



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



Human Rights Education Workshop

Held at

District Institute of Education and Training (DIET),

Mysore, Karnataka State

Held on 14-15 March 2013

Sponsored by IARF SACC



REPORT

Facilitators: Adv. Shabeer Ahmed & Adv. Mrs. M.A. Hemalatha Rao

At a Glance

Venue	District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), Karnataka State
Date	14-15 March 2013
Facilitators	Adv. Md. Shabeer Ahmed & Adv. Mrs. M.A. Hemalatha Rao
Number of Participants	65
Gender Balance	Female-12 & Male- 53
Age Group	18-45
Religious Representation	Hinduism (Comprising different sects)-62, Muslim-02 & Christian 01

Main Aim of the series

Promotion of religious harmony, understanding and peace in society.

Objectives of the series

Creation of awareness of human right of religious freedom and promotion of respect for different faiths and realization of religious freedom and human dignity.

Timeline

14th and 15th March 2013. From 9.00 am to 5.00 pm [for two days].

Session outline

Breakdown of the topics covered and activities per session:

Day-1

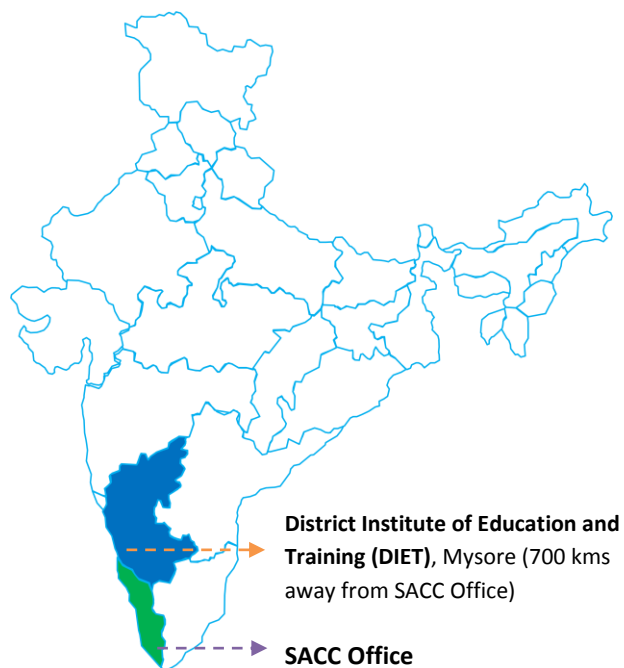
- Registration
- Inauguration
- Introduction of participants, expectations and assessment
- About IARF and HRE Project
- Identification of issues of religious intolerance and discrimination in groups
- Presentation by groups
- Screening of "Rita's Choices" followed by discussion
- Discussion on UDHR & DEIDRB
- Screening of "Sacred Grove" followed by discussion

DAY – 2

- Reflections on Day – 1
- Screening of "Where is Home" followed by discussion
- Group exercise – identification of issues of injustice in the three films and presentations
- Identification of local issues and action plan for addressing them
- Presentations
- Evaluation
- Close

Methodology employed

- Introduction in group by formation of pairs.
- Group interactions and discussions.
- Group exercises, preparation of charts and presentations.
- Viewing of films for sensitizing and creating awareness.
- Distribution of handouts on UDHR and DEIDRB.



- Songs and energizers & games conducted by the participants themselves.
- Formation and adherence to ground rules.

Issues rose during each session

- Denial of religious freedom, dignity and human rights related to these in the following issues
- Inter-religious and inter-caste marriages.
- Loss of identity of tribal communities.
- Discrimination based on religion and belief in educational institutions, jobs and government policies.
- Inter-religious conflicts between different religious communities such as Muslims, Christian and Hindus.
- Discrimination within families.
- Government in action at the time of communal conflicts and support for religious majority community.
- Religious intolerance and hatred.
- Desecration and destruction of places of worship.

Ideas and solutions to the issues identified by the participants

- Creation of awareness of human right of religious freedom through the educational system, workshops, distribution of literature pertaining to it, etc.
- Inter faith dialogue for understanding and harmony.
- Understanding and knowledge of scriptures of one's own religion and other religions.
- Promotion of understanding and harmony through interfaith get-togethers, participation in the rituals, practices and festivals of different religions for better communal relations and understanding.
- Abolition of caste system and elimination of caste-based discrimination and intolerance through government policies, programs and legislation.
- Protection of places of worships by local communities and Government as per rule of law.

Assumptions that were made

There were assumptions of prevalence of religious intolerance and discrimination in Mysore. Accordingly it was assumed that the participants would show some initial resistance to freely discuss the issues that are directly related to them.

Risk factors and how they were taken care of

It was felt that during the discussions and interaction some contentious and sensitive issues would emerge. At times these discussions tended to turn into debates and heated exchanges. This was taken care through a very friendly, interactive and participatory approach that was adopted from the beginning through ice breakers, songs and creation of an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Learning Outcomes: Please give a detailed report of the outcomes of the session / series as identified by you and the participants at the end of each session / series

Short-term

- Mutual respect among the participants of different faiths and understanding of different points of view.
- Understanding of different religions and the belief and practices associated with them.
- Understanding of concerns of religious discrimination and intolerance in the framework of human rights.
- Exploring the ways of promoting religious harmony and tolerance in the society.

Long-term

- Establishing religious harmony, peace and understanding in the society.
- Nurturing a culture of human rights in general and rights pertaining to religious freedom and dignity in particular.

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

Meeting hall, HRE films, Projector, microphone, stationery, tables and chairs, etc. The arrangements worked smoothly.

What was the contribution made by the community/ communities?

Please give details.

Meeting hall, Sound System, Tables, chairs, Projector Screen & accommodation for both the days were provided by DIET Mysore.

HRE Films, Stationery, Transportation Conveyance, Lunch, tea-coffee, snacks, on both the days and, Certificates with group photograph was provided by Forum for Harmony & Peace Mysore)

Note:-Rs. 3000 remuneration paid to us is also spent for the program without using by us for our purpose.

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

All the three films – “Rita’s Choices”, “Sacred Grove” and “Where is Home” were screened. UDHR, DEIDRB, IARF’s Statement of Purpose, etc. handouts were used prominently throughout the series.

Did you face any difficulties with regard to the use of the materials?

No

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

Since the HRE literature and films were in English, Some of the participants had little difficulty with language. Kannada is the Mother Tongue of participants. The films were explained to them in Kannada for better identification and understanding of the issues. All the HRE related handouts had to be explained to the participants both in English and Kannada

How did the community receive the learning programme?

The learning programme was received with curiosity and enthusiasm.

Did you face any resistance from the community?

No

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

No

Do you feel the community/target group you chose was appropriate, why? Please give concrete examples.

The students and teaching staff of DIET Mysore District open mind for receiving an important learning like HRE. Since there were representatives of different religions, the HRE series provided them an opportunity to come together and openly discuss the issues. It also helped them to understand different religions and to hear different points of view. A change in attitude of the Students would help to create an environment conducive to mutual respect and harmony. The students learning about rights would create far reaching impact on their family and community.

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

Participants were in the 18 – 54 age groups.

Hindus : 62
Muslims : 02
Christians : 01

Total : 65
Female: 12 & Male: 53

Please write about attendance of participants at the session / series?

For example, did you have problems getting the same people for each session etc. (Please attach the Participants' Attendance Pro forma) – *the questions immediately following will provide a summary of what is on the attendance pro forma*

The participants attended all the sessions.

a) Which faith traditions attended?

Hindus, Muslims, Christians

b) How many people from each faith attended?

Hindus : 62

Muslims : 02

Christians : 01

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

The participants were both young adults and adults

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?

Some of the participants expressed strong views about Conversion by Christians. In the ensuing discussion the Subject was clarified with examples by the Christians participants. Facilitators also spoke on the issue and clarified the issue.

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

Introduction of the participants was done by forming pairs and introduced each other. There were songs. Groups were formed for the participants to carry out interactions and exercises closely as teams.

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

Mr. M.R. Preethan (male, Hindu, 28 years)

Mr. Mansoor Ahmed (male, Muslim, 36 years)

Miss. Neha Fathima (female, Muslim, 20 years)

Mrs. B K Laskhmi Devi (female, Hindu, 55 years)

Ms. Naghma Ara (female, Muslim, 30 years)

Name of mediator and the role he/she played

Mrs. Sneha, Coordinator of DIET Mysore assisted in all respect for successful completion of HRE workshop

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

Initial Assessment of the Evaluation forms will be sent.

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

Discussion on UDHR and DEIRB could be improved by providing the relevant material in Kannada. For the future series the material would be provided in Kannada. Translation would be done. Similarly, videos would also be dubbed in Kannada.

Please share any further information that you wish to Note

The Participants after explaining each chart presented skits which was added more color to the workshop.

Participants' Comments (Selected)



Krishna V. (M), 21, Hindu

The workshop was very good. I had no such experience earlier and my knowledge about human rights was very limited. However after attending this program I got lots of insights. Thanks to IARF.



Snehalatha (F), 44, Christian

The seminar was very good in its content. The discussions and skits were very informative. Thanks to IARF for this kind of endeavor to educate common people.
However it would be much better if the materials in Kannada.



Saiyad J.H. (M), 21, Islam

Two day seminar on human rights and religious freedom was very good. This kind of seminar draws much knowledge to us, since the opportunity to attend the workshop is very limited. Discussions were very healthy and informative. Thanks to all for this workshop.



Savitha Ramma (F), 52, Hindu

It was my first opportunity to attend a human rights program with rich and wide knowledge and programs. All sessions were very interesting and important. Films and their contents displayed very timely messages. I 'm happy to attend more programs like this in future to help my society to be aware about human rights and religious freedom.



Shiva K.J. (M), 19, Hindu

The program gave me lots of insights and knowledge to me. Thanks to the organizers for organizing this program in our institution. Films were very simple but conveyed lots of message, socially relevant and eye opening. All sessions were equally important.

View Photos

Follow the link to view photos of the workshop.

<http://www.iarfsacc.org/media/photos/index.php?cat=107>