

Human Rights Education  
Held At  
ASHA KENDRA, Pathanamthitta, Kerala

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On 11-12 JANUARY 2013  
Facilitator: Prof. T.K. Jyothiraj

# REPORT



Participants with Facilitator and SACC Chairman

At a Glance	
Venue	ASHA KENDRA, Pathanamthitta, Kerala
Date	11-12 January 2013
Facilitators	Prof. T.K. Jyothiraj & Dr. Ashok Alex Philip
Number of Participants	45
Age Group	17-45
Religious Representation	Hindu-35 & Christian-10

### Introduction

Two day human Rights Education program was held at ASHA KENDRA, Pathanamthitta, Kerala on 11-12 January 2013. 45 women, mainly from five Dalit villages participated in the program from Hindu and Christian communities. The program was intended to empower women, especially *dalits* (the weakest people group in Indian society) in the region, especially to give them moral backup to fight against discriminations and violations of human rights.

### Program in Detail

The program was started with prayer. Mr. Abin K. Vincent, IARF SACC Coordinator introduced Prof. T.K. Jyothiraj and Dr. Ashok Alex Philip, HRE facilitator to the audience. Prof. Jyothiraj interacted with participants and very positively they responded and interacted. Unfortunately Dr. Ashok Alex Philip could not attend the HRE due to a serious accident happened to him during the preparations for HRE. His motorbike collided with another vehicle and got serious injuries including a fracture on his leg. Doctors told him to be in bed rest for at least three months.

Majority of the participants were from five Dalit villages. With much enthusiasm they assembled in conference hall in time. In fact, their responses were genuine and sincere comparing to urbanites. They were very receptive to lectures. Serious discussions were held on Religious freedom and human rights. Dr. Thomas Mathew, Chairman IARF SACC explained the role of IARF along with other NGO's and Governments to make the society, a place for everybody to live in peace and harmony. He also motivated them to stand together to fight against injustice and double standards that destructs the very fabric of the society. The workshop really motivated them and opened their eyes to subtle exploitation and violations knowingly or unknowingly happening in the society. Their voices are also counted to form a just society, where all will be treated equally, irrespective of caste, creed and color.

Participants whole heartedly participated in the workshop and shared their concerns of insecurity which prevails in the society now a days.

### Main Aim

- Sensitize people about the rights of freedom of religion and belief.
- Promote religious harmony and peace in villages

### Objective:

Minimize socio-cultural and religious conflict, violence and tension from the society.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Session

- Greetings from the facilitator
- Introduction of participants and their expectation.
- Identifying their concerns about intolerance, religious discrimination and Conflict- sharing and categorizing their concerns.
- Social purposes, learning goal, social goal of this HRE workshop.
- Proposing goal for social change to overcome obstacles to religious Freedom - Sharing goals.
- Thinking about action.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Session

- Reading, acknowledging and clarifying- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
- The declaration on the Elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief (DIDRB).
- Major Human Rights Treaties
- Relate the goals of the participants to the rights describe in the UDHR and DIDRB

### **3<sup>rd</sup> session**

- Film show -‘Rita’s Choices’
- Responding the film - awakening their awareness
- Inquiry about injustice
- Analyses the injustice within a Human Rights framework.
- Alternative views and application of HR to prevent such injustices
- Applying HR (DIDRB) what actions may be undertaken

### **4<sup>th</sup> session**

- Review – Rita’s Choices on the light of DIDRB and the said goal
- Film Show – ‘Sacred Grove’
- Responding the film - awakening their awareness
- Inquiry about multiple injustices
- Analyses the injustice within a Human Rights framework.
- Alternative views and application of HR to prevent such injustices
- Action to be undertaken

### **5<sup>th</sup> session**

- Review of Sacred Grove on the light of said goal
- Film show – ‘Where is Home’
- Responding the film - awakening their awareness
- Inquiry about multiple injustices
- Analyze the inter-religious injustice within a Human Rights framework.
- Alternative views and application of HR to prevent such injustices
- Action to be undertaken

### **6<sup>th</sup> session**

- Reviewing their concern and goals
- Recommending actions
- Planning action for social change
- Strategic planning for action

### **Methodology**

Group works - discussions, lectures, case studies, Audio visual learning and group report presentation.

### **Issues rose**

Hatred, humiliation, intolerance, Religious conflicts, Rights to freedom of religion and belief these issues had raised and discussed in the program.

### **Assumptions**

Dalits are dominated in this area. They are always subjected to multiple exploitations especially of human rights and religious freedom.

### **Risk factors**

Since the participants were Dalits in majority, it was very difficult to highlight many issues, since they are very sensitive to such issues.

## **Expected learning outcomes**

### **Short-term**

Participants will be able to change their mind set up and will be oriented and motivated to accept the freedom of religion and belief as important as Human rights.

### **Long-term:**

All sorts of social violence, inter caste conflicts and tension will be resolved.

### **Resources Required**

Cooperation and man power support from the local organization

Teaching and training materials viz., pad, pen, power point, laptop, flip charts etc.

### **Language Problem**

Language problem was existed, because majority of the participants were unable to follow English. Therefore Malayalam (vernacular) was frequently used.

### **Location**

ASHA KENDRA, Pathanamthitta

### **Why have you chosen this community/ target group?**

Tension and misunderstanding present among the village people, especially on the basis of caste and creed. The gap between haves and have not's are increasing.

### **Balance of gender, ages etc?**

The workshop was exclusively to deal with the issues of women and empower them. Therefore all participants were female.

### **Do you have ice-breaking /team building activities?**

Yes

### **How many people from each faith attended?**

Hinduism-35 and Christianity-10

### **Name of Potential Mediator**

Mrs. Bindu

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## Participants Comments



**Suni George (40), Christian**

I'm really privileged to attend the program. The seminar influenced me a lot both in personal and societal life. Human Rights protection is most essential in the social life. We have to fight for human rights and religious freedom. The films screened were very touching.



**Sudha Vijayan (34), Hindu**

Human Rights protection is highly needed in the society. All are equal in the society. If everyone is committed to preserve justice and peace our entire society will flourish in every means. Job opportunity must be given to all in spite of their religious and cultural background.



**Sobhana (37), Hindu**

The seminar was very good. The facilitator was very friendly and approachable to us. I'm interested to attend this kind of seminar. Films were very touching and thought provoking. Study materials in vernacular (Malayalam) will be an added advantage to the workshop, if the organizers could provide. Because we cannot grasp everything from few sessions, so reference materials would help us to recollect things.



**Renju Nair (27), Hindu**

Facilitator explained a detailed catalogue of human rights to which everyone is entitled to enjoy. This kind of awareness workshop is the need of hour, since the rate of violation of rights in every sense is increasing uncontrollably. I am indebted to the organizers and facilitator for arranging this workshop.



**Mini J. (35), Christian**

The workshop was very informative and helpful. Today the rate of the violation of Human Rights has been increased as never before. The issues dealt in films were very important and serious discussions made on them were very informative and creative. Thanks to IARF for organizing this program.

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## View Photos of the Event

<http://www.iarfsacc.org/media/photos/index.php?cat=87>