



international association for
religious freedom
belief with integrity
South Asia Coordinating Council

Human Rights Education workshop

@ Vincent Apostolic Degree College,
Omkar Nagar, Nagpur– Urban, Maharashtra, India

30–31 January 2013

Sponsored by IARF SACC



Facilitator: Adv. Mrs. Amal Rohilla



At a Glance

Venue	Vincent Apostolic Degree College, Omkar Nagar, Nagpur, Urban, Maharashtra, India
Date	30-31 January 2013
Facilitator	Adv. Mrs. Amal Rohilla
Number of Participants	34
Gender Balance	Female-20 & Male-14
Age Group	18-35
Religious Representation	Hinduism - 17, Christianity-4, Buddhism -10, Islam – 2 & Sikhism-1

Main Aim of the series

To educate and empower young adults to know the values of Human Rights based on religious freedom for peace within the community, other communities, states, and ultimately awareness about the importance for global peace and Harmony.

Objectives of the series

To achieve world peace and Harmony and to eliminate all sorts of discrimination and intolerance based on religion and its practices.

Timeline and Venue

30th and 31st January 2013

8:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.

Vincent Apostolic Degree College, 28, Central Railway colony, Omkar Nagar, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India.

Session outline

Breakdown of the topics covered and activities per session

Welcome: The principal of the college Miss. Vinita Bower and Dr. Rajendra S. Dongre, Professor of RTMNU Nagpur and Secretary of IARF Nagpur Branch presided the inaugural session of Human Rights Education at Nagpur on 30th January 2013. The participants were from Degree College and Junior College of Vincent Apostolic, and Dr. Bower Junior College, Omkar Nagar, Nagpur. The vice president of National Chapter, President of Nagpur Branch and facilitator of HRE briefed about the statement and purpose of IARF and its history, activities in India and abroad. Dr. Rajendra Dongre guest of honour enlightened the participants about religious freedom and the purpose of the workshop. He highlighted the uniqueness of Indian Constitution, which gives freedom to profess and practice one's own religion without any interference of others or the state. The facilitator Mrs. A. Rohilla gave brief introduction about Human Rights and the purpose of this workshop and requested the participants to involve them in the activities of peace building which is essential in the growing political, cultural, social, economic change around the world. She further demonstrated importance of religious freedom for world peace and Harmony.

Session I

Participants were divided in three groups. Then they were told to have their partner for the session (Immediate next person). Acquaintance with each other, sharing the concerns with other partner and introducing each other in front of the audience and sharing their concerns really presented a new atmosphere. Then, the group leader wrote down the concerns in their groups, categorising the concerns and proposing goal settings and think about action. 2 hrs.

Session II

- Participants reflections
- Awakening and deepening awareness
- An inquiry into injustice
- Analysing the injustices within a Human Rights frame work.

Session III

Analysis II Considering Alternatives. Analysis III- Applying HR standards and criteria - considering action. Group I Enlisting supporters for change, Group II - HR learning. Group III - HR action for Tolerance and Religious freedom - summarised the simulation after viewing all 3 films. Wrap - up Assessment of learning as Action on elimination of intolerance and discrimination.



Session IV

Viewing film and share awareness, response, Analysis and other action, concepts of Social Justice Human Rights & Indian constitution.

Session V

Viewing all 3 films - Drafting strategy for change - statement - goals- recommendations for change - presentation- framing a task force- final reflection on Human Rights leaning for tolerance and elimination of discrimination based on religion- Religious freedom Monitoring feedback- evaluation.

Methodology employed

Discussion, Lecture, Question Answers, Interchanging group views, video, preparation of charts, group songs on religious unity and integrity, folk, theatre/ street play etc were employed.

Issues rose during each session

Unrest related to Religion: Participants highlighted their concern over religious fanaticism and intolerance, which is growing in the society than ever before. The state Maharashtra has also tasted the bitterness of terrorism. Most often terrorism grows behind the curtain of religion and contaminates the good name of religion.

Human Rights Violations in various forms such as: Lack of educational facilities, lack of proper medication, transportation, Corruption, Pollution, Illiteracy, lack of cleanliness, Poverty etc were discussed.

Education: No school facilities are available in some areas. Young children have to cross through dirty *nallahs* to reach the school nearby.

Transportation: Roads are not properly made. There are lots of pit holes, patches due to low quality material used in construction.

Water supply: No proper plan for water supply pipe line- water should be equally distributed in all areas. Leakage of water pipe line- hence contaminated water supply.

Electricity: No electricity supply in many areas of the urban. Even if street light is there they are not working.

Cultural Centre: Illegal activities like gambling in the centre meant for cultural activities of the children and the young.

Primary Health Centre, recreation centre, play ground, library for common people, good gardens etc are still lacking in the society here. DJ sound at night disturbing the public.

We as citizens of India want better service, good income, so that we can have a better standard of living. Our constitution has guaranteed many rights. In order to enjoy the life we need better service/employment, so that we can fight against unfair practice and injustice and remove differences among the community and work for justice Peace and friendship.

Government's failure to preserve the culture of tribals, interference of govt in their religious practices as noticed in "Sacred Grove".

Discrimination in the religious practices of communities, and within the same religion as it is noticed in "Rita's choice" and in "Where is Home?" difference s between two religious groups/communities.

Ideas and solutions to the issues identified by the participants

Teachings and workshops on religious harmony throughout the state will decrease the rate of riots and intolerance based on religion. Participants also wished to bring this matter to the attention of representatives of people. The government has to make policies for solving the problem of pollution, illiteracy, cleanliness, to eradicate corruption, and poverty. Complaint has to be made to the respective authorities for proper implementation of the scheme. Government through the representatives in the area has to take appropriate measures to overcome the difficulties of the citizen. School, pollution, health centres, Roads, Sewage line, Good drinking water, play ground for children, library has to be provided to everyone. The government machinery has to think on these lines and act to remove those difficulties. Interaction, education, stress for practical knowledge, encourage for innovative ideas, equality, think globally and act locally, give importance for moral values, transparency, empowerment of tribal women, give equal status for women. Enhancing security and vigilance, eradicating of illiteracy, poverty, corruption empowerment of women, educating child about the religion, interaction between heads of religious communities,



celebrate all festivals together inviting all religious groups, proper parenting, motivating local leaders (formal and informal), advocacy of their problems in national level, employment opportunities, public awareness, counselling of both parents and children, proper implementation of Govt. schemes, motivating them to join for income generating activities. Employment ethics, transparency in administration, family values, ideal life of parents, value based education, counselling, stress related recreation centres, family values, and pre-marital seminars. Health campaigns have to be conducted. Government's control on price hike, govt policy for rape victims, family planning, educational campaign by the govt on various topics, knowledge on right to equality, people should unite and celebrate festivals, one must give family values and responsibility to the child when they are young, this can be done by the parents only. Awareness about Human Rights and rights related to Religious freedom.

Everyone should be treated equally. Equal status and standard of living should be maintained. Good education and proper family planning methods, free education for all, gender equality, equal status in the family for girls and boys, astringent action against illegal abortion, corruption etc.

Participants have also expressed their trust in IARF and believe that IARF can make some drastic change in their society through its continues efforts presence.

Assumptions that were made.

NGO's like IARF can associate with government and likeminded agencies to bring awareness among people through which tension and intolerance can be reduced at a large level. Changes will be made possible only through education and awareness. Meantime Government can initiate certain methodology for promoting social change in the society in order to eradicate all kinds of social evil in the society like corruption, poverty etc.

Risk factors and how they were taken care of?

The participants' college time schedule was in the morning and they usually leave for home before noon. So getting them for afternoon session was really burdensome job. In order to keep them back for our learning session, extra snacks and tea were arranged.

Learning Outcomes

Short-term

Participants were eager to know about UDHR. Because of their enthusiasm it was easy to define DIDRB. The participants were with full of energy and enthusiasm. This subject was totally new to them. Even the staff of the college attended all sessions with sincerity and dedication. Every lecture, instruction and activity was done with great care, perfection and eager to know what is HR and religious freedom. I promised to meet them again in their college. Even some are interested in joining us. Every group leader had taken 30 to 40 minutes for explaining their problems, solutions, allotted UDHR, DIDRB articles to them. It was definitely a successful series.

Long-term

Participants' response was 100%. I must say that this programme was a successful one. I am sure the participants who had shown their willingness to join us would be future young adults of IARF. Altogether the participants understood what are UDHR and DIDRB.

What resources were used? Did the arrangements like equipment, meeting hall, and seating, etc. work smoothly?

What difficulties were faced?

Meeting Hall and sitting arrangement was good. Projector and Sound system was provided by the college.

What was the contribution made by the community/ communities? Please give details.

Hall, Projector, and sound system were provided by the community.

Materials: What films and which sections of the HRE Manual/handouts were used in the training sessions?

All three films Rita's Choice, Where is Home? Sacred Grove and HRE learning handouts, Statement and purpose of IARF, UDHR, and DIDRB were used in the training session.

Did you encounter any language problems among participants in terms of the materials (for example, handouts, films)? And how did you handle them?



Most of the participants were able to understand English. However lectures were translated to Hindi for better understanding.

How did the community receive the learning programme?

Response from the community was very good and motivating. They would like to attend more such programmes.

Did you face any resistance from the community?

No. Not at all.

If you live at some distance from the workshop site, did this pose any challenges to you?

Though the distance was around 25 K.M, it did not affect.

Do you feel the community/target group you chose was appropriate, why?

Please give concrete examples.

The community target group needs to be educated for better future of the nation to maintain peace and Harmony in the society. No one reaches so far to enlighten them with such kind of activities. Participants are lucky we could reach them.

Please write about the composition of the learning group. How did you ensure a balance of gender, ages etc?

The learning group was degree college students and junior college students. They are the future of this nation. The participants had shown keen interest in learning and knowing their rights as Human and specifically the rights based on religious freedom.

a) Which faith traditions attended?

Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism

b) How many people from each faith attended?

Hinduism - 17, Christianity-4, Buddhism -10, Islam – 2, Sikhism-1

Give details of the gender balance amongst the participants.

Female : 20 & Male: 14

Did you include any young people? If so, how many?

Most of them were young

Were there any serious disagreements and tension between the participants from different faith groups? If so, what were the points of disagreement and how they were resolved?

No

What ice-breaking/team-building activities did you conduct? (Please specify)

Religious group songs by different groups.

Please add the names, gender, faith traditions and approximate ages of at least 3 people in the group who were your support team.

1. Jyoti V. Jog
2. Miss. Molly B. Shaha
3. Mrs. Suanda U. Munghate

(All were from Vincent Apostolic Degree College and Dr. Bower Junior College, Nagpur.)

Name of mediator and the role s/he played

Management of the college was known to me. I requested Dr. Rajendra Dongre, secretary of IARF Nagpur, to meet the management and to have an initial talk to the college management and he obliged. Sou. Jyoti V.Jog administrator of the college and their lecturer Sunanda Munghate helped me for maintaining discipline in the workshop and to conduct the session peacefully. Miss. Vinita Bower, Principal who was co-operative in all respect throughout the session and her staff had helped me by extending their co-operation to complete the series successfully.



Please give detailed information about participants' feedback and evaluation of the session / series

In totality it was a successful series. The participants learned about HR and religious freedom. Participants had shown their interest in respecting other religious groups. Willing to share and participate in other religious activities.

What areas of the session / series could have been done better and how do you plan to make these improvements in the next session / series?

At the end of two days hard work, I felt as if I have been running short of time. Some of the participants were not good in English to express their views in English. That was a draw back. So I had collected their views and opinion and translated them to English.

Participants' Comments (Selected)



Ashwini Naresh Bulkunde (F), 17, Buddhism

I enjoyed and learned a lot of things. It was really an encouraging program. All sessions were equally important and good. Facilitator was very friendly and knowledgeable. Thanks to IARF for supporting this endeavour. I would like to join many such programs.

M. Abrar M. Ilyas (M), 19, Islam

It is a nice education system. I enjoyed it a lot. Now I know what is human rights and UDHR. Especially Article 18 of it. The issues discussed in circle groups were very timely and informative. The films were also very touching.



Shincy Luckose (F), 24, Christian (Nun)

This kind of workshops really gives us mileage to work for the upliftment of poor and needy in the society. Issues discussed in different sessions were relevant to our society and context. Most often we have become the victims of human rights violations. However this program gave us more insights and knowledge to cope with the situations and how to tackle and overcome struggles. Thanks to all.



Sagar Keshavrao Barde (M), 24, Hindu

The two day workshop was very good. It provided us a platform to speak for ourselves. Really it was a new experience and exposure for us. It really covered all topics related to human rights and religious freedom. I wholeheartedly thank IARF and facilitator Adv. Amal Rohilla Ma'am.



Gurvinder Kaur Sachdev (F), 17, Sikhism

It was really good. We all enjoyed a lot. I got more knowledge about religious freedom and human rights. Minorities of the country always face discrimination from different corner. They often fall scapegoats of violations. Thanks to IARF for giving us better knowledge.



View Photos (Click on the link given below to view photos)

<http://www.iarfsacc.org/media/photos/index.php?cat=94>