

Evaluation Report

December 2007
Montréal
Québec, Canada

28th International Human Rights Training Program

IHRTP 2007

Participants speak out -
quotes from the IHRTP:

Change will happen with or without us; we are here to give this change a better direction. Nous avons tous une nécessité de contribuer à l'édification d'une culture des droits humains. I think giving people a chance to talk and say what she/he knows or her/his experience would make me learn more than what I only know. Humilité, tolérance, patience et amour. I am passionate about continuing my work and see my future intimately linked with human rights. J'avais des idées préconçues sur beaucoup de choses. Ce n'est plus le cas maintenant et à jamais. De plus, j'ai été convaincu qu'il faut savoir transcender les faits, les actes, les comportements pour pouvoir faire un jugement équitable. **Globalization has left an indelible impression in my mind. Think local, act global.** Les droits humains sont pour la promotion humaine, la promotion de la paix, de la justice, sociale, et de l'égalité. Au total, il n'y a pas de développement sans le respect des droits humains. **Being passionately aware that I could be wrong.** J'ai toujours pensé que chaque personne est une pierre (quelque soit sa provenance) utile pour la construction de l'édifice qu'est notre monde manifeste. I have a much more **global vision of what HRE is.** C'est un impératif d'être un citoyen du monde en respectant et en reconnaissant les diversités culturelles pour une culture universelle des droits humains.



**Equitas - International Centre for Human Rights
Education**

2007 International Human Rights Training Program

Evaluation Report

December, 2007

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Executive Summary

This is the Evaluation Report for the 28th annual International Human Rights Training Program (IHRTP) prepared by Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education (Equitas). The Program took place at John Abbott College, in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Québec, June 10 – 29, 2007. This report is mainly addressed to all program stakeholders, which include participants, facilitators, co-facilitators, resource persons, Equitas staff as well as IHRTP alumni, funders and Canadian Embassies, Consulates and High Commissions.

The 2007 session of the IHRTP brought together 130 participants (including 6 returning alumni who attended as co-facilitators) from 61 countries. It also included 8 facilitators, 25 resource persons, 23 Equitas staff members, and 9 student interns. In addition, over 85 volunteers contributed time, services or goods.

The IHRTP is at the heart of the activities of Equitas. This intensive three-week training is an intermediate level program intended primarily for members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) involved in the advancement of human rights through human rights education. Some representatives of government agencies and national human rights institutions (NHRIs) also participated in this program. The program is designed to provide participants with essential practices and conditions for fostering transformative learning¹. It uses a participant-centred approach that encourages reciprocal learning through an exchange of experiences among participants, facilitators and resource persons.

The focus of the IHRTP is oriented towards strengthening the capacity of human rights organizations to undertake human rights education (HRE) efforts (e.g., training, awareness campaigns, information dissemination, and advocacy) aimed at building a global culture of human rights.

The results from the IHRTP evaluations clearly indicate that the program is achieving the desired results. Regarding the 2007 IHRTP, an average of ninety-seven percent (97%) of participants agreed or strongly agreed that overall program objectives were met. Moreover, ninety-eight percent (98%) of participants, on average, stated that the objectives of the streams (or sections) of the program were relevant to their current human rights work. Ninety-six percent (96%) of participants agreed that women's right issues were adequately discussed throughout the IHRTP.

1 Transformative learning theory according to Mezirow (2000) suggests that individuals can be transformed through a process of critical reflection. Transformative learning implies that the most significant learning occurs in the communicative domain which "involves identifying problematic ideas, values, beliefs and feelings, critically examining the assumptions upon which they are based, testing their justification through rational discourse and making decisions predicated upon the resulting consensus."



Part I: Program Description

Program Goal and Objectives

Program Goal

The overall goal of the IHRTP is to strengthen the capacity of human rights organizations to undertake human rights education (HRE) efforts (e.g., training, awareness campaigns, information dissemination, and advocacy) aimed at building a global culture of human rights.

Program Objectives

The four overarching objectives of the program are to enable participants to:

- analyze the issues and situations encountered in the work of their organizations using a framework based on internationally accepted human rights values and principles
- explore ways in which human rights education can increase the effectiveness of their human rights work
- increase their capacity to apply their learning within their organizations and their society
- network and explore partnership activities essential to furthering the cause of human rights

Program Methodology

Program Instructional Design Model – The Learning Spiral

The instructional design model used by Equitas for the IHRTP and all of its other training programs is “The Learning Spiral” (refer to Figure 1). It is a participant-centred, experience-based model which incorporates principles of adult experiential learning. The underlying premise is that the curriculum acts as a framework for drawing out content based on participants’ experiences. Participants and facilitators commit to engaging in a process of mutual teaching and learning. This design includes many of the essential practices and conditions conducive to transformative learning that Equitas would like participants to learn and use in their own human rights education work, as they are appropriate.

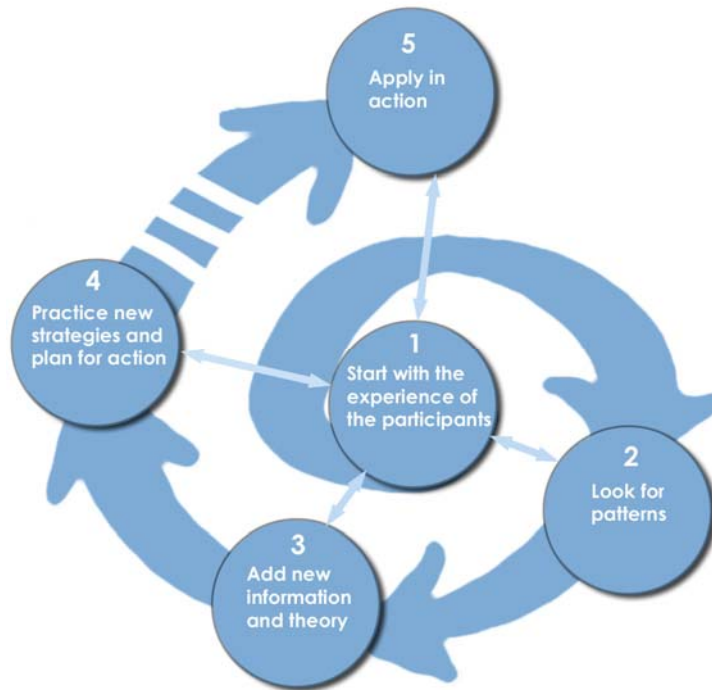


Figure 1–The Learning Spiral

Group Setting for Transformative Learning

During the IHRTP, participants worked in eight (8) working groups of 12 to 18 members for most of the program. There were two French and six English language groups. The guiding principle for the formation of groups was maximum diversity in terms of professional background, type of organization, and country of origin while at the same time ensuring a gender balance.

Each group was assigned a facilitator, and in some cases a co-facilitator (i.e., 6 co-facilitators for the 8 groups), who were alumni of previous sessions of the IHRTP invited back to further develop their HRE/facilitation skills. The role of the facilitators and co-facilitators is to provide guidance in achieving the objectives of the IHRTP as the participants work through activities, which include large and small group discussions, critical reflection activities, case studies and an extensive simulation activity. Facilitators and co-facilitators are selected for their ability to effectively support the learning process, for their knowledge of human rights and their experience in adult education methodology. At various points during the IHRTP, the eight (8) working groups are reorganized or divided into different groupings to further promote exchange of experiences and networking among the participants.



Program Overview

The IHRTTP is an intensive, intermediate-level training program that focuses on international human rights standards, current human rights issues and human rights education strategies. The exploration of human rights principles and instruments, HRE methods and techniques, ongoing critical reflection and inquiry, extensive sharing of experiences and continual evaluation allow participants to strengthen their capacity to engage in effective human rights education.

Pre-Training Assignment (PTA)

All participants selected were asked to complete and return to Equitas a pre-training assignment (PTA) before the start of the program. The PTA provided background information about the participant's knowledge and experience, about his/her organization's work and about the human rights context in which their work is carried out. The information from the PTA was analyzed and then shared with group facilitators, resource persons and Equitas staff during the Program. It also provided baseline data for ongoing evaluation of learning and progress over time. More specifically, the assignment involved having participants:

- rate their pre-training knowledge of the international human rights system, human rights instruments and their level of expertise in human rights education
- reflect on their training needs and what they could offer in terms of knowledge and experience
- prepare a description of the situation in their respective countries with regard to human rights and human rights education

Week 1

The week began with participants getting to know the members of their working group and engaging in activities that helped them to establish the groundwork for developing a productive group dynamic based on mutual respect. Participants also explored the notions of conflict and conflict transformation in a human rights education context. They became familiar with the overall course content and methodology and began a process of reflection on their societies, the human rights work of their organizations and their own role within those organizations. Participants practiced debating skills by engaging in a debate on the role of self-interest in human rights education. They also reflected on the universality of human rights, examined their personally held beliefs on the notion of gender equality as well as engaged in discussions around the underlying principles and values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Participants were also asked to examine a number of definitions of a 'Culture of Human Rights' and determine the roles and responsibilities of different groups in society in building a global culture of human rights.



Week 2

Participants began the second week discussing and exploring links and differences between the fields of conflict transformation and human rights. They then explored the trends associated with globalization and examined their roles as human rights workers in the current global context. Participants were also provided with an overview of the reform of the UN Human Rights system, including the newly created HR Council. Through case studies and discussions, participants further explored applicability of some key³ international human rights instruments in their work. Using Open Space Technology, participants had the opportunity to discuss human rights issues that were of particular importance to them.

Week 3

In the third week, participants were re-grouped by geographic region providing them with an opportunity to work together to examine key components of effective monitoring and advocacy and the role of these activities in educating about human rights. Participants also had the chance during this final week to further hone their training skills through the “Human Rights Education Marketplace” session. The Marketplace involved participants developing and demonstrating human rights education activities as well as evaluating the activities developed by others. Participants also became familiar with methods of educational evaluation.

Individual Plan for Putting Learning into Action

One of the objectives of the IHRTP is to provide participants with strategies and techniques to network and explore partnership activities essential to furthering the cause of human rights. Participants were encouraged to retransmit the knowledge and skills acquired during the program within their own organization and their community at large. The emphasis throughout the program is on critical analysis, reflection and practical application leading to the development of strategies for future action. The Individual Plan, which participants began to work on in Week 1 and continued to develop throughout the 3 weeks, was designed to provide participants with a framework for developing a concrete plan for putting their learning into practice once they return home in order to increase their organization’s capacity to conduct HRE. This component of the program was piloted in the 2001 session and continues to be an important part of the IHRTP.

³ ICCPR, ICESCR, CEDAW, CRC, CERD, and the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.



Participant Selection

Equitas' well-developed selection process ensured that the participants selected were from organizations with the greatest potential for local human rights education initiatives and capacity, and were committed to retransmit the knowledge and skills acquired during the IHRTP. Overall gender balance and geographic representation were also taken into consideration. Equitas partner organizations in the regions and organizations with links to the broader human rights community provided names of potential candidates for the IHRTP. In addition, Equitas staff involved in regional and thematic initiatives throughout the year recommended organizations that could benefit from the IHRTP. This system of recruiting from trustworthy sources has proven successful in attracting appropriate candidates for the Program. Equitas received 755 applications to participate in this year's IHRTP. To be accepted as participants to the IHRTP, candidates must have fulfilled the following criteria:

- be an active member for at least two years in a non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO), community-based organization (CBO), or from national human rights institution (NHRI)⁴ with an established a record for effective action
- be from an organization involved in human rights education activities such as training sessions, workshops, public awareness campaigns, advocacy, monitoring, etc.
- be in a position to influence the human rights education work of the organization
- be aware of human rights principles and major international instruments
- receive the commitment from the organization and be committed to transferring the knowledge and skills gained to colleagues and to others with whom they work
- be sensitive to the issues which arise when working in multicultural groups and respectful of diversity
- proficient in either English or French

⁴ In a limited number of cases, consideration will be given to candidates affiliated with other types of organizations involved in human rights that have a demonstrated commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights.



Participant Profiles

This year's session brought together 130 participants (55 men and 75 women) from 61 countries (refer to Table 1). At this year's IHRTP there were about 27% fewer men than women.⁵ Ninety-two (92) participants were English-speaking and thirty-eight (38) were French-speaking.

Table 1: IHRTP Participants by Region.

Region	Number of Participants
South Asia	17
South East Asia	23
English Africa	17
French Africa	26
Middle East	13
Latin America and Caribbean	15
Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia	13
Canada and USA	4
Other	2
TOTAL	130

Changes Made to the 2007 Session of the IHRTP

Based on the feedback gathered from the 2006 IHRTP evaluation and building on the recommendations of the 2005 review, the following list describes the three main content changes incorporated into the 2007 session:

- Particular attention was given this year to gender mainstreaming throughout the program. This involved the following:
 - adding reflection questions on gender, equality and women's rights,
 - a gendered perspective to conflict transformation,
 - better integration of gender issues within the various panel presentations, and
 - having participants design an advocacy campaign on gender-based violence.
- Enhancing the potential for transformative learning by having participants reflect on changes that can result from their HRE work at the individual, organizational and societal levels. Questions were added to the Individual Plan to meet this goal.

⁵ Equitas strives to achieve gender balance and regional representation while selecting participants. However, the challenges posed to participants in acquiring an entry visa to Canada and making international travel arrangements often conspire against having an equal number of men and women participants.



- Strengthening the use of new information technologies (i.e., “Equitas Community”) by promoting its usage among participants, facilitators, and Equitas staff. A presentation on the use of the Equitas Community was added to the Program. A number of participants maintained a blog during the 3-week program, while others participated in discussions on issues emerging during the course.

In addition to the above, the following process change was also incorporated:

- Strengthening the capacity to conduct long-term evaluation and impact assessment by improving baseline data gathered through the application forms and the pre-training assessment (PTA) and by developing a coding system to monitor IHRTP alumni who participate in follow-up activities organized by Equitas and/or who complete 6-month and 24-month evaluation questionnaires.



Part II: Program Evaluation

Evaluation Method

To ensure that the content and methodology of the IHRTP remained current and relevant, Equitas reviewed the program from various perspectives. In addition to the feedback from participants, facilitators and resource persons, the Equitas Programs Committee (a joint Board and staff committee) also assesses the IHRTP's ability to meet the evolving needs of human rights workers in the changing global context of human rights.

This evaluation assesses the content, methodology and delivery of the IHRTP, focusing specifically on:

- Program objectives and stream objectives
- Program content and methodology
- Formal presentations
- Training materials
- Facilitators and co-facilitators
- Facilities, logistical arrangements and special events

This Evaluation Report is based on information gathered from several sources:

- Evaluation questionnaires filled out by participants at the end of every stream or other sessions (such as the "Open Space" and "HRE Marketplace" sessions). The questionnaires aimed at assessing the content and process of each Program component.
- A meta-evaluation conducted during the first days of the Program (after Stream 2) to have participants reflect on how they evaluate and also to serve as a quality-control assessment of the evaluation process.
- A general evaluation questionnaire that covered all aspects of the Program administered on the last day of the Program.
- Daily debriefing sessions with the facilitators and co-facilitators.
- Facilitators' and co-facilitators' written reflections on participants' learning.
- Informal feedback gathered through discussions with participants and resource persons.



- 2) *When completing an evaluation questionnaire, I tend to be somewhat uncritical because of the friendly rapport I have established with other participants and/or the facilitator and/or EQUITAS staff.*
- 3) *When completing an evaluation questionnaire:*
- a) *I rarely write comments to explain my answers when there is space to do so.*
 - b) *I sometimes write comments when there is space to do so.*
 - c) *I often write comments to explain my answers when there is space to do*

Some general conclusions we can draw from the results include the following:

Question 1: This year 52% and 69% of participants reported not selecting the highest or lowest ratings, respectively, out of principle. These are similar to last year's results (50% and 60%) lending further validity to the practice of aggregating the two highest and two lowest ratings (i.e., agreement versus disagreement) and reporting them as a common percentage. This decision also makes sense from a methodological perspective since many, if not a small majority of participants, answered this question somewhat ambiguously due to anxiety over providing answers that are either too positive or too negative. Two camps of agree and disagree are therefore a useful comparison.

Analysis by Gender: According to the data, approximately half of the participants agreed and the other half disagreed that they never or rarely select the most favourable choice because there is always room for improvement. However while women's answers were relatively equally distributed between agree and disagree, men were more likely to agree to this statement than disagree (i.e., 63% agree versus 37% disagree).⁶ From this it seems that the men, in this population, are more likely than women to provide lower ratings on the Likert scales even when they view outcomes favourably. That being said, as the report will show findings are overall highly positive; therefore this gender difference should not actually factor into the analysis to any substantial degree.

The second part of question 1, in contrast to the first part, shows that the women respondents were somewhat more likely than men to agree that they never or rarely select the least favourable choice because they believe there is always something positive to be said. This would suggest that the women were more likely than the men to provide higher answers on a Likert scale even when they view outcomes unfavourably. This being said, the magnitude of the gender difference is much less than in part A of question 1 and was not found to be significant. Therefore its implications for participants' answers on evaluation instruments are even more likely negligible.

⁶ Using a t-test, this was found to be statistically significant with a P value of 0.0165. Where men had a mean score of 1.34 and a SD of 0.4789; and where women had a mean score of 1.569 and a SD of 0.499.



Additional Meta Evaluation Questions

The eight (8) working groups of the IH RTP were combined into four (4) in order to use Equitas' resources more effectively. Results from the joint groups' discussions on additional meta-evaluation questions were collected and analyzed for response trends. There were very clear common threads in the discussions reported from these workgroups. From these results, a few observations that can be made are:

Participants in all groups mentioned that they found it difficult to answer questions with such a limited range of response options (i.e., using a four-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Some participants mentioned that it would be better to include a wider range of responses (i.e., 1 to 10) as well as provide some middle ground "neutral" responses. According to Dick & Carey (1996), the problem with including too many quality levels on a rating scale is the loss of reliability in the answers generated by that scale. Differentiating a "6" and a "7" on a ten-point scale can be rather difficult and could result in too many inconsistencies both within and across evaluators. The best way to counter this inherent problem among wider scales is to qualify each point on the scale so that the response options are not only represented by a digit.

In terms of providing a neutral option selection, it was explained that the reason for this omission is because the evaluators wanted to force participants to make a choice between disagree and agree as too many individuals may tend to pick neutral responses based on the anxiety associated with making a clear choice. Neutral responses are ultimately less useful for educators as they provide less information on what changes need to be made if any.

Many participants also discussed the question asking them whether or not their ideas/perceptions changed due to their participation in the activities of each stream. For some participants, this question was considered vague and confusing. For the most part there seemed to be the lack of a common understanding of the term "changed ideas/perception". For example, one group brought up the important point of what the change is referring to: content or process (i.e., participatory learning method); while another group disagreed over how big the "change" needs to be. Half the group stated that it had to be big, while others said it need only be small.

Similarly, for many participants, the discussion on "changed perceptions/ ideas" was too early. One suggestion was that this question be asked at a later time, perhaps during the six and twenty-four month follow up questionnaires. There was additional confusion regarding the definition of "change". Finally for other participants, rather than changing their ideas, the activities simply reaffirmed what they already knew and practiced in their work contexts. Having participants reflect on the effects of a learning



experience on their attitudes and beliefs about themselves and their human rights work is critical for a transformative learning process. Given the importance of this reflection throughout the program, greater attention needs to be devoted to presenting these concepts to participants.

Participants in two of the groups also stressed that the qualifiers used in many of the questions/ statements, including “sufficiently” and “adequately” are open to different interpretations. This is an important issue if Equitas wants to ensure that it is asking useful questions in its evaluation questionnaires that are understood in a similar way by different participants. Equitas therefore needs to better explain these qualifiers and their meaning.

These observations highlights the complexity of designing standardized evaluation questionnaires for such a diverse group and suggests that meta-evaluation may be an effective tool for addressing some of the issues related to different interpretations. Moreover, it is clear that Equitas needs to better explain to participants its questions. This needs to be done early on in the evaluation process.

Participant Perspective of the Program

In this section of the report, the results of the evaluation process are presented. The four overall program objectives serve as a framework for analyzing all data obtained during the entire 3-week training session. Supporting results from the end-of-stream questionnaires as well as other activities (e.g., HRE Marketplace and Open Space Technology) are used to provide additional evidence that the overall four objectives were achieved. Most questions utilized a four-point Likert scale whereby 4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree and 1 = strongly disagree.

On average, ninety-seven per cent (97%) of participants either strongly agreed (57%) or agreed (40%) that the overall program objectives were met. Moreover, an average of ninety-six percent (96%) of participants either strongly agreed (40%) or agreed (56%) that the individual stream objectives were met. Unfortunately, the questionnaires do not include questions that ask respondents to explain their disagreement to several questions (e.g., whether objectives have been met). This is problematic as it leaves the numeric data in isolation without sufficient qualitative information to explain participants’ responses.

Finally, ninety-eight percent (98%) of participants indicated on the end-of-stream evaluations that the stream objectives were relevant to their current human rights work.



Objective 1

The IHRTTP has enabled participants to effectively analyze the issues and situations encountered in the work of their organization using a framework based on internationally accepted human rights values and principles.

Objective 1 refers largely to the analysis of human rights issues from a framework based on HR values and principles. This refers to participants' capacity to discuss their ideas related to what human rights are and how they affect individuals. It also refers to personally held values and assumptions about *right* and *wrong*, the notion of universality of human rights, as well as globalization and strategies for coping with its impacts. Finally, this refers to improving participants' knowledge of and capacity using international human rights instruments in their human rights work.

According to respondents' answers in the general evaluation questionnaire, ninety-eight percent (98%) agreed (45%) or strongly agreed (53%) that Objective 1 had been met. The difference in means between men (3.43) and women (3.55) on this item was not statistically significant. In addition to the General Evaluation, several end-of-stream assessment questionnaires support this data. The following discussion analyzes the data collected from these supporting end-of-stream assessment questionnaires.

Exploring Human Rights Situations in Other Countries

In **Stream 2**, "Starting from Where We Are", participants were asked if they had "*sufficiently explored the human rights situation in the countries represented by the members of our group to be able to better understand the context of each other's work.*" Based on participants' responses, ninety-six percent (96%) of participants either agreed (63%) or strongly agreed (33%) that this was achieved. This activity is important for Objective 1 as it highlights the similarities as well as differences in terms of human rights issues experienced by individuals in different countries. For example, according to participants:

"It gave me an understanding and complete picture of the situation of HR in other countries, which have a similar situation to Indonesia."

"This helped me understand different country contexts & what human rights mean for different people."

Sharing Personal Concepts of Human Rights

Also related to Objective 1, participants "*compared their personal concepts of human rights to those of other members of their group*" in **Stream 2**, entitled "Starting from Where We Are". More specifically, this activity used group discussions on similarities as well as differences among participants' perspectives and views of human rights. In this case, a



“By understanding peoples’ opinions on HR, one is able to appreciate their starting points and commonalities, from which one can adequately plan on how to explain and/or impact the HR principles properly.”

Personal Values and the Universality of Human Rights

Stream 4, “Seeking Common Ground”, also contains activities related to Objective 1. In particular, participants were expected to *“examine how personal values and held assumptions about “right and wrong” influence the actions and reactions of individuals”*; in addition they were also asked to *“critically explore the concept of universality of (human) rights”* and how it relates to human rights education.

Regarding the examination of personally held values as human right educators, ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents stated that they were either in agreement (61%) or strong agreement (36%) with the item. Regarding how personal values and assumptions about right and wrong influence the actions and reactions of individuals, several participants recognized this reality. One participant best summed up the feeling with the following comment: *“This is an important point and it helps me to open up my mind to other perceptions and perspectives resulting in a reconsideration of some preconceived positions.”*

In terms of participants critically exploring the concept of universality of rights, ninety-nine percent (99%) were either in agreement (55%) or in strong agreement (44%) that this was achieved. Overall a large proportion of the participants found the discussion on the universality of human rights versus the notion that human rights differ from culture to culture (i.e., cultural relativism) to be very important and they reacted positively to the discussion. According to one participant, *“The universality of HR is important to the work I do in the Congo since HRs are often contested as only being a western notion.”*

Among participants, the debate on universality versus relativism is clearly ongoing, as there is not complete consensus on human rights. For instance LBGT rights continue to be very controversial among many participants. More specifically a significantly large proportion of participants did not feel comfortable to defend gay rights as human rights. For example, one facilitator mentioned during the facilitator debriefing session on participants’ learning that participants said they were more willing to defend the human rights of a Nazi war criminal than of gay people’s right to marry.

Globalization and Human Rights

Stream 5, “The Global Human Rights Context”, also had activities related to Objective 1. In Stream 5, one hundred (100%) percent of respondents agreed (55%) or strongly agreed (45%) that they had *“adequately described the different dimensions of globalization and provided examples of globalization’s positive and negative impacts on human rights in their*



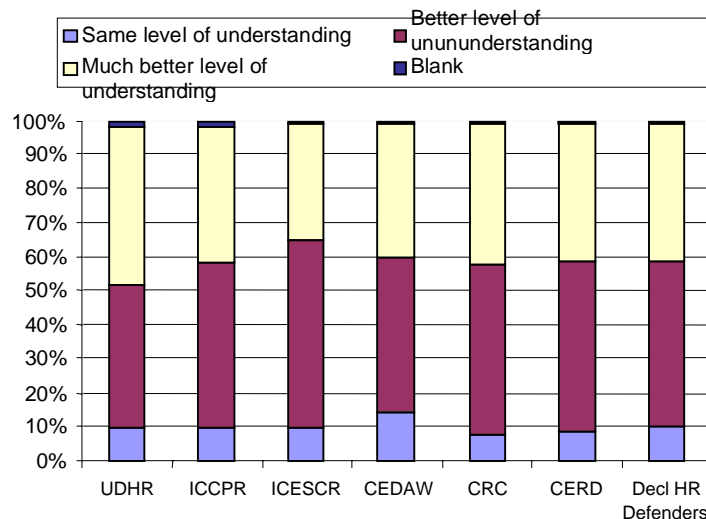
situations faced by participants in their work. As such, participants' familiarity with the content and the application of these standards is essential.

In order to gather some insight into whether participants experienced change in their level of knowledge/skills related to the international instruments, participants' were asked in the General Evaluation whether or not they felt they knew more about the human rights instruments than before the IHRTP. While this type of methodology is not the most robust for demonstrating actual "change", it does serve as a rudimentary indicator for participants' perception of their acquisition of new knowledge/ skills.

Based on results from the pre-training assignment, an average of forty-nine percent (49%) of participants indicated they were familiar or very familiar with the instruments. In particular, participants indicated that they were most familiar with the UDHR, CEDAW and the CRC where more than sixty percent (60%) of respondents self-rated as either *familiar* or *very familiar* with the instruments. In contrast, participants were least likely to be familiar with the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders; approximately seventy-four percent (74%) of respondents stated that they were not familiar or only somewhat familiar with this instrument. Similarly, sixty-six percent (66%) were not familiar or only somewhat familiar with CERD, while more than fifty percent (50%) showed a lack of familiarity with ICCPR and ICESCR.

By the end of the program, an average of forty percent (40%) of participants indicated in the General Evaluation questionnaire that they had a *much better* level of understanding of these instruments after having attended the IHRTP (refer to Figure 2); another 49% indicated a *better* level of understanding, while the remaining eleven percent (11%) indicated their understanding of the instruments was the same after the Program.

Figure 2 Participants' Familiarity with International Instruments after the IHRTP





Stream 6, Human Rights Standards and Mechanisms", was the stream concerned with examining the United Nations human rights instruments and included four end-of-stream assessment questions related to objective. They were the following:

- *"We determined effective ways the UN human rights system can be used at the national level to protect and promote human rights."*
- *"We adequately explained the main features of the following six human rights instruments (ICCPR, ICESCR, CRC, CERD, Dec HR Def)."*
- *"We adequately described the concept of women's rights as human rights."*
- *"We appropriately applied human rights principles articulated in international instruments to particular situations (i.e., using a rights-based approach)."*

Based on respondents answers', ninety-eight percent (98%) agreed (57%) or strongly agreed (41%) that they determined effective ways the UN human rights system can be used at the national level to protect and promote human rights, while between ninety-eight and one hundred percent (98-100%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that **Stream 6** had adequately explained the main features of the human rights instruments.

Applying Human Rights Principles to Human Rights Situations

Finally, ninety-eight percent (98%) of participants agreed (65%) or strongly agreed (33%) that the stream *"appropriately' applied human rights principles articulated in international instruments to particular situations (i.e., using a rights-based approach)."*

The following participants' comments provide evidence of why this material was considered useful to participants.

"I have to be able to link [my] work to international documents, both to support existing policy positions based on existing protection under legislation, but also to use these documents to support new positions that advance the interpretation on Code to attempt to extend protection and possibly to advocate amendments to our legislation."

"As an HR activist and a HR educator all the instruments are relevant to my work and useful for my people. We are under a military regime so those HR instruments are never applied in my country nor do the people have a chance to learn about them."

"Because each time I teach on HR people always ask what can be done about HR abuses. Now I can explain about the HR instruments."

"One of the goals of my organization is the implementation of international human rights standards to Ukrainian law."



When asked what part of **Stream 6**, participants found most useful, forty-one percent (41%) of all respondents mentioned the use of case studies regarding international human rights instruments. Not surprisingly, many participants alluded to using these case studies in their own HRE work. According to one participant: *“Particularly for the case study technique, it really helps in developing HRE. I learned that the case study could help the target group to get closer to their real problem and help them to understand the materials/substance of HRE.”*

Participants also provided evidence of how they will apply their knowledge into their HRE work. For example according to respondents,

“I would introduce children (they are usually my target group) to their rights and to the various defence mechanisms, and then make little case studies for them (e.g. a) if a policeman detains them, b) they have no means to go to school, or c) if somebody treats them abusively). The children would then be asked: What rights will they have? Should they act and which rights will apply?”

“There are lots of torture cases that come to my office. I can now better recognize which instrument and which article is relevant to which case.”

To summarize, the evidence strongly suggests that Objective 1 was achieved; or in other words, the IHRTP enabled participants to effectively analyze the issues and situations encountered in the work of their organization using a framework based on internationally accepted human rights values and principles. This is an important starting point for the next learning objective, which involves increasing the effectiveness of participants’ human right work through human rights education.

Objective 2

The IHRTP has enabled participants to effectively explore ways in which human rights education can increase the effectiveness of their human rights work.

Objective number 2 refers largely to capacity building of appropriate HRE methodologies to enhance participants’ performance in their human rights education and human rights work in general. More specifically, this objective concerns itself primarily with the IHRTP learning model, strategies for dealing with conflict, and the links between the fields of human rights education and conflict transformation. Objective 2, moreover, includes the following: a) reflection on the roles of human rights educators and activists, as well as on the role of HRE in the process of global social change, b) the key components of effective monitoring and advocacy, c) an examination of how monitoring and advocacy can be used effectively to educate about human rights, and d) reflection on how to identify opportunities for HR advocacy campaigns.



“The hands-on approach to creating ground rules was most important. Naturally they will be accepted since the participants have been a party to making them. Earlier in my work I’ve always imposed rules on participants; however I now think this is a better method.”

“These activities were highly relevant because in order to successfully implement a training program, the content, methodology, learning strategies and an effective working code need to be clearly understood and specified.”

“Ground rules contribute to the maintenance of a coherent and healthy atmosphere during training. Moreover, positive feedback contributes to an improved presentation of the material.”

Participants were also asked how they would use these content areas/skills in their own human rights-related work. While many participants did not provide specific answers to this question, a few provided some detail. For example one participant provided the following comment: *“[The ground rules and tips on effective feedback] will help me to complete a training manual that my organization is in the process of preparing for the human rights of specific target groups including children, women, those living with HIV/AIDS, migrant workers and those who are handicapped.”*

Also within Stream 1, participants *“examined effective strategies for addressing conflicts that may arise in a human rights education context.”* In this instance, ninety-four percent (94%) of participants agreed (66%) or strongly agreed (28%) that this was completed.

Of the 119 comments written by participants concerning what they found most useful in Stream 1, sixty-nine (69) or fifty-eight percent (58%) indicated or strongly alluded to the participatory methodology and/or learning spiral design model of the Program. When asked to reflect on what they would apply to their own HR work, participants again mentioned or strongly alluded to Equitas’ participatory learning and/or spiral design models. The words of one participant best illustrate participants’ reactions.

“I organize a lot of workshops, seminars and trainings and using an experiential/participatory method is very attractive, effective and simple. You elicit the objectives, method, outcome and all parts of the program from adult participants and you guide them. In that way, they feel they are part of the process & they own it.”

Building a Culture of Human Rights

Building a culture of human rights is the end goal of all human rights education. Thus the “building blocks” related to creating this culture are part and parcel to human rights education. Exploring these “building blocks” therefore is necessary for increasing the



the foundation of my training; therefore an in-depth analysis in addition to different methods of presenting the Declaration are relevant to my work."

Finally in **Stream 3**, ninety-five percent (95%) of participants agreed (72%) or strongly agreed (23%) that they *"determined the role of human rights education in the process of global social change."*

When participants were asked what from Stream 3 was most useful to them, participants provided process-oriented as well as thematic answers. In general according to participants comments, some of the types of participatory instructional methods used were considered to be the most useful aspects; fourteen percent (14%) identified both the use of effective presentation skills and the use of debates, while twelve percent (12%) identified the discussions using the Fishbowl technique.

When participants were asked what from the stream they would most like to apply in their work, the majority of answers were again related to the implementation of various participatory education methods used during the activities. However, the most commonly cited method was the fishbowl technique with almost 20% of all respondents citing it. According to one participant, *"I found the fishbowl technique very interesting. Also, I think it will be possible to use it during implementation of the projects where there is a need to listen to both sides - and not just debate."* Other comments include:

"I would implement the fishbowl model in training the community, so that they can join the dialogue; it can also help to raise community awareness on the role of HR Activists and educators."

"The fishbowl technique is something I definitely will be using in the future as it is a really good alternative to the debate. Much less confrontational and yet allows the issues to be aired."

Participants also commonly cited debate techniques and effective methods for giving presentations as aspects from the stream they would apply to their own human rights work.

Human Rights Education and Conflict Transformation

Conflict transformation is another topic that participants explored to increase the effectiveness of their human rights work. In **Stream 4**, "Seeking Common Ground", participants were expected to *"sufficiently explain the links and differences between the fields of human rights education and conflict transformation."*

Overall 92% of respondents agreed (68%) or strongly agreed (24%) that this had been achieved. Of the ideas explored in Stream 4, the topic of explaining the links and differences between the fields of human rights and education and conflict



or improve your advocacy strategy, monitoring technique, etc.” Another participant expressed that using adult actors in a role-play simulation for children would be a very effective means for teaching young people about general human rights.

Finally, in **Stream 7**, participants designed advocacy campaigns, evaluated them in groups and wrote advocacy songs. Based on having completed these activities, ninety-five percent (95%) agreed (62%) or strongly agreed (31%) that the content in Stream 7 *“explained what is involved in planning an effective advocacy initiative.”* Furthermore, ninety-three percent (93%) of respondents agreed (65%) or strongly agreed that they *“identified realistic/good opportunities for human rights advocacy and education campaigns.”*

When asked what from Stream 7 was most useful, almost one third mentioned the design of an effective advocacy campaign; an additional one-quarter of participants also cited the presentation on the relation between HRE and advocacy and the simulation exercise.

In terms of what participants would most like to apply to their work, designing an advocacy campaign was cited by twenty-three percent (23%) of participants and the steps for effective monitoring by twenty percent (20%). Finally, fifteen percent (15%) of respondents specifically mentioned they would incorporate the testimonial and song writing techniques into their human rights work.

To summarize, the evidence strongly suggests that Objective 2 was achieved; or in other words, the IHRTP enabled participants to effectively explore ways in which human rights education can increase the effectiveness of their human rights work. Again, this stands as an important starting point for the next learning objective, which involves increasing their capacity to apply their learning within their organization and their society.

Objective 3

The IHRTP has enabled participants to effectively increase their capacity to apply their learning within their organization and their society.

Ultimately the IHRTP aims to, not only increase capacity among participants, but it also strives to train individuals who can be effective ambassadors of this knowledge and skills. Based on the final general evaluation, ninety-nine percent (99%) of participants agreed (66%) or strongly agreed (33%) that this objective had been met. The difference in means for women (3.65) and men (3.64) using a four-point scale is not statistically significant.

In addition, the results from the end-of-stream assessment questions also lend further evidence that Objective 3 was achieved. In terms of this objective the following end-of-stream assessment items, as well as questions related to the Individual Plan, were



Evaluation of Human Rights Education

In **Stream 8**, “Educational Evaluation”, participants are exposed to the concept of evaluating HRE activities. Evaluation of education activities is crucial as it not only gives credibility to organized events by demonstrating their effectiveness, but it also provides essential insight and information to planners on how to improve training. The fact that evaluation of educational programs is often neglected makes the case for evaluation even stronger. In terms of learning transfer, learning about evaluation enhances participants’ capacity for communicating the merits of particular HRE methodologies to their organization and society all the more.

In terms of the material on evaluation being relevant to participants’ needs, respondents’ comments suggested strongly that it was. Most comments stated that evaluation was important for the following three reasons: 1) participants have an active role in evaluation work at their organization, 2) an understanding of evaluation theory is important for overall program improvement to occur, and 3) that evaluation work, in general, is too often overlooked within their own organization.

In Stream 8, ninety-seven percent (97%) of participants agreed (54%) or strongly agreed (43%) that the stream content and activities “adequately defined educational evaluation and explained the cycle of continuous improvement, a model for educational evaluation.”

Furthermore, ninety-five percent (95%) agreed (56%) or strongly agreed (39%) that they “identified different types of results used in planning educational activities.”

Participants were asked which aspect of the stream on education evaluation was most useful. Out of 116 respondents, 54 (47%) cited the section on education evaluation including the breakdown on *outputs, outcomes and impacts*. As best summarized by one participant, “As human right educators we are working at various levels and performing a number of activities; so identifying the target group, outputs, outcomes and impacts is a major component in measuring the long term effects of our work.”

Finally, participants were engaged in “developing appropriate quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure results of human rights education activities.” Ninety-three percent (93%) of participants agreed (63%) or strongly agreed (30%) that this was completed. Given the more concrete nature of having developed indicators, it is not surprising that agreement for this last item is the lowest given the limited time available. That being said, 93% is still a very strong rate of agreement.

From the debriefing of the facilitators and co-facilitators, one suggestion was to introduce the section on evaluation earlier during the 3 weeks as several participants from one group began to revise their Individual Plans based on the information gained during the stream on evaluation.



exercise was useful to participants. In fact, ninety-six percent (96%) of respondents stated that it was a useful human rights education technique.

Nevertheless, some participants' comments do address the networking aspects of this session and include the following:

"The HRE Marketplace is a highly useful HR educational technique. It engages participants in an interactive and participatory activity on HR in which all the groups play and come together. The idea of the market is great – it is related to the world, which is diverse and full of other activities. Nevertheless, we need to find ways to make the voice of HR heard; this Marketplace is one of them."

"The HRE market place is a useful technique. It's a fun way to learn about HR and some of the games required us to cooperate with other fellows in order to achieve our goal. I think it's a good way to promote cooperation."

"The HRE Marketplace helps to inform us about techniques as well as in terms of targeting future partners."

While the HRE Marketplace was perceived overall as a useful activity, several participants did make comments on how the session could be improved in the future. The main criticism of the session was the perceived lack of organization and the chaos that arose from the plethora of activities going on all around. As several participants suggested, perhaps much of this could be alleviated through the availability of larger rooms to minimize interference, distractions and general noise caused by the HRE activities themselves. Furthermore, language seems to have been an issue in this session and prohibited many from participating in certain events. Finally, some participants found the competitive nature of many groups to be a negative outcome of this session. According to one participant, many "groups tend to focus on 'selling' or 'marketing' their 'products' such that the 'competition' for 'buyers' uses inappropriate gambling techniques." One way to perhaps counter this aspect of the session would be to provide additional comments during the formal opening to discourage this behaviour as well as establishing ground rules and a code of conduct for behaviour at the Marketplace.

Open Space Technology (OST)

OST is an effective strategy for organizing and managing meetings of large groups up to several hundred participants for the purpose of addressing very complex issues. A strong point of OST is its ability to unite groups of enormous diversity in terms of education, ethnicity, economics, politics, culture, social position, or all of the above. Open Space Technology (OST) is also useful for networking and partnership opportunities for furthering the cause of human rights. This is particularly so as individuals are free to join groups with which they feel common interests.



- The role of NGOs in youth involvement in civic activities and HRE for Youth
- Cooperative games in human rights education
- Migrant workers' rights
- Restorative justice
- Women's rights and religion (*in French*)
- Financing of NGOs and their viability (*in French*)
- Human rights education and environmental pollution (*in French*)

Rencontres avec participantes et les participants – R.A.P. Sessions

RAP sessions involve participants and Equitas staff. The RAP Sessions are organized according to regional or thematic¹¹ focus (e.g., English or French-speaking Africa or migrant workers) and participants are invited to participate in them accordingly. The goals of these sessions are for participants to a) learn about the activities of Equitas in a particular region or on a particular theme, b) share information about challenges human rights educators face, and c) explore opportunities for joint HRE initiatives among IHRTTP alumni and/or between IHRTTP alumni and Equitas.

Based on results from the different RAP sessions, the three goals seem to have been achieved. Table 2 demonstrates the agreement level among the participants for the various sessions. The total number of respondents and those in agreement appear in parentheses below the percentages. According to the data, the groups from CEE/CIS, South East Asia (SEA), Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa and Haiti were all in agreement with the three goals, providing evidence that the networking aspects of the RAP sessions were successful.

The group from CEE/CIS requested visiting a local women's shelter to view first hand how this type of organization is operated and how it addresses the needs of women who are under threat physically and/or mentally.

In addition to the regional RAP groups, thematic RAP sessions were also organized for Migrant Workers and for Sexual Orientation. Unfortunately, the Migrant Workers thematic group was not given the standard questionnaire and therefore no quantitative data are available.

¹¹ The thematically focussed RAP Sessions are based on the past, current or future programs of Equitas

**Table 2 Percentage of RAP Session Respondents in Agreement that Goals were Achieved**

Regions	South East Asia	MENA	CEE/CIS	Anglo-phone Africa	Franco-phone Africa	Haiti	Migrant Workers	Sexual Orientation
a. To learn about the activities of Equitas in a particular region or on a particular theme,	100% (25/25)	NQ	100% (14/14)	100% (17/17)	92% (11/12)	100% (5/5)	NQ	NA
b. To share information about challenges human rights educators face, and	100% (25/25)	NQ	100% (14/14)	100% (17/17)	92% (11/12)	100% (5/5)	NQ	100% (22/22)
c) To explore opportunities for joint HRE initiatives among IHRTP alumni and/or between IHRTP alumni and Equitas.	92% (23/25)	NQ	100% (14/14)	88% (15/17)	92% (11/12)	100% (5/5)	NQ	55% (12/22)

NA = Not applicable; Equitas is not currently involved in work specifically related to LBGT rights
 NQ = Not questioned; these participants were not asked to complete the standard questionnaire

The findings from the RAP session on sexual orientation were positive minus the first objective on “*exploring opportunities for joint HRE initiatives among IHRTP alumni and/or between IHRTP alumni and Equitas.*” On this item, only 55% of respondents agreed that this was achieved. It is important to recognize that this RAP session was newly introduced this year and therefore may have differed in more ways than one. At a basic level, this RAP session was meant to be more exploratory than result in concrete action. For instance the rap session on sexual orientation included a visit to the offices of a telephone support line for LBGT people. The directors of the centre provided background information on how such a centre was established and on how it is operated. In addition, this rap session also included a guest speaker (originally from Rwanda) who is involved in a support group for LBGT people from sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean currently residing in the Montreal region.

It is noteworthy that many of the participants may continue to have mixed feelings about LBGT rights as “human rights” and this may have played a role in the ambiguity of the outcomes. In addition, some participants themselves stated that getting involved in the cause of LBGT rights can be a liability for NGOs working in the HR field. What is



problematic is that funders and other influential stakeholders may equate LGBT human rights work as a loss in credibility.

Equitas Community

A new tool developed by Equitas and launched this year is the online **Equitas Community (EC)**. This is the first year that the EC was used as a tool during the IHRTP itself. The Equitas Community is a secure Internet-based meeting place for participants, facilitators, resource persons and staff of Equitas training programs to continue the learning experience through a variety of on-line post-training activities such as discussions forums and information sharing

Networking and exploring potential partnerships in human rights and human rights education were a major impetus behind founding the 'community'. Based on a review of the postings by participants, evidence is available to demonstrate that networking and exploration of partnerships is not only feasible, but is currently in progress.

Use of the Community during the IHRTP/PIFDH 2007

During the IHRTP, eight online groups were created corresponding to the eight working groups to discuss various issues amongst each other. In each group, there was one organizer and one co-organizer. Thus, from the very start of the IHRTP, individuals were posting content to the group. Participants of the IHRTP have very good knowledge of basic computer software (e.g., Microsoft Office and Internet tools) and this helps to facilitate the exchange of information. In fact, more than ever participants attended the IHRTP with portable computers, digital cameras and MP3 players. With this portable technology, participants could reach the Equitas Community anywhere including their rooms after the day's activities were over.

Use of the Community after the IHRTP/PIFDH 2007

Statistics: Participants were queried about how they would continue to network with others including IHRTP alumni after the 3 weeks training were completed. Out of 119 respondents, 58 or 49% specifically stated that they would use the Equitas online community. If you include those who made more general reference to the use of Internet and email, the total number of individuals alluding to online technologies is 77/119 or 65% of respondents. While 65% of respondents mentioned online technologies specifically, even more may have had the intention of using such media for future networking opportunities.

Soon after the IHRTP, there were about thirty (30) members who connected daily to the Equitas Community, one hundred (100) weekly. There are to this day about forty (40) participants who continue to post around twice a week with others posting more infrequently. With regard to the IHRTP-2007 group, Equitas has noticed a greater



Table 3: Gender Breakdown of whether the IHTRP provided adequate opportunity to discuss women’s human rights

	Strong Disagreement	Disagreement	Agreement	Strong Agreement
Men	1.5%	1.5%	37%	60%
Women	0%	0%	57%	43%

Few participants provided comments that women’s rights were over-discussed. In fact there were only five (5) and four (4) of these participants were from the CEE/CIS region. In the words of one participant, *“Sometimes I felt that women’s issues were discussed so thoroughly to the expense of the overall topic.”* While there are not enough respondents to definitively ascertain any demographic trends, this finding may plausibly be attributed to the degree that women’s human rights are at risk among regions. For example in the words of one participant from CEE/CIS, *“The issue of women’s rights was even over-discussed; but I do understand that other countries face very acute problems.”*

One male participant from Latin America made the suggestion that the IHTRP could include a broader *gender* perspective as opposed to a women’s perspective. According to him,

“The IHTRP was lacking a gender approach; meaning that often the analysis was made keeping focus only on women but not on men. It is necessary to realize that male culture has to change, not only female culture.”

In the literature on gender, there is increasing attention on the notion of *masculinities* and their role in human rights topics. The participant therefore seems to be suggesting that a wider perspective that includes *masculinities* is important, as men’s evolution is also crucial in regards to the emancipation of women and realization of their human rights. In fact men undoubtedly can act as change agents among other males as well as in society as a whole; therefore a discussion that includes various *masculinities* may be useful in achieving the greater goal of women’s human rights.

In addition to the General Evaluation, **Stream 6** also asks participants about the issue of women’s rights as human rights. More specifically, the end-of-stream questionnaire asks participants whether the material and presentations related to the international human rights instruments *“adequately described the concept of women’s rights as human rights women’s rights”*. Feedback from participants was particularly positive as ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents agreed (57%) or strongly agreed (40%) that the



Below are some noteworthy comments from participants:

“The above documents were well and painfully prepared to meet the students’ needs and meet the intercultural reality. The documents can meet the test of any international HR training in the world.”

“Very well prepared! Use of the materials was very easy and they will be used in our future works!”

“The participants’ manuals were of excellent quality as the level of language used was adapted to participants’ ESL needs. Moreover, the examples were very well illustrated and rich with information.”

Potential Improvements: Participant Manual and Resources Manual

Participants’ comments also included suggestions on how they felt the participants’ manual could be improved. For two individuals, the inclusion of perspectives that reflected their own regional experiences would have been beneficial. For one individual HR materials reflecting a central Asian view were absent, while another participant would have appreciated seeing more HR materials reflecting Islamic/religious perspectives and the links between poverty and HRE.

Two participants commented on how they would have found useful, the use of simplified and practical examples of human rights situations. For one person this comment was in relation to the human rights instruments. This participant wanted simplified examples in order to better understand how to use them. For another participant, s/he suggested that a case study be presented and analyzed at the end of each stream. According to her/him, “In that way, participants can learn more and it will be more practical and less theory-oriented.”

Final suggestions on how to improve the manual revolve around the issue of manual readings. For one participant, the comment was made about centralizing all resources in the resource manual in order to eliminate confusion about which book the readings were in. Finally, two participants made comments about the level of difficulty of some of the readings, especially considering the ESL or FSL characteristic of many participants. According to one participant, “Some materials were very hard for ESL people, particularly exercises in the Participant Manual that required a lot of reading. This would slow us down and once made it impossible to complete the exercise.”

One alternative would be to use shorter articles. That being said, Equitas has always tried to simplify the instruction acknowledging the ESL/ FSL nature of many of its participants. Continued vigilance on the part of the instructional designers while selecting readings is crucial.



Part III: Recommendations

The following recommendations are presented to Equitas Project Team reviewing the IH RTP in preparation for the 2008 session.

1) Content

a) Educational Evaluation

Evaluation is presented in the IH RTP as a tool to enhance the effectiveness and usefulness of HRE activities. As such, an entire Stream of the Program (Stream 8) is dedicated to educational evaluation. In addition, evaluation is touched upon early on in the Program, in the presentation of the Individual Plan on Day 2 and through the Meta-Evaluation exercise on Day 3. Comments by participants and facilitators, however, consistently reveal that more attention needs to be given to this area early on as well as throughout the IH RTP. This can be addressed with educational evaluation, in general, and more specifically to the contribution of HRE to societal impact. For example, increased focus can be included in the following sections:

- The presentation of the Individual Plan on Day 2 and in all Individual Plan-related activities during the Program
- In the Meta-Evaluation activity
- In Stream 7 and 8

b) Global HR Context

In the IH RTP participants explore the different dimensions of globalization and examine globalization's impact on human rights. Comments from participants however indicate that more consideration should be given to strategies for using human rights education as a tool for addressing globalization's negative impacts. This issue could be addressed in the Program by, for example, reinforcing the component on rights-based approaches and by outlining the relationship between human rights education and the Millennium Development Goals (e.g. security, development and the eradication of poverty, protection of the environment, democracy and good governance, etc.)

c) Testimonials as a Human Rights Education Technique

The use of testimonials from victims of human rights violations constituted a powerful educational tool during the IH RTP. The opportunity to exchange with a) women victims of violence and b) Holocaust survivors was greatly appreciated by participants. That being said, participants and facilitators have both commented on



the challenges resulting from the extreme emotional nature of these testimonials. Therefore, it is recommended that Equitas:

- continue the use of testimonials during the Presentation on Violence Against Women and visits to the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre
- add briefing and debriefing activities before and after the testimonials
- include information about “testimonials” as a human rights education technique to the IHRTP Manual.

d) Resource Manual and Mandatory Readings

Participants and facilitators have extensively commented on the high quality of the IHRTP Participants’ Manual and Resource Manual. Participants have also suggested changes to the Resource Manual that we recommend implementing:

- reduce the number of mandatory readings in the Program, but add a complementary thematic bibliography of suggested readings
- update some of the articles to better reflect present trends in human rights and human rights education
- diversify the perspectives discussed in the readings by adding authors from various regions of the world

e) RAP Sessions

Participants overwhelmingly agreed that the RAP sessions constituted a useful activity for participants to share information about the human rights situation in their region or theme and to learn about human rights activities of other participants. However, it was also commented that limiting the scope of discussions could optimize the usefulness of the RAP sessions. It is therefore recommended that Equitas review the content and process of the RAP sessions to focus more on human rights education activities

2) Individual Plans for Putting my Learning Into Action

Participants recognized the value of the *Individual Plan for Putting my Learning into Action* as an effective framework for developing a concrete plan for putting their learning into practice once they return home in order to increase their organization’s capacity to conduct HRE. However, on-going confusion about the expected scope of the Individual Plan continues to prove challenging for participants: It is therefore recommended that Equitas:



- review the *Individual Plan for Putting my Learning into Action* and increase the guidance / support given to participants by Equitas staff when developing their plan during the Program
- reinforce the training given to the facilitators and Equitas staff for the accompaniment of participants during the elaboration of the Individual Plan

3) Equitas Community

The use of the Equitas Community proved to be an important tool for sharing and exchanging information between participants and for continuing discussions that began in the classroom. It is recommended that Equitas:

- continue the use the Equitas Community before and during the Program
- develop an evaluation method and tools to measure the impact of the use of the Equitas Community during the Program

4) Recaps, Debriefings and Critical Reflection

Returning facilitators and Equitas staff have commented on the sophistication and greater experience of IHRTP participants over the last few years, and on their ability to discuss and analyze issues with more depth. It is recommended that more time be provided for the daily recaps and debriefings for critical reflection

5) Evaluation

Evaluation of the IHRTP is critical in ensuring its continued relevance and effectiveness. A review of existing methods and techniques is essential to ensure that adequate time and resources are dedicated to this activity. To this end it is recommended that Equitas:

- review and streamline the IHRTP evaluation process and tools to maximize data collection and reporting while minimizing the required resources
- continue to develop and refine the meta-evaluation activity to maximize its usefulness and to better understand participants' personal approach to evaluation and filling-out questionnaires.
- explore ways to use the data collected to inform other processes (i.e., selection process) during the planning and preparation of the Program

6) Co-Facilitators

Because of *i*) the noted sophistication and greater experience of IHRTP participants over the last few years, *ii*) the positive experience of having a facilitator with a co-



Conclusions

The overall results of the 2007 IHRTP were very positive. At the conclusion of the 28th annual International Human Rights Training Program, participants were asked for the most important thing learned during the Program. All of the respondents answered this question and most of them indicated more than one “most important learning” item.

Participant responses fell into four broad categories, all playing an important role in building their capacity in human rights education. These included:

- Participant-centered curriculum, participatory methodologies, and new techniques in HRE (48%)
- Group setting that enables the ability for participants to work with others, to know each others’ cultural backgrounds, respecting diversity, tolerance, patience, building solidarity (29%)
- Greater knowledge of international instruments (16%)
- Greater knowledge of monitoring and advocacy techniques (7%)

What this underscores is the significance of the participatory educational methodology used during the IHRTP as a critical component of the content for a successful human rights education program. By continuing to explain the program’s methodology as transparently as possible to participants, the IHRTP will continue to be a program that challenges human rights educators to question their own values and principles guiding their work. As such, the IHRTP will remain a program that contributes to building a global culture of human rights.

While Equitas can provide some support to participants once the program is completed, it is up to the 2007 alumni to carry out their Individual Plans and disseminate their results. In addition to promoting the integration of new found knowledge, skills, attitudes and values into participants’ work, these Individual Plans are excellent tools in helping to assess the impact of the IHRTP.

