationally as an innovative leader in terms of methodology and the design and delivery of effective human rights education programs.

Results

- 1** **Increased sharing of experiences and documentation of lessons learned** and good practices which are subsequently being embedded in the work of human rights educators and contributing to innovation
- 2** **Equitas produced educational materials and publications, website and online channels are recognized as valuable resources** about human rights education and human rights-based approaches
- 3** Targeted influencers and **decision-makers are more aware of the activities, results, success stories** and good practices of Equitas and our partners
- 4** Targeted influencers and **decision-makers are engaging in activities** to advance the goals and mission of Equitas and our partners.
- 5** **Equitas is engaging in targeted activities** to influence Canadian Government and international organizations practice and policy related to human rights education, HRBA and gender equality.



Goal 3 **Financial Sustainability**

Equitas will have more stable and more diverse sources of funding to reinforce its long-term sustainability and independence.

Results

- 1** **Relationship strengthened with Global Affairs Canada** and other key Federal Government stakeholders
- 2** **A minimum of \$5.6 million in project fundraising secured** on an annual basis
- 3** Existing relationships strengthened and new **relationships developed with institutional donors**
- 4** **Relationships strengthened with key corporate partners,** private philanthropists and foundations
- 5** **Increased untied fundraising revenues to \$250,000/year** by 2020-21 to invest in strategic innovative initiatives and consolidate capacity to deliver strategic results
- 6** **New targets established for 2021-2024** to ensure continued investments and sustainability
- 7** **Feasibility explored and decision made** regarding opportunities to offer training on service-offer basis



Goal 4 **Organizational Consolidation**

Equitas will review and reinforce its structure as well as its management and financial systems to consolidate its growth over last five years and ensure a sustainable future.

Results

- 1** **Equitas working conditions support staff** in being able to realize their full potential to contribute to the Equitas mission
- 2** **Increased efficiency and effectiveness of internal teams** as well as greater capacity to adjust to a changing environment and seize strategic opportunities
- 3** **IT systems supporting efficient and secure management** of Equitas knowledge and data
- 4** **Board members actively contributing to the mission** and achievement of the strategic plan
- 5** **Equitas reinforces its reputation for strong governance** and financial accountability



Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education
666 Sherbrooke West, Suite 1100, Montréal, QC, Canada H3A 1E7
www.equitas.org