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# **Human Rights Education in the Euro-Mediterranean region**

## Issues and Challenges

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“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to strengthening of respect for Human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious group...”

## Universal Declaration of Human rights 1948- Article 26

### 1. Preamble

A significant number of human rights local, regional and international NGOs in the Arab and Euro-Med region are increasingly involved in human rights education with a variety of different groups particularly young people. In cooperation with Arab Human rights Arab NGOs, international and regional organizations promote HRE by building training programs for young human rights defenders (HREA), addressing youth while working on HRE and intercultural dialogue (European youth centre in Budapest), and undertaking capacity building programs while implementing HRE trainings and ensuring access to HRE materials and tools (Equitas, Amnesty International and Salto Euromed resource Centre).

However, there is little systematic exchange of ideas and cooperation between such organisations in regards to ideas, information, strategies and methodologies. Additionally, there is little exchange between educationalists and activists on similar issues.

In many countries, the human rights movement is currently facing the challenge of ‘recruiting’ a new generation of young committed human rights defenders. For various reasons (historical, organisational, cultural, etc.) human rights NGOs are significantly dominated by people in their 40s and plus, however, by no means in all organisations: few young people become involved in this vocation.

To respond to this challenge, in the beginning of 2006, the EMHRN launched a new project on Human Rights Education (HRE) and Youth. The project aims at promoting youth participation in human rights work by developing a sustainable network of young NGO representatives from the mainstream human rights movement, as well as strengthening NGO networking in the field of human rights education.

One of the key activities through which these aims are to be pursued is the organisation of a human rights summer school with a particular focus on young people involving key NGOs working on human rights education. Apart from gathering young people together and giving them a platform through which to engage, the project itself is an opportunity to network and to stimulate human rights discussions and agendas through a broad and participatory process.

As part of this process, the EMHRN Secretariat commissioned this report to initially map, review and evaluate human rights education activities and methodologies amongst EMHRN members in the region and to review needs, wants and barriers as regards to human rights education. The information collected in the report is based on a survey questionnaire estimating the nature and extent of Human Rights Education provisions in the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN). In addition, this report also includes information from nine HRE organisations who identified their own strengths, weaknesses and challenges.

The key objectives of this report are to:

- Influence future initiatives and agendas in HRE by highlighting opportunities, gaps and challenges.
- Stimulate debate and discussion within the Network and with key partners about HRE methodologies and strategies.
- Provide ideas and input for the organisation of regional summer schools.
- Influence future initiatives and agendas in HRE by highlighting opportunities, gaps and challenges.
- Help us share our thinking on HRE with like-minded people in the region.

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# 1. Human Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

## 1.1 Introduction to the EMHRN

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) was established as a civil society response to the Barcelona Declaration, its process and the agenda it put in place, initiating the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership involving the European Union states, the EU Commission and 12 South Mediterranean partners.

The EMHRN is an independent network of human rights organisations and institutions, as well as individuals, adhering to international human rights standards and international humanitarian law.

The majority of the Network's members were already active in the field of human rights prior to the Barcelona Declaration but viewed the framework established by that Agreement as a useful context within which to work, i.e. a context in which they could come together, promote and protect international human rights principles and strengthen and develop further the values of cooperation and dialogue across cultural, social and economic borders.

The members recognise the impact that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and EU-Arab cooperation frameworks have on the region and aim to ensure that human rights values and practices are a key dimension of these relations.

The mission of the EMHRN is to promote and strengthen human rights and democratic reform within the framework of the Barcelona process and EU - Arab cooperation frameworks. Rooted in civil society, the Network seeks to develop and strengthen partnerships between NGOs in the Euro-Med region, disseminate human rights values and increase its capacity in this regard.

As such, the EMHRN's vision is to develop into a regional forum for human rights NGOs and become a major regional source of expertise, raising awareness of human rights and democratic reform.

The key values that guide and shape the Network are interrelated and include the following:

- The importance of recognising and promoting the fundamental universality, indivisibility, interdependency and interrelation of human rights, individual as well as collective rights.
- Respect for democratic principles and the rule of law as outlined in various international conventions and humanitarian law.
- The importance of security for human being's dignity and fulfilment of their rights.
- The fundamental value of freedom of expression, assembly and association.
- The importance of civil society in the promotion and protection of human rights and the right for civil society to be an active partner in this agenda.
- Gender equality and the importance of highlighting and actively promoting the rights of women and women's participation in public life.
- The value and benefit of intercultural approaches to human rights as well as dialogue and the promotion of intercultural understanding.
- The right to popular participation and ownership in shaping human rights agendas throughout the region.



## The key objectives of the Network include:

- To pro-actively support and publicise the universal principles and standards of human rights in the Partner States and the whole of the Middle Eastern region and to actively highlight the abuse of rights from any source.
- To critically engage with all dimensions of the Barcelona Process and to maintain a critical stance on the EU's own performance in this regard, especially in its dealings with participating states from the South.
- To support the development of democratic institutions alongside the promotion of the rule of law, the equality of men and women, public education and awareness as well as human rights education per se.
- To strengthen, assist and co-ordinate the efforts of its members to monitor compliance with human rights, as well as to promote them amongst the Partner states, especially in contexts where such rights are systematically abused or denied.
- To set up and support necessary structures and procedures to achieve the above.

The Network recognises the significant gap between the rhetoric of the Barcelona Declaration as regards human rights, the realities of the Barcelona Process and the situation in many countries of the region. The Network is committed to critical engagement with these issues and challenges both in the North and in the South.

## 1.2 Our understanding of Human Rights Education

In 2005, the EMHRN published a background discussion paper on human rights education which outlined the Network's understanding of the broad content, approach, values-base and methodology of this key area of education. For the Network, human rights education has four key dimensions – these are summarised below <sup>1</sup>.

The four dimensions can and should be explored in specific contexts and understandings e.g.:

- The growth of the ideas and the struggles that have shaped and modelled the international human rights movement.
- An understanding of the existing international human rights regime, its institutions, standards, laws, obligation and actors.
- Linkages between the international and domestic human rights regimes.

Within the framework of EMHRN membership, the key dimension will also be explored and understood within the context of the diversity of their economic, social, cultural, educational backgrounds etc.

### Values and Dispositions

- **Respect and caring for self** – as a society struggles to become more just and democratic, respect and caring for self is central to the flourishing of the well being of both the individual and the wider community. Respecting and caring for oneself brings both the capacity to act autonomously and to be self-motivated. It is an essential pre-requisite for an understanding of how to care for others and creates the potential for inner peace in a world of change and uncertainty.
- **Respect and caring for others** – as societies become more democratic, the disposition to respect and care for others is central to living interdependently. The positive relationships forged among individuals and groups are essential to the development of qualities such as co-operation, interdependence, and respect for a diversity of people and cultures which allows us to live and work in the realities of the world of today and the future.

<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Education: a background paper, an EMHRN publication, <http://www.euromedrights.net/88>.



- **A sense of social responsibility** – in a society geared to the general well-being of all it is essential to develop a commitment to social responsibility based on the critical scrutiny of information and evidence within an awareness of existing power relationships, social mores, principles and traditions. Such a disposition to social responsibility should also entail a commitment to living in an environment that is held in trust for the future.
- **A sense of belonging** – citizenship and community depend on a disposition to be part of the enterprise as a whole, a commitment to common purposes that go beyond personal interests, a willingness to participate as an active citizen, engendered by an understanding of the world as a place where each individual feels valued and where both group and individual concerns and opinions are respected.

## Ideas and Understanding

- **The centrality of relationships** – in an increasingly pluralist and interdependent society, the need to recognize and foster economic, social, cultural and political relationships based on equality and reciprocity as well as a recognition that mutual benefits follow such relationships.
- **The importance of compromise and negotiation** – in a context of moving away from violence towards the possibility of peace and human rights, the need to develop an awareness of the importance of negotiation and compromise. And the ability to recognize what is essential and what is subsidiary.
- **The concepts of democracy, governance, community and citizenship** – the promotion of understanding and action to underpin democratic practices and procedures and the duties of all. An appreciation of the history of the struggle for democracy and human rights and the need to safeguard them as well as the recognition of the responsibilities of governments and civil society at large.
- **Cultural identities, conflicts and conciliations** – at a time of rapid internationalization, we need to foster recognition of the equal value of all cultural identities and the dangers of ethnocentricity, which fuels conflict and aggression. The value of conciliation and the skills necessary to achieve it also need to be developed and practiced.
- **Rules, rights and responsibility** – equality, participation and democracy require the active involvement of all citizens in all countries. The recognition that all are born with inalienable rights must be matched with a recognition that there are also parallel responsibilities. A recognition also that the promotion and protection of rights and responsibilities is not simply the duty of government but of all.
- **Gender identities** – In order to realize the full humanity and dignity as well as the potential contribution of all, we need to foster recognition of the equal rights of all regardless of gender and that discrimination on that basis is immoral and increasingly illegal. We need to rediscover stories which have been hidden from history because of gender discrimination and we need to explore and foster new and different gender roles for the future.



## Skills and Capabilities

- **Communication Skills** – including the ability to: listen, discuss, make oral presentation, debate, interview, communicate competently across all language modes and in a range of media, write for a purpose, defend a position, express one's interests, beliefs and viewpoints through an appropriate medium, perceive and understand the interests, beliefs and viewpoints of others, be empathetic and make appropriate use of information technology.
- **Research and Problem-tackling Skills** – including the ability to research and evaluate information and ideas, interpret media 'texts', identify bias and prejudice, recognize discrimination and the use of stereotypes, organize information, apply reasoning skills to problems and issues and to perceive the consequences of tackling or not taking, specific actions in particular contexts.
- **Social Skills** – including the ability to develop satisfying and interactive human relations in different cultural contexts and across domains of power, take responsibility and make decisions, establish democratic working relationships, sustain dialogue within and across cultural settings and negotiate and make necessary compromises.
- **Action Skills** – (this dimension is frequently neglected and yet is central to a curriculum for peace and democracy) including the ability to identify and understand the objectives and impact as well as the importance of appropriate decision making, effectively engage in participative and appropriate democratic action and organize meetings and engage with representatives of different social, political and cultural groups.

## Experiences and Actions

If all of the above are to translate into action, they need to be fostered by means of a variety of methodologies and processes. However there are certain types of essential experience which foster the development of the values, ideas, skills and actions and which should be featured in all educational settings. These include:

- Working co-operatively and working independently.
- Giving and receiving feedback and participating in decision-making.
- Feeling valued and sharing responsibility.
- Knowing a sense of achievement.

Whilst learners should regularly experience many of these in formal educational settings, there should also be opportunities built into organisational arrangements that allow the experiences to be made real in other, non-formal contexts. The experiences do not change, but the contexts do. It is the responsibility of organizers and leaders to ensure that where circumstances permit, learners have the appropriate opportunity to take part in such things as:

- Residential experiences.
- Opportunities to join societies and associations.
- Opportunities to be involved with school councils.
- Opportunities to engage with representatives of other and perhaps 'opposing' traditions and perspectives including those of other cultures – this dimension is especially important in the context of comparative or cross-cultural learning.
- Opportunities to practice skills of negotiation and conciliation outside the 'safety' of the formal settings etc.





## 2. The survey: A map of HRE in the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network

### 2.1 Introduction and methodology

The mapping exercise covered in this report focused largely on the activities of EMHRN member organisations both in the North and in the South (those working 'in' and 'on' the region) through interviews with directors, coordinators, students and others involved in HRE activities. The researchers also surveyed the documents and resources produced by members, visited educational events as well as the organisations themselves. Phone interviews were undertaken as well as direct interviews and discussions on human rights education activities with participants.

The participants in the mapping exercise were selected from amongst EMHRN member organisations and some non-members from the region itself. The final sample included 29 member organisations identified by the EMHRN and the research team after an initial survey conducted in Madrid <sup>2</sup>.

The questionnaire used contained 62 questions, of which seven concerned organisation description and back ground information of HR organisations (e.g. mission, vision, governing structures, employees, technical capacities, etc.) and was designed to give the research team a general overview of HRE in the region including information on:

- Human rights education per se (general issues such as the extent and status of HRE in formal and non-formal sectors in their respective countries, the member organisation's ability to contribute to HRE, its awareness of beneficiaries, the needs of staff in HRE and what they considered to be the added value of their activities in HRE.
- Organisational and technical issues related to HRE activities conducted by members (subjects and topics covered, training materials used and/or published, the nature and range of participants, lecturers, the methodologies used, the settings – venue, duration of programme, costs, continuity of programmes, staffing etc.).
- Thinking about HRE (e.g. appropriate models of evaluation, gender perspectives, promotion of HRE, partnership, etc.).

A shorter version of the questionnaire was also used in some contexts. Both questionnaires are available for consultation at [www.emhrn.net](http://www.emhrn.net)

The survey has a number of key limitations which should be noted:

- The survey was of EMHRN members and this limits the sample on a country and regional basis.
- In certain cases some of the respondents did not fill out the questionnaires in front of research team members, so in some cases there was no possibility to ask additional questions by interviewers.
- The time and resource framework of the research was also a limiting factor in itself (the short time framework in which to conduct the research).
- The fact that the research was carried out in the specific political setting of the region (ongoing instability with special reference to the recent Israeli-Lebanon conflict).
- Additionally, there were travel and health restrictions in some cases.

Of the total 54 member organisations – 29 responded to the questionnaire with the questions later coded and processed. Other open-ended replies were included and summarised in narrative form.

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<sup>2</sup> EMHRN Members: Human Rights Education and Other Relevant Activities Survey, done at General Assembly of Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network held in Madrid 12-14 May 2006. Extensive results of this Survey are available at EMHRN Secretariat.



## 2.2 The situation of Human Rights Education in the Euro-Mediterranean region

The human rights education realm is subject to a paucity of published reviews and evaluations (or even documentations) of past and present activities and a general lack of structured discussions and exchange on HRE throughout the region. At the outset, it is important to restate some of the key limitations of this survey which covers the HRE programmes of Network members only. The political and cultural environment of the region in relation to human rights in general conduce to severe restrictions on what can actually be undertaken and what specific topics and issues can be addressed within human rights education. Needless to remark, this situation is not general throughout the region as a whole and has very specific local and national characteristics.

In general, it can be argued that there is an ongoing lack of basic information about HRE activities in the region generally and, more specifically, in terms of the successes and failures of different programmes and initiatives as well as about the content and quality of different activities. The majority of those surveyed indicated that it is difficult to evaluate programmes due to the lack of information and norms of evaluation even in the countries that adopt formal HRE programmes. Nevertheless, there is a degree of unanimity around a number of key issues.

Overall, there are many educators in the region who emphasise the importance of HRE not only for disseminating human rights culture in general but also in the context of current political and cultural reform as well as social advancement. Theoretically, there is a consensus that HRE is important, but in practical terms, HRE remains weak and underdeveloped for a variety of reasons outlined below.

### Integrating HR into School Curricula and Schoolbooks

The Arab Institute for Human Rights formulated a programme (from 1994-2005) to assist Arab countries to integrate Human Rights values and principles into school curricula, programmes and schoolbooks. The first part of the programme was the study of the educational programmes and school textbooks of the basic education level that covered a number of Arab countries analysing legislations, curricula and schoolbooks. The results of these studies were presented in a conference organised by the Institute in Beirut. The second part (2000 - 2003) related to secondary education was “the Introducing of human rights into school curricula and schoolbooks.” The outcome was that the Institute received invitations from more than one Arab ministry to participate in the evaluation of curricula and schoolbooks, to put forward recommendations in this regard, and to organise training seminars for teachers.

As regards to the HRE in the formal sector of education, there are significant differences between countries. Few countries have adopted national plans for HRE (Morocco<sup>3</sup>, Lebanon<sup>4</sup>, Tunisia, France<sup>5</sup>, Turkey<sup>6</sup>), and aspects of formal sector HRE are evident in Ireland, Malta<sup>7</sup> while others have introduced human rights terms and concepts in certain school curricula, particularly the civic education (Lebanon and Egypt) and peace education (Israel<sup>8</sup>). Other countries have shown little progress in this regard (Algeria, Syria and Libya). There are certain ‘informal initiatives’ at university level through non-obligatory courses especially in Lebanon. According to those interviewed, the main factor behind this uneven progress in the field of HRE is the lack of democracy in society at large and the lack of political will. This ‘political factor’ was highlighted as being decisive in any understanding of the uneven and underdeveloped situation of HRE<sup>9</sup> particularly in the South-Mediterranean<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> In Morocco, there is a National Focal point for the World Programme on Human Rights Education exists (Commission Centrale des Droits Humains et de la Citoyenneté, Département de l'Éducation Nationale, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Formation des Cadres et de la Recherche Scientifique)

<sup>4</sup> In Lebanon, there is also a National Focal Point (Bureau des Relations Extérieures et de la Coopération internationale, Cabinet du Ministre de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement Supérieur)

<sup>5</sup> In France there is National Action Plan for HRE exists (France : Plan d'Action pour l'Éducation et la Formation aux Droits de l'Homme 2000-2005 (available at [www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org))

<sup>6</sup> In Turkey: Human Rights Education Programme of Turkey 1998-2007 exists, (see <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/national-actions-plans.htm>)

<sup>7</sup> At University of Malta there is a Mediterranean Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratization (<http://home.um.edu.mt/laws/entrance/index.html>)

<sup>8</sup> Peace education is taught and research is supported in this area at Haifa University, Israel

<sup>9</sup> Summary of national initiatives undertaken within the Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) can be seen at <http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/initiatives.htm> including information on the following countries Algeria, Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Netherlands, Palestine, Sweden, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and United Kingdom (summary is not available for Belgium, Spain and Israel)

<sup>10</sup> See also Plan of Action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (UN Document A/59/525/Rev.1) , (available at <http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/planaction.htm>)



## Morocco: A national action plan for HRE

A participatory process spread over almost two years ended in February 2007 with the creation of the citizens' platform for promoting the culture of Human Rights, created upon the initiative of the Advisory Council for Human Rights with participation by EMHRN organizations members as the AMDH, the OMDH, the AFDM and the Espace Associatif. Three main areas of focus were identified as the mainstays of the platform – i.e. formal and non-formal education, the training of professionals, notably those responsible for enforcing the law, and increasing the awareness of the general public.

The citizens' platform for promoting the culture of Human Rights is based on two fundamental principles: namely, the establishment of the culture of human rights through a global approach which goes beyond sector-based considerations and cross-disciplinarity. This makes the platform a framework for action and interaction which reflects the issues of common interest of different operators.

The platform is also based on a principle of participation and complementarity, as it is not only a global framework for all actions and initiatives whose aim is to promote the culture of Human Rights, but it is also a framework for combining all the efforts deployed in sector-based, regional and national plans with a view to developing resources and improving work tools.

Thirty or so actions have thus been identified as providing a structure for the efforts to be made by the country, so that the culture of Human Rights impregnates attitudes and behaviors – both on State level through its institutions, organizations and civil servants – and on the level of all its male and female citizens. Thirty actions, scheduled over a five-year period, have been divided into three phases: Preparation, Implementation and Assessment.

As regards to informal HRE, there has been a noticeable increase in the HRE activities. Human rights, women's rights, child rights and development NGOs have initiated HRE activities with a wide range of groups. In addition, there have been support initiatives for HRE in the formal sector undertaken by civil society including lobbying, awareness raising, informal cooperation and partnership in addition to significant publications about human rights and gender equality. Women's rights organisations have also reviewed the formal curricula from a gender perspective and have contributed to a heightening of public awareness of issues such as sexual harassment.

## Purpose of the GMRK

The Gender Mainstreaming Reference Toolkit is intended to serve as a resource document for assisting the EMHRN and its member organisations, as well as generalist human rights organisations, women's rights organisations and other civil society groups, in mainstreaming gender in their policies, programmes and interventions.

As such, it is both a knowledge and a practical tool. The toolkit was presented and discussed during the first EMHRN Women's Rights and Gender WG meeting in April 2007 in Morocco. The current version includes the recommendations and reviews suggested by the Working Group as well as the feedback and comments provided during the subsequent testing of the GMRK in Beirut in May 2007 as well as the testing in Paris in November 2007.

The GMRK is intended to facilitate a process of internal discussion and ownership for gender mainstreaming as well as kick off internal Gender Mainstreaming processes within the framework of Human Rights and other NGOs at the level of their policies (both internally and externally), their programmes and their activities. In doing so, the GMRK provides necessary knowledge, tools and methods to discuss the key concepts of gender and gender mainstreaming. This may include for instance exercises which require participants to undertake an analysis of the causes and manifestations of gender inequality within their specific contexts. However, this will be done for the purpose of understanding and informing the process of gender mainstreaming within one's organisation.



## Young Girls Guide to fighting Sexual Harassment

Within the framework of its program to promote human rights – which aims at young people in particular – the youth group belonging to the Democratic Association of Moroccan Women, which was set up in 2001, published the “Young Girls Guide to fighting Sexual Harassment” in 2006. This document, which has about 20 pages, became imperative following a survey which was carried out on “the Image of the woman in the street,” which revealed that most young women in Morocco are subject to sexual harassment, and that this occurs on a regular basis.

The particularity of this work is that it is based on realities on the ground and relies on testimonies of cases of harassment – moreover, it is written for young women by young women. Its objective is thus to firstly increase the awareness of young women to sexual harassment, to give them the means to prevent and fight against the devastating effects of this phenomenon and lastly to inform them of the laws in force against this crime.

Following this work, the ADFM opened the debate on the theme of sexual harassment by inviting its youth group to participate in activities which increase awareness – following a local initiative in educational institutions, universities and youth centers – with the aim of promoting equality and the values of human rights. A dozen or so educational institutions and centers were touched upon by this initiative to increase awareness in 2006.

Besides this activity, ADFM's youth group, together with participation from a dozen or so young people belonging to six Human Rights associations, led another project which was part of the program mentioned above. This work had a twofold objective: it aimed to both increase the skills of young activists in NGOs in the area of producing and managing radio broadcasts and to increase the awareness of young people and teenagers in themes relating to human rights, the culture of equality, citizenship and democratic values. Thus, a series of twelve radio commercials in Arabic and French were made, dealing with different subjects: the equality of the genders, sexual harassment, pedophilia, racism, the participation of young people, the marriage and work of minors, the schooling of girls, etc... These commercials have been broadcast on Hit Radio – a very popular channel amongst young Moroccan girls – since May 2007.

However, according to those interviewed it is difficult to evaluate the contributions of civil society – while many commented positively on various initiatives, they acknowledged a general failure to evaluate the work done, they argued, to the lack of information and evaluation norms. One of the main critiques of civil society initiatives related to consistency and sustainability. There are many non-governmental actors in the field, but not all of them have clear visions or feasible, practical strategies. A second issue related to the issue of ‘professionalism’, many of those interviewed argued that only a few organisations displayed a high degree of professionalism while the majority, in their view, were weak, under-qualified and under-resourced in this regard.

As already noted, HRE activities are significantly affected by the surrounding political, social and cultural environment – those surveyed in the Southern Med highlighted the lack of democratic norms and this is identified as the main obstacle hampering the progress of HRE. Many organisations spoke openly about ‘difficulties with local authorities’, about ‘the bureaucracy’, sometimes about difficulties in obtaining visas for participants from certain countries, as well as general harassment of human rights defenders or human rights educators. Culturally, they regularly noted ‘the dominance of a conservative culture’ and ‘cultural resistance’. Additionally, many noted the ongoing debate about cultural relativism and its impact on the core value of HRE i.e. the universality of the human rights. In Morocco for example, while there has been progress in formal sector HRE, difficulties related to the cultural and societal factors remain. There is a consensus among human rights organisations that while the Ministry of Education is relatively open to civil society initiatives, many teachers are resisting introducing human rights values into the school environment due to doubt among civil society groups as to the quality of such activity due to the ‘trade-off’ between international standards, Islamic values and ‘patriotic values’.



## Prevention through documentation

The project promotes the dissemination of knowledge, increased collaboration and building of expertise of health and legal professionals on the investigation and documentation of torture as a means to combat impunity, ensure reparation for survivors and prevent torture. The wish is to promote awareness and encourage the use of the Istanbul Protocol, which is an invaluable tool for health and legal professionals in establishing evidence of torture. Moreover, the project addresses the need for sharing of the knowledge and data accumulated in rehabilitation centres with relevant stakeholders, thereby ensuring that crucial information on torture practice and prevalence is efficiently used in the fight against torture.

More generally, the IRCT provides training on human rights to IRCT member centres; these trainings represent single activities of multifaceted projects.

Since 2005 the IRCT has established a centre for rehabilitation of torture victims in Basra (Iraq); the Bahjat al Fuad Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims is following an intense programme of trainings and workshop organised by the IRCT. Between July 2006 and December 2007 the BFRCT received 5 trainings on human rights issues and various trainings on the rights of vulnerable groups (such as prisoners, children and women). In 2008 there will be at least one additional training on human rights issues outside Basra (most likely in November).

Moreover the IRCT Secretariat staff provides training to law enforcement personnel and NGO staff from different parts of the world in close collaboration with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute and the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

In other countries, the authorities intentionally deploy the cultural relativism argument to mobilise public opinion against human rights groups and to undermine their initiatives.

In addition, there are other 'organisational and institutional factors' to be considered – primarily related to the capacity and performance of civil society organisations in HRE, this issue was raised regularly during the research. For example, the following was noted by an Arab Human Rights NGO:

“The participants in the workshop underscored the lack of stability of the staff serving in NGOs, which raises a problem relating to the transfer of experience and the scarcity of human resources, as well as the lack of permanent staff that are likely to provide training and set out the strategies required by such training. This becomes more acute in view of the difficulty of full-time work, which makes it hardly possible to retain any training staff. Among the other aspects of the internal shortcomings, some of the participants called attention to the crises affecting the work of many organisations which are due to conflicts between political opponents, the lack of democracy within associative work, and the connection between training work, in many of its aspects, and political work, apart from such other phenomena as corruption which has negative impact on training and on its mechanisms”

In summary, any assessment of the current situation of HRE should take into account different political, cultural and institutional issues. This is in addition to other significant factors such as geopolitics, internal conflicts, difficulties in building civil society, the weakness of human rights culture, changing value systems and the lack of financial resources as well as the differences and the diversity inside the region itself.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> For those interested in comparison with other regions see: Reclaiming Voices: A Study on Participatory Human Rights Education Methodologies in the Asia-Pacific, available at <http://www.arrc-hre.com/>, or documents released by Division for Citizenship and Human Rights Education of Council of Europe at <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/>. Also, it might be useful to consult UNESCO regarding Regional Conference on Human Rights Education in the Arab States Tunis, Tunisia 20 Feb 2006 - 23 Feb 2006, Organized by UNESCO Beirut & Doha (official information is not posted on the web)



## Euromed Summer School Cyprus

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) “2007 Summer School” was held in Limassol, Cyprus from 23-29 July 2007. The Summer School was organised by the Working Group on Human Rights Education & Youth and the EMHRN Secretariat. It was a week long event comprising of workshops and lectures focusing on human rights education. Thirty two participants between the ages of 19 and 35, 16 men and 16 women, from 14 countries participated in the summer school. The Cyprus Summer School 2007 aimed at:

- Creating and building a better understanding of HRE among participants in an engaging and empowering manner.
- Providing resources and materials for use by participants during and after the Summer School with a focus on the Euromed region and its human rights mechanisms.
- Exploring HRE methodologies and tools to be developed and delivered at a regional and local level within the Euromed region.
- Facilitating the development of personal action plans.

### **The Cyprus Summer School 2007 also intended to:**

- Support capacity building in HRE on organizational and personal levels and to foster greater understanding and delivery of human rights education activities organisationally, personally and within EMHRN as a whole.
- Share ideas and methodologies used in human rights education for the purposes of promoting and delivering human rights values and human rights education approaches in the Euromed region.
- Explore ways of co-operation within the field of human right education in the Euromed region, following the outcomes of the Summer School.



## 2.3 Samples programmes, activities and methodologies from case-studies

### Programmes & Activities

- Raising awareness among grassroots people about main concepts and principles of human rights issues according to the General Declaration for HR.
- Preparing trainers for HRE, providing training skills and HR information.
- HRE for specific groups like judges, lawyers, journalists.
- Meeting the needs and priorities of the target groups and enhancing promotion of their rights and building on and benefiting from target groups' experiences.
- Using examples and role models of local women encouraging participants of human rights education program to use them as examples.
- Inviting people to reflect about cultural diversity as enriches and promotes positive values.
- Explores boundaries and dilemmas by focusing on the issue of torture within the framework of the war on terror.
- Workshops for teachers in human rights education.
- Workshops for teachers in intercultural education.
- Weekend schools and seminar cycles for students of pedagogical faculties (prospective teachers) on the minority issues and local impact of global migration.
- Awareness-raising and advocacy in the minority issues, including new migrant communities.
- Publishing of manuals and other educational materials.
- Monitoring and evaluation of educational policy measures.

### Methodologies

- Presentation (theoretical part to spread information and facts).
- Working groups (to work actively on a subject and deepen the information).
- Discussion (to exchange information and experiences).
- Providing participants with basic information about rights and violence against women assisting them exploring and developing their own strategies to combat violence, continuing with trainings dedicated to building their skills to claim, defend and protect their rights. It goes further to building their leadership capacities enabling them taking lead and participate in public life through receiving leadership and citizenship rights trainings.
- Adopting Training of trainers' methodologies to enhance outreach and sustainability of trainings involving local capacities.
- Organization of leisure activities for youth proposed and organized by a multicultural group of young people that will work together and cooperate (in consultation with the responsible person from the association).
- Intercultural Week: organization of many cultural and artistic events during one week.
- Peer education: recruitment of students who are trained as guides for their peers.
- Drama education: utilization of drama principles and techniques in teaching human rights, creation of drama pieces based on pupils work and reflecting HR issues on the local level, in particular problems of intolerance, racism, xenophobia, violence and chicanery at schools. Training of teachers in basic dramatization skills which are applicable in the formal educational settings.
- Oral history: gathering of testimonies of Holocaust survivors; gathering of personal stories of migrants and refugees and their utilization of the testimonies for the educational purposes.

Recommended reading: Human Rights Training: A Manual on Human Rights. Training Methodology, OHCHR, available at: [www.ohchr.org/english/about/publications/docs/train6.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/english/about/publications/docs/train6.pdf)



## 3. The survey findings

### 3.1 Extent and provisions of Human Rights Education programs

This section seeks to shed some light on the current human rights activities of Network members and to explore some of the strengths and weaknesses of that work.

- **Content and added value:** Survey respondents indicated a number of dominant trends and patterns - the main priority focus areas appear to be (in order) civil and political rights; economic, cultural and social rights, women's rights, children's rights, institution building and other areas (the theory of human rights, democracy, religion and human rights etc). Additional topics mentioned include the culture of peace and democracy and political reform.

Respondents argued that their 'added value' was in adopting a human rights discourse which is different than the governmental one, linking human rights and violations, stressing the universality and indivisibility of human rights, adopting a comprehensive content in terms of knowledge and values, dealing with issues from different angles (rights, legal etc.) or introducing HR components in literacy programs.

Women's rights organisations said that their added value was based mainly on issues related to gender such as adopting gender-based approaches, producing and disseminating knowledge about gender equality, linking between micro and macro analysis on gender issues.

#### Key Human Rights Issues from surveys

- Civil Rights (in relation to the forthcoming elections).
- Childs' Rights.
- Rights of Youth.
- Women's Rights.
- Immigrants' Rights.
- Empowerment of people at risk of exclusion.
- Fighting against all kinds of discrimination (islamophobia, racism, xenophobia, intolerance).
- Torture (education and public awareness against torture) and fighting impunity.
- Rule of Law.
- General human rights issues particularly in the context of political violence and the protection of civilians from harm and human rights violations, such as the killing of civilians and extrajudicial killings / targeted assassinations.
- Social and economic rights of disadvantaged groups; particularly equal access to education, health, housing and social services.
- Promotion of intercultural dialogue and communal life.
- The right to access information.
- Advocacy for rights based national policies in the health and social sectors.
- The right to access resources; to combat poverty and a declining nutritional status.
- Democratisation.
- Conflicts and Human Rights.
- Arab Culture and Human Rights.

- **Training materials:** A majority of those surveyed indicated that they were using already developed materials from a diverse range of sources while a minority were developing their own materials. In the former situation, members were predominantly using clippings from books, journals and/or manuals developed by regional and international organisations.





While a relatively high percentage said that they were developing training materials, they felt that the quality of these materials depended greatly on the professionalism of the organisation. In addition, few organisations appear to make their materials available for use by others and in general, those surveyed were not aware of materials produced by other organisations.

As to the materials used by lecturers in training courses, the majority appear to focus on human rights treaties and conventions or case studies. In some areas such as religion and human rights there appears to be a significant deficiency in the availability of educational materials. In addition, there is a consensus regarding the importance of other educational sources such as audio-visual materials but some organisations are currently developing CD-Rom based materials.

### Groups who benefit from HRE

Civil society, judges, journalists, teachers, parents, children, academics, politicians, experts, scientists, human rights activists, policy makers, public opinion leaders, women (elderly, with special needs, supporting their families, female group leaders and civil society leaders, female researchers, female refugees, female media workers, etc), immigrant communities of different origin, minorities, migrants, health professionals, political parties, young activists, and lawyers.

- **Types and 'levels' of programmes:** The vast majority of respondents indicated that they were organizing general human rights courses followed closely by topic-oriented programmes. Respondents noted that the majority of courses could be classified as either basic or intermediate with a minority describing their courses as advanced. These categories were self-defined with the researchers noting considerable differences between organisational assessments of each category.

**Participants** – a wide range of beneficiaries access current activities and courses including students, teachers, NGOs members, lawyers, journalists and media persons, judges, police officers, women groups, civil servants, illiterate people and others. Some organisations considered offering courses and activities for 'new sectors of beneficiaries' as being a priority.

As regards recruitment of participants, it appears that a large majority of organisations are approaching identified individuals, with a strong reliance on word of mouth as a way of publicising an event with only a minority of members using public advertisements (web sites, posters, etc.). According to many organisations recruiting participants is one of main challenges that affect the quality of the activities. A number of organisations said that they set criteria before sending out applications, but many of the participants' organisations do not respect such criteria. For many, there appears to be a lack of interest or concern among younger generations. A majority of providers claim to take age and gender considerations into account in organising events but a particular issue was identified by some – that of the age and gender profile of lecturers, with a majority being older men. This was considered problematic as there appears to be a significant difference between trainees and trainers in terms of both gender and age.



## ● Methodologies & frameworks:

In general there is widespread agreement on the need and value of using modern participatory and active learning techniques and methodologies. There was also agreement on the pressing need for clear strategies and approaches in terms of setting objectives and in relation to evaluation and implementation, conducting activities based on research, needs assessment and consultations, adopting active and participatory approach or adopting training programs based entirely on local needs.

The survey results indicate quite clearly that the traditional way of teaching via lectures is still overwhelmingly dominant although some organisations indicated a use of other methods including workshops and working groups, panel discussions, mock courts and field work.

Member organisations are utilising professionals to lecture, teach or present with only a small minority engaging students and non-professionals in this way. There is widespread use of public figures, writers, politicians, and journalists but less so professionals in the field of human rights or human rights educationalists. Some organisations indicated that sometimes the political and ideological perspectives of teachers affected the quality of the HRE. Some organisations identified a different challenge – that a new, younger generation of trainers view professionalism as merely a technical matter without due consideration of the knowledge and values base of HRE. Accordingly, some argued that the field has witnessed the emergence of new ‘technocratic trainers’ who focus only on training skills and often undermine or undervalue knowledge and values.

Most respondents considered the delivery of information and analysis of culturally sensitive issues (e.g. women rights and religion) to be still problematic - that they still have difficulties in disseminating the culture of gender equality and religious freedom.

## ● Organisational aspects:

Respondents were asked about decision-making as regards course content and approach and in the vast majority of cases, it is either the course/event steering committee or director who chooses content and approach, funding organisations do not appear to influence content greatly. Respondents indicated that many facilitators feel the need to be consulted more about content and approach prior to finalisation of agendas and approaches.

The majority of respondents indicated that they conduct activities, courses, summer schools, etc. on their own with only a minority indicating the use of partnerships with other relevant and appropriate organisations. Some regional organisations rely on cooperation to implement activities at the national level. However only in Morocco are there partnership agreements between NGOs and the Ministry of Education, usually partnerships are between NGOs and other NGOs or other international organisations. Few partnerships with academic institutions were recorded.

In only a small number of courses were fees charged, donors cover the costs of most activities.



● **Follow-up & evaluation:**

The majority of respondents indicated that they organise predominantly 'once-off' sessions/events with only a minority organising follow up sessions. However, half of all respondents indicated that they organised and supported 'programmes of study'. As to evaluation the majority interviewed indicated that they undertake routine immediate evaluation (via evaluation forms and sometimes by individual and group discussion but long term impact assessment is rarely conducted). It was noted that having an external evaluator is not a common practice among the organisations.

The area of evaluation and impact assessment was considered to be seriously problematic by many of those surveyed.

● **Visibility & communication:**

Even though a majority of respondents agree those web sites can be used to promote, advertise, inform, teach, or in one term to spread news about the human rights education initiatives, few organizations make their programs available on the internet. From the survey results, it is clear that only some NGOs have a specific educational component on their web site. Also, while organisations produce HRE resources like electronic information, training materials and feedback and follow up mechanisms, link to other educational events/ activities/ sites, available list of trainers or narrative reports did not publish them through public channels limiting wider visibility of the work.

Respondents explained that such deficiencies are due to several technical factors internal to the organisations: lack of human resources, funding, time allowance, equipment and facilities. The wider community is generally not systematically informed about the HRE activities and production.

## 3.2 Perceived strengths and weaknesses regarding Human Rights Education

### Some strengths

- There is a clear understanding amongst members of the importance of human rights education in fostering and promoting a general culture of human rights. This establishes a clear platform upon which to build further and upon which to identify and address key weaknesses and challenges. Members appear to be aware of many of the key dimension of human rights education and of the need for improved approaches and professionalism.
- Human rights education has been incorporated into the agendas and activities of a growing number of organisations and this has led to a broader range of organisations becoming engaged in education activities albeit to varying degrees of professionalism etc. This diversity of actors increases the possible sectors and audiences with which HRE can be pursued and perhaps broadening its potential impact within the community at large may be. Generally the diverse actors have increased the capacity of the sector to cover different geographical areas and to approach a wider range of beneficiaries. Of particular importance in this regard has been the tendency among many NGOs to approach teachers and educators.
- Related to the previous point, the diversity of actors promotes diversity in the range of activities offered. As observed, some activities focus mainly on training courses and summer schools (basic, medium and advanced levels). Other activities are directed to raising public awareness through publications, media workshops, conferences, etc. Other NGOs are conducting studies to explore the pros and cons of human rights values and content in formal curricula. In addition, new initiatives have emerged on the use of the internet as an important medium for human rights education.



## Strengths<sup>12</sup>

- Have access to well prepared trainers specialized on different topics.
- To have numerous professional and prepared volunteers working in the field of HRE allows us to arrange activities on a 50% voluntary basis.
- Have good relations with different institutions, ranging from civil society to governmental organisations like Ministry of Justice, High Council for Youth, High Council for Judges and officials of universities.
- Our human rights education program meets basic needs and priorities of its target groups in general and women and victims of violence in particular.
- Our absolute belief in the importance of promoting human rights principles.
- Outreach to rural and unprivileged areas despite difficulties.
- Linking our human rights education program with the provision of legal and social counselling. (Participants of the human rights education programs are provided with counselling services should they need, assisting them defending and protecting their rights). Additionally, many of the past trainees accompanied women victims to our counselling center, where they were received and provided with counselling services.
- Our team of specialized trainers in human rights sets the training program and executes the different activities.
- Increasing and regular demands for human rights trainings raised by local organizations and others interested, establishing a coalition of nineteen local community based organizations (CBOs) represented by fifty women in different governorates in Jordan who participated in capacity building activities focussing on training of trainers skills, law and legal issues, human rights with focus on women's rights, leadership, violence against women, counselling services provision, gender and other related issues.
- We have very good HRE trainers (one of our members is trainer of the Council of Europe), so that we are able to train our own trainers to work and collaborate in our projects, focusing on the specific local needs of our target groups. Our projects are at local level; this allows the new young trainers acquire experience for future bigger projects.
- The Academic Support for children and youth is an important way of keeping a direct and personal contact with many youth, giving them a good image of the association (important for the organization of future events).
- The decision to have “no formal education” in our training activities (both training with youth and training for trainers) is a key aspect for the success of our trainings. From our experience we consider that peer to peer education and experiential learning are the best learning methods.
- A clear vision and mission of the organization.
- Utilization of innovative and participatory approaches in the learning process, especially peer education and drama education, emphasis given to non-formal and learner-centred approaches.
- Utilization of oral history methodology in the research of Jewish and Roma Holocaust in Slovakia.
- Incremental change of programs and activities, “mainstream” activities combined with experimental testing of new methods and approaches.
- High commitment of people and strong network of cooperating international, national and local organizations and individuals.
- The NGO's board consists of young people. Therefore, rather than trying to teach anything to young people about human rights, we try to question human rights, make case studies and share our views on human rights.
- One of our strengths is the target group. We engage with the young at a critical age, whose hopes and abilities are still hidden and need an outlet. Through our programs and activities, we focus on building their personalities and capacities and preparing them for their coming future in universities and thereafter.
- We believe that establishing a network with other youth organisations at both the national and international level is a source of sustainability.
- Focusing on youth volunteers to concentrate on youth-to-youth methodology.
- We have accumulated in depth institutional knowledge and experience in human rights research, publications, advocacy and education.
- We have a dedicated training centre, a full time Human Rights Education Program Officer, and experienced support staff.
- A significant number of human rights defenders are alumni of our human rights training courses and participate today in the training course as trainers and lecturers in order to share with younger generations their experiences.
- The methodologies of the training courses have been significantly developed in the last years. Training is now based on participative modern techniques rather than on presentations given by lecturers, and consequently participants are trained to practically apply what they have learned during lectures and trainings through the activities they perform.

<sup>12</sup> For the survey results, please refer to Appendix 4 and to <http://www.euromedrights.net/pages/52>



## Some weaknesses

- Internal governance – according to those surveyed, it appears that a lack of effective internal governance in many organisations has a negative impact on their HRE activities. Due to this situation there is a feeling amongst many that organisations are all too often simply service-providers as opposed to being a space where members and beneficiaries can practice and promote human rights approaches and values. In addition, there is need to support and promote participatory approaches in the designing and implementation of HRE activities.

Unfortunately, it is a key conclusion of this survey that while all organisations are aware of the importance of participatory approaches, their structure and internal governance do not support or match this 'theoretical' awareness.

- Whilst there are many activities being undertaken in the field, their visibility remains underdeveloped. Many organisations continue to fail to make their work visible within different constituencies. Key in this regard is the fact that the educational materials produced by member organisations (or by other organisations in the region) remain unknown to other organisations.
- There appears to be a problem regarding human rights knowledge among many human rights educators. This problem is evident on two levels - first, the lack of knowledge about new ideas, debates, experiences in human rights education, especially in other similar societies. Secondly, the lack of knowledge about local needs either in terms of the expressed needs of different beneficiary groups or the supporting knowledge that can help educators to deliver a consistent and coherent human rights message. This problem is manifested in the imbalance between the increasing focus on technical skills and the weak values or knowledge background of many human rights educators.
- There is strong evidence that evaluation and follow up are still one of the weakest points in the field of HRE in the region. This problem affects not only the work of the individual organisations but also the overall outcome of HRE activities. In addition, the lack of evaluation and follow up is one of the main causes behind the poor visibility of the situation of HRE in the region.



## Weaknesses<sup>13</sup>

- Since we are a small NGO without permanent financial recourses, we always depend on particular funds which decrease the guarantee of sustainability.
- In the Arabic world, there are no strict administrative rules. This has, on the one hand, the positive effect that participants and trainers feel free, are flexible and do not feel under time pressure but on the other hand, there is the negative effect of delay or sudden change of program.
- Not being able to conduct the relevant number of follow-ups with as many participants as we wish.
- Weak coordination among local women's rights organizations affects us and others, limiting the exchange of experiences & lessons learnt and the consolidation of concrete joint national human rights education programs.
- We have few people working in the association, and we can't dedicate all the time we should dedicate to each project (especially in the follow-up!). This is due to the lack of money and the lack of local youth able to manage a project, or at least interested in being seriously trained at it (i.e. long-term training).
- Lack of participation by the youth in our activities. We must always plan a big diffusion if we want participants from local reality, because they are not interested in social action. That's why we are trying to improve and maximize the outcomes of our effort in gathering volunteers and voluntary participants for our activities.
- We don't dedicate enough time and efforts to the final evaluation and follow-up at the end of a project. We realize this, however, we should pay more attention to these aspects, using them as a tool for internal reflection and improvement inside the association. The main point is that we don't always have time, or we're not always motivated enough to find it: Common evaluation and feedback, that would let us grow and improve not only as individual trainers but also as an association and as a team.
- We need to strengthen our contact with the immigrant communities, to obtain their confidence so that when we direct to the community, to have their support behind us.
- Lack of staff, relatively high fluctuation of employees, short temporal discontinuities in particular activities.
- Missing long-term fundraising strategy combined with the general lack of available schemes of financing.
- The society in which we live in is not an open society and in some regions even questioning human rights is regarded as taboo. Therefore, it is difficult to deal with young people who have this kind of social background.
- Political stresses, cultural restrictions and apathy can freeze the work flow of our activities.

<sup>13</sup> For complete Case studies, please refer to <http://www.euromedrights.net/pages/52>



### 3.3 Challenges to address in promoting Human Rights Education

- Given an oppressive environment in certain Mediterranean southern countries, where the effective enjoyment of basic freedoms remains a source of grave concern, independent civil society actors, NGO activists and defenders, teachers and political parties members, young activists, journalists, lawyers, academics, judges, and human rights educators throughout the region are confronted with a variety of forms of repression and are exposed to an ongoing insecurity, authoritarian practices and restraints of their freedom of expression and actions.
- The research showed that undemocratic practices are **undermining the value of human rights and human rights education** within it. Undemocratic practices are widespread in the region and there is a danger that even human rights organisations are or will be infected with such a practice. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for all human rights activities, including human rights education, to be organized and implemented in accordance with the highest democratic principles and standards. All the activities should be participatory, transparent, open, pluralistic, accountable, inclusive, subject to permanent evaluation, etc.
- **Human rights education needs more visibility and communication** - there are a number of tools for achieving these goals and they have to be used more effectively and efficiently. The proper and well-designed application of available ICT solutions (web presentations, e-mail, etc.) is just one way towards becoming more visible. The potential of the network in this regard is quite substantial but needs to be carefully planned for, taking the diversity of contexts and situations in different parts of the region. Therefore, human rights organisations with more practice should be encouraged to share their experiences and to support other organisations with less experience in this area.
- **Partnership as an important approach in HRE (between individual member organisations and between member organisations and the Network) is significantly undervalued and member organisations understanding of the term is deficient.** Few member organisations have identified partnership between different types of organisations or with the Network as a valuable way forward. In this regard, there is a need to face the issue of 'unequal partnerships', based on the fact that some organisations are larger, or considered to be more 'significant' or established or better funded than others. These issues are important and are of strategic interest for the make up, effectiveness and agenda of the Network.
- **The importance of participative and interactive, learner-centred educational approaches in human rights education need to be highlighted, promoted and practically supported.** Traditional ways of knowledge transfer alone are increasingly seen to be ineffective in learning terms and certainly as regards behaviour change. There is a need to balance different educational approaches and to make more use of those methods that address different learning styles and needs. Additionally those interested and entrusted with the mandate of promoting human rights values and culture need to take these issues more fully into account if stated objectives are to be realised.
- **The lack of effective monitoring, documentation and evaluation is an urgent issue.** This affects not only the effectiveness and impact of individual organisations but also the overall cumulative impact of the human rights education agenda and human rights overall. Developing effective frameworks and methodologies for monitoring and evaluation will not only improve the quality and impact of the work of the movement overall and of individual organisations, it will also create a basis for comparative learning and the sharing of experiences and ideas. This is an area that needs urgent attention and is one in which the Network has a significant role to play.
- **The need for additional and ongoing research is obvious.** In order to improve the quality, breadth and impact of human rights education in the region, the level and range of research and documentation will have to increase significantly. In order to build capacity, to share learning and lessons and to support partnership approaches, research will be needed.



## Identified key challenges

- Any activity that is performed outside the centre or where international participants are invited needs permission from the respective government.
- Some parties or individuals don't respect foreign donations on which we are depending as an NGO.
- Religious and social challenges face us, for example concerning the rights of women. Governmental challenges face us e.g. concerning issues like torture. Economical challenges are given due to the fact that it is difficult to get financial recourses for NGOs.
- Interpretation of religious texts in a way to keep the devaluating status of women by different conservative groups, refusing change which threatens men's powers and interests.
- Our social heritage, which is characterized as traditional and conservative and built on values, customs and traditions encourages patriarchal authority, that control women's lives and governs and limits women's participation and marginalizes women's roles.
- Remoteness of the areas where many activities are performed and difficulties related to reaching these areas. High costs of transportation and travel for facilitators, trainers and supervisors.
- New Bylaws of non-profit organizations. This bylaw puts heavy restrictions and enables the executive authority (Ministry of Industry and Commerce) to interfere in the work of non-governmental organizations who are registered as non -profit companies. Many human rights organizations will be affected by this by law.
- General distrust between state institutions and non-governmental sector, and hostile atmosphere and hypocrisy.
- Non-transparent funding schemes.
- Rigidity of the school system and formal curricula.
- Value orientation of the majority population, reluctance or disinterest of the general public to the human rights issues, relatively high rates of racism and xenophobia among the population.
- We are faced with social and religious challenges. Learning about human rights, questioning the core values and tolerance for diversity is sometimes quite challenging due to social pressure and religious dogma.
- We face various challenges at the level of politics, social and religious aspects. The apathy of people affects the effectiveness of the programs.
- Fear of change is a constraint.
- Poor knowledge on human rights: Where we live there is a poor level of knowledge about even the basics of human rights. This contributes to human rights culture and values being weak. Within society there are numerous human rights related problems; for women's rights, citizens' relations to their government and so on. Such problems are compounded by a lack of critical thinking skills and questioning which are (deliberately) not taught in the formal education system.
- Lack of space for discussions: There is a chronic lack of space for discussions and debates about human rights and about political issues from a human rights perspective and so either such debate does not happen or other narratives are used.
- Restrictions in the Freedom of Association: With the reinforcement of 'security measures', a growing number of associations are now hesitant about hosting workshops which are organized by non-governmental human rights organizations and specifically when the workshops are tackling more sensitive issues.





## 4. Conclusion

Human Rights Education is offering knowledge and a particular way to understand the world. In order to define the purposes of education we must begin by forging a shared vision of the kind of society we wish to create. The goals of education should revolve around a set of values and beliefs to be explored and understood within the context of the diversity of their economic, social, cultural, educational backgrounds.

This research has highlighted a number of key issues of key significance to human rights organisations in the region especially as regards the role and purpose of human rights education and, in particular, the need for greater engagement with young people in the building of future agendas. These conclusions offer many challenges to establish human rights organisations particularly in relation to organizational structure and governance programme planning based upon partnership models and building capacity to support participative approaches in human rights education. In short the research report suggests the need for a very considerable 'culture' shift within human rights organisations.

Perhaps the central challenge identified is that of engaging with potential future generations of human rights defenders in a manner that is appropriate and participative. Given the ever-increasing range of options open to young people, it is unlikely that they will engage fully with organisations that do not recognise or incorporate the need for opportunities to genuinely participate and to have a 'say' in what is done, and in how it is done. Organisations administered from the 'top' down in very traditional (male dominated) ways are unlikely to prove attractive to young people. This research suggests that the answer to ensuring the future involvement of youth in our organisations is as much an 'internal' as an 'external' issue.

The research also suggests a number of other areas of key relevance for the future – the need for significantly increased focus on human rights education per se within human rights organisations; the need for greater capacity in HRE especially as regards planning and delivery of programmes; the need to build real and effective partnerships especially between well established human rights organisations and those newly emerging in the region and the urgent need for greater documentation of current programmes and their impact as well as the development, drafting and dissemination of key resources in human rights education. In the latter context, the identified needs appear to be for databases of various kinds e.g. experienced and qualified 'trainers' and youth workers, handbooks and sector focused resources and developing e-learning approaches.

The educational process is not complete without action planning. Collective action is one of the most significant arena of change, as individual and groups commit themselves to various strategies and tactics to build support for issues and solutions. Many organisations do not appear to have a strategic plan for work in human rights education (this appears to be the case in related areas also). It is difficult to see how the work of building up a culture of human rights, as well as a body of committed human rights educators and activists can be achieved in the absence of such considered planning.

Of particular concern to the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network is the finding from the research that few member organisations identified partnership between different types of organisations or with the Network as a valuable way forward. This represents a challenge to the Human Rights Education Group of the Network as well as to its Executive Committee.

This brief research report is but the start of a much larger and more extensive research agenda intended to guide and support future activities in the Network membership as well as in the region. We hope the report contributes to the planning and on-going delivery of such activities.



# Appendix 1: The Human Rights Education and Youth Working Group

## Working Group on Human Rights Education (HRE) & Youth

### Introduction

The working groups are created as a part of the EMHRN strategy of addressing specific human rights issues in the Euro-Mediterranean Region. The working groups design specific policies and programs, advise the Executive Committee, and ensure the effective delivery of the mandate and agenda of the Network. The working groups are established for a specific purpose and may be composed of regular, individual and associate members.

### Objectives of the HRE & Youth Working Group

The HRE Working Group (HRE WG) works to promote and strengthen Human Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean region through educational practice and theory. It seeks to build networking, partnership and cooperation amongst members engaged in Human Rights and Human Rights Education work in the region. It works to develop, disseminate and evaluate HRE information, values, methodologies and experiences.

### Composition of the HRE & Youth Working Group

The Working Group on Human Rights Education (HRE) & Youth is made up of twelve NGOs:

- 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World represented by Valerie Duffy.
- Amman Centre for Human Rights Studies represented by Omar Qadora.
- Arab Institute for Human Rights – Tunis represented by Ben Khaled Maya.
- Democratic Association of Moroccan Women represented by Amina Lemrini.
- Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies represented by Zahra Radwan.
- Danish Institute for Human Rights represented by Mu'ayyad Mehyar.
- Greek Helsinki Monitor represented by Antonia Papadopoulou.
- MEDAC represented by Omar Grech.
- Public Committee Against Torture in Israel represented by Louis Frankenthaler.
- Sisterhood is Global Institute represented by Lubna Dawani.
- Algerian League for Human Rights represented by Salima Tayebi.

### Activities of the HRE & Youth Working Group

The human rights movement is currently facing the challenge of 'recruiting' a new generation of young committed human rights defenders. For various reasons (historical, organizational, cultural, etc.) human rights NGOs are dominated by people in their 40s and 50s and few young people become involved in this work. Consequently it is crucial to attract young people to human rights and to keep them within the human rights orbit to provide new vitality to human rights work.

The overall objective of the HRE Working Group is to promote the dissemination of human rights through education activities addressing young people. It aims at promoting youth participation and strengthening NGO networking in the field of HRE.

The mid term objective is to develop a sustainable human rights network of young NGO representatives related to the mainstream human rights movement as well as strengthening human rights NGO networking in the field of education.

The short term objective is to organize Summer Schools on Human Rights and Democratic Reform for future decision makers in the Arab region as a joint project of key NGOs working on human rights education. The working group will be in charge of preparing the research and organizing the Summer School, and the WG meetings will also provide a forum for discussing educational methodologies, sharing experiences and networking on HRE issues.

To promote youth participation in human rights and strengthened networking among HRE NGOs, the Working Group will arrange Summer School on Human Rights and Democratic Reform for future decision makers and experiences by Arab organizations, such as the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies and the Arab Institute for Human Rights, with organizing summer schools.



## To conclude the HRE Working Group will:

1. Produce reports:
  - a. Assessing and evaluating human rights education in the region, including identifying which organizations and institutions work on HRE, what the content of the courses are, which methodologies are used etc.
  - b. Identifying beneficiaries/stakeholder(representatives of the youth population, members of political parties, young NGO workers, NGOs working in the field of human rights) and their wishes and needs for human rights education.
  - c. Learning resources and methodologies for Human Rights Education and Youth in the Euro-Mediterranean region.
2. Organize working group meetings with key Euromed HRE NGOs.
3. Use the WG meetings to identify the format, content, educational methodologies and location of Summer schools and evaluate them after completion - and to conduct discussion about HRE and policies in this regard.
4. Organize Summer Schools with focus on methodologies, so as to facilitate human rights learning in youth related environments in the formal and informal sectors. The EMHRN summer schools are designed as training for trainers and aim at promoting the dissemination of Human Rights culture and human rights values through active education activities addressing young people in the Euromed region.
5. Seek to establish and maintain an alumni network of participants at the Summer School.
6. Increase the visibility of young people within human rights and civil society groups.



## Appendix 2: The Survey's Questionnaire Mapping Human Rights Education - EMHRN

### Part I Organization: Background Info

1.1 Organization name.

1.2 Contact details.

1.3 What is the mission of your organization?

1.4 Please write a short description of your organization technical capacities  
Do you have computers and additional office equipment (LCD projector, etc.)?  
Do you have computers for users/beneficiaries or only for employees?  
Do you have Internet access?

1.5 What is organizational structure of your organization (governing bodies of organization and departmental structure if applicable?)

1.6 Number of employees.

	No of employees	Gender balance	
Full time employees	Administrative Staff:	M	F
	Professional Staff:	M	F
Employees working on HRE	Administrative Staff:	M	F
	Professional Staff:	M	F

1.7 What is educational background of your staff (including both formal and non-formal education)?



## Part II Organization: Human Rights Education

2.1 Are you familiar with any formal Human Rights Education programme in your country?  
(Undergraduate, Graduate): Yes/No

2.2 If yes, what is in your opinion the quality of existing formal human rights education. Place an X in the appropriate box. You may choose only one item.

High quality	
Medium quality	
Low quality	
No human rights education at all	

2.3 Do you have any idea about how to contribute to those formal HRE programmes? (If existing)

2.4 Are you familiar with any informal Human Rights Education programme in your country? Yes/No

2.4 If yes, what is in your opinion the quality of existing informal human rights education? Place an X in the appropriate box. You may choose only one item.

High quality	
Medium quality	
Low quality	
No human rights education at all	

2.5 Who are the beneficiaries of those programmes (Both formal and Informal)? Do you have any information about gender balance of those beneficiaries?

2.6 Do you consider education in the field of human rights of organization staff and/or membership as one of priorities? If yes, what type of education do you consider to be the most important?

Type of human rights education	YES/NO
Human rights theory	
Human rights monitoring and reporting	
Training of trainers	
Assistance in the cases of human rights violation	
Human rights advocacy	
If other, please specify.	

2.7 What is the added value of your activities in HRE?



## Part III Organizational / Technical Issues related to HRE activities conducted by members

### III-I Subjects / Topics in HRE

#### 3.1.1

Who is deciding about content of your seminars/summer schools/other educational programmes? (Steering board, working group, donor driven, etc...)

Are those programmes	Y / N
General human rights courses	
Topic oriented?	
Both?	

By the level, are they Basic/Intermediate/Advanced? B / I / A

Please describe the process of training organization.

#### 3.1.2 Training materials

Do you develop new materials for the programmes? Y / N

Do you use already developed materials? Which ones? Y / N

Do you use readings made by clipping from books, journals, manuals, etc.? Y / N

Please describe the process of training material production.

### III-II Participants

Do you recruit participants by advertisement? Y / N

Do you rely on mouth-to-mouth? Y / N

Do you approach deliberately chosen individuals? Y / N

Are the participants professionals? Y / N / Partly

Are the participants non-professionals/students/B/I/A?

Do you pay attention to age distribution of the participants? Y / N

Do you pay attention to gender distribution of the participants? Y / N

Can you describe the selection process?

What are the language skills needed in order to participate?

Please further describe the process of participants' selection.

### III-III Lecturers

Do you employ Professionals? Y / N

Do you employ Non-professionals (students) to lecture? Y / N

Do you pay attention to age distribution of the lecturers? Y / N

Do you pay attention to gender distribution of the lecturers?

Can you describe the selection process?

Do you have specific language requirements for lecturers? Y / N

Please describe the process of lecturers/trainers selection



### **III-IV Methods**

Who is deciding on methods: organizer and/or lecturer? Organizer / Lecturer / Together

Do you employ ex-cathedra lecturers? Y / N

Do you organize workshops? Y / N

Do you organize panel discussions? Y / N

Do you organize moot courts? Y / N

Do you engage in field work? Y / N

Please specify if you employ other methods

Please further describe the methodologies used at the trainings.

### **IV Settings**

Do you choose hotels for your venues? Y / N

Do you organize your activities at the host organisation premises? Y / N

Do you organize field visits? Y / N

What is the average duration of the programme?

What is the average Participation Fee? If any.

Are the costs covered by a donor? Y / N If not, please specify who covers the costs?

Do you execute the programme alone or in partnership? Alone / Partnership

Please describe the process of training execution.

### **V Continuity**

Do you organize one time programmes?

Do you organize follow up sessions?

Do you organize some programmes periodically (i.e. summer schools, etc.)?

### **VI Organisational matters**

Do you have a coordinator of the programme?

Do you have assistants?

Do you have an evaluator?



## Additional interview questions that will be asked by researchers:

- In what ways, if any, Human Rights Education has been influencing the principles and directions of your organization?
- Does your organization makes any efforts to promote Human Rights Education (marketing, advertisement, publishing, conferences, listservs, etc)? If yes, please describe these efforts in generally?
- Identify and evaluate type of support that your organization had in implementing the human rights education activities.
- Who are your partners in those activities?
- What kind of activities you consider as a most successful? Please describe one or two most specific examples.
- Has your Organization had any negative or frustrating experiences during implementation of human rights education activities? If answer is yes, please describe one or two specific examples.
- What would be the most appropriate method of evaluation of the human rights education program in your organization?
- Do you have a gender perspective in your HRE work?
- Do you have any recommendations for joint EMHRN Summer School?





## Appendix 3: List of organisations contributing to the research

**The research team would like to thank the following organizations for their contributions to this research in the form of questionnaire responses, interviews/case studies and/or written responses.**

ACSUR - Spain  
Adalah Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights - Israel  
Al Mezan Center for Human Rights - Israel  
Al-Urdun al-Jedid Research Centre - Jordan  
Arab Association for Human Rights (HRA) - Israel  
Algerian League for Human Rights - Algeria  
Algerian League for the defence of Human Rights - Algeria  
Amman Center for Human Rights - Jordan  
Amnesty International- Regional Office - Lebanon  
Amnesty International Association - Morocco  
Arab Institute for Human Rights - Tunisia  
Asociación Cazalla Intercultural - Spain  
Balkans Human Rights Network - Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Bruno Kreisky Foundation - Austria  
B'Tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories - Israel  
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Study - Egypt  
Caritas- Migrants Center - Lebanon  
Center For Arab Women Training and Research (CAWTAR) - Tunisia  
Center for People's Rights – Morocco  
Collective for Research & Training on Development - Lebanon  
Committee for the respect of freedom and Human Rights - France  
Danish Institute for Human Rights - Denmark  
Democratic Association for Women in Morocco - Morocco  
Ecumenical Popular Education - Lebanon  
Essex University Human Rights Centre - Great Britain  
Egyptian Association for Community Participation - Egypt  
Espace Associatif - Morocco  
EU Agency for Fundamental Rights - Austria  
Federation of Associations for the defense and promotion of Human Rights - Spain  
Foundation for Human and Humanitarian Rights - Lebanon  
Foundation for International Studies - Malta



German Commission for UNESCO - Germany  
Greek Helsinki Monitor – Greece  
Human Rights Centre of Catalonia (IDHC) - Spain  
Intercenter, International centre for sociological, penal and prison research - Italy  
Intercultural Centre - Croatia  
International Committee for Peace - France  
International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) - Denmark  
Italian Council for refugees – Italy  
Juzoor Foundation for health and social Development - Palestine  
Libyan League for Human Rights - Germany  
Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies - Malta  
Milan Šimecka Foundation - Slovakia  
Moroccan Association for Human Rights - Morocco  
National Council for Freedom - Tunisia  
Palestinian Organization for Human Rights – Palestine  
Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI) – Israel  
Public Interest Advocacy Centre - Lebanon  
Rehabilitation Council for Torture (RCT) - Denmark  
René Moawad Foundation - Lebanon  
Rights and Freedom Association - Cyprus  
Solida - Lebanon  
Sisterhood is Global (SIGI) – Jordan  
Swedish Refugee Aid (SWERA) - Sweden  
Tunisian Association for Democratic Women - Tunisia  
Tunisian Federation for Citizenships - France  
Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) - Lebanon  
World Organization against Torture (WOAT) - Switzerland  
Youth Initiatives Association - Turkey  
80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World – Ireland



## Appendix 4: Sample case studies

What follows below are a number of examples of human rights education in practice. These examples and others not mentioned here use a number of methodologies including training of trainers, interactive pedagogical techniques, teaching and working with specific target groups including youth, women and community. Additional information may be obtained by going to:

**[www.euromedrights.net](http://www.euromedrights.net)**

### **Integration of the Human Rights in the school education**

Within the framework of the project “Formation & reinforcement of the capacities for a better protection of the human rights in the Arab world”, the Arab Institute for Human Rights has tried to develop and work out an Arab strategy in order to provide a human rights and democracy education which unifies visions and the approaches of the Arab education systems. This strategy aims at contributing to the exchange of experiences for the integration of human rights in the official courses in school (high school and university). In this sense, the objectives of the training course on “The integration of the Human Rights in the school education” were: the reinforcement of the participants’ background in the field of teaching and educational planning, in order to integrate the Human Rights into the High school programs in Arab countries; and the transfer of some Human Rights concepts, standards and principles, enhancing competences which could be pedagogically adopted and applied in practice.

(Arab Institute for Human Rights Studies **[www.aihr.org.tn](http://www.aihr.org.tn)**)

### **Distance Learning: New Ways of Programme Delivery**

CIHRS hosted meetings of the newly-initiated distant learning program: «Youth for Human Rights» under supervision of three human rights organisations, namely, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, the Arab Institute for Human Rights (Tunisia), and the Human Rights Education Association (the Netherlands and the United States). The Program aims at achieving a number of goals in terms of enhancing human rights capacities and skills in the Arab World, creating a regional network of human rights defenders, and upgrading Arab human rights activists’ capabilities to use modern tools and technologies in order to mobilize all potentials for the defence of human rights issues. The program’s curricula are designed in accordance with the most up-to-date international concepts and strategies in terms of defending and monitoring human rights. For more detailed overview of CIHRS activities visit:

(Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies **[www.cihrs.org/Programs\\_en.aspx](http://www.cihrs.org/Programs_en.aspx)**)

### **Art-based approaches to exploring Human Rights issues**

Two workshops during the EMHRN Summer School in Beirut used art as a medium through which to explore a range of human rights issues at the individual, communal, national and international level. The workshop All Different – All the Same focused on the individual as part of the society with an ever-increasing circle of political, social and cultural influences. The intention was to engage participants in a visual and verbal debate about notions of individual identities and how these find a place within increasingly diverse and changing societies. Working from a set of influences, participants gradually created a “map” that recognised the connections between individuals identities and those of others around them.

**(...Is there a real Human Rights Education?  
report from the EMHRN first Summer School on HRE, Beirut, EMHRN HRE WG, 2003)**



### **Effective Partnership: Summer School in Malta**

The Summer School is organised by the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies in collaboration with 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World (Ireland) and funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Building on the experience and assessment of the previous summer schools (involving participants from over fifteen countries) the Summer School aimed to introduce and explore the major International Human Rights Instruments from a number of perspectives - the legal, the educational as well as the action perspective. A considerable emphasis is placed on “balancing” the approach to teaching and learning through the use of “formal” lectures, workshops and seminar style sessions, active and participative learning methodologies and the creative use of media such art, drama and photography.

(MEDAC <http://home.um.edu.mt/medac/Conferences/>)

### **Working With Children and Young Students**

The Human Rights and Civic Education Project (HRCE) of Arab Association for Human Rights targets Palestinian Arab school children in Israel. ARABHRA is realizing this programme through wide variety of activities: Facilitator Training, Semester-long Courses in High Schools, Teacher Training, Human/Women’s Rights Days in Schools and Unrecognized Villages, Student Forum Haifa, High-School Student Forum, One-time Lectures, Lecture Series, and Workshops, Summer Camps for Children, Educational Tours to Unrecognized or Destroyed Villages, Expanding the Human-Rights Library, Establishing the Rights Theatre, Publishing Dalil the Human-Rights Syllabus, Women’s Rights Summer Sessions, Publications, Films, Theatre.

(Arab Association for Human Rights [www.arabhra.org](http://www.arabhra.org))

### **Community Partnership for Women Empowerment programs**

Through this project, Sisterhood is Global in Jordan established a coalition of nineteen local community based organizations (CBOs) represented by fifty women in different governorates in Jordan who participated in capacity building activities focussing on training of trainers skills, law and legal issues, human rights with focus on women’s rights, leadership, violence against women, counselling services provision, Gender and other related issues. These CBOs participated in facilitating and conducting awareness raising activities in their local areas and started providing counselling services under SIGI/J’s supervision. This project assisted SIGI/J expanding the outreach and sustaining human rights education program in Jordan through local women. SIGI/J also succeeded in availing local women trainers on women’s rights in Jordan who will be able to perform local trainings on their own and provide counselling services.

(Sisterhood is Global [www.sigi-jordan.org](http://www.sigi-jordan.org))

### **Promoting social activism among migrants with a focus on youth**

Asociación Cazalla Intercultural in Lorca, Spain is structured in two areas: The International Mobility department (mainly through Youth in Action Programme and Leonardo Programme) and the Integration department. Inside the latter one, the aims are to promote mutual knowledge and self-integration between local and immigrant communities, to improve the quality of immigration services in the town and their communication with immigrant community, and to promote social activism among immigrant sectors of society, with a special focus on youth. The work program deal with active and responsible citizenship with all communities, immigrants and local ones (empowerment of people in risk of exclusion, capacity building, promoting the sense of belonging and community, social inclusion of immigrants); and with fighting against all kinds of discrimination (islamophobia, racism, intolerance in general); promoting voluntary service as a valuable and important resource for local community.

(Asociación Cazalla Intercultural [www.cazalla-intercultural.org](http://www.cazalla-intercultural.org))



### **Subject Specific Modular Approach to HRE: Torture Explored**

The Public Committee Against Torture (PCATI) Education Project is a modular human rights education programme which explores the question of boundaries in the context of the war on terror, through a focused consideration of the issue of torture. It reflects an approach to human rights education which is contextualised and multi-disciplinary, acknowledging the complexity and confusion surrounding rights and wrongs in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as in the global war on terror, and encouraging young people to engage and wrestle with difficult questions. Young people are encouraged to interact with complex situations while wrestling to come up with their own answers.

(Public Committee Against Torture [www.stoptorture.org.il](http://www.stoptorture.org.il))

### **Training of Health Professionals**

Most of the countries in which the Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims (RCT) works lack experience in offering the special needed help to torture survivors. Consequently, RCT puts a lot of emphasis on building local capacity, i.e. training of the local project staff and through them other health professionals, for instance students at local health education and employees in the health sector. In this way, they are prepared for carrying on the work initiated in the projects also after the co-operation with RCT is concluded. This is yet another reason why it is important for RCT to co-operate with the local authorities. However, it is often impossible. In many countries, the authorities do not recognise that torture exists or has existed.

(The Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims [www.rct.dk](http://www.rct.dk))



## Appendix 5: Ideas and tips for a web visibility of Human Rights Education in the EMHRN

The aim of this section is to explore ways to increase the visibility of EMHRN members' human rights education efforts in the virtual world (World Wide Web). Many members are involved in a variety of educational activities in various settings and environments. However, these efforts are often described and documented in reports that only reach a very limited audience – sometimes only donors or organizers.

So, it is important to understand the concepts of visibility as a potential tool for reaching new actors that might result in programme strengthening (new donors, partners and collaborators). While it is difficult, if not impossible to predict who might be a new stakeholder and what impact it will have, it is beyond doubt that if a report or an activity record is not published widely, opportunities and chances are limited.

Websites can be used to promote, advertise, inform, persuade, teach, or in one term spread news about human rights education initiatives, events and materials. Websites should provide current information about the organization to its members and wider community, provide remote access to the training and educational material created both internally and externally of the organisation, assist potential members and activists in exploring the human rights education arena, and serve as a basis for community projects

So instead of the question should we have a website? The question should be: What kind of website should we have? In exploring this question several technical factors needs to be examined inside the organization: personal/skills, time, money, facilities, equipment and software, as well some questions related to the overall quality of the website.

Based on the current literature and several guidelines available on the Web explaining what determines a good website and comparing various educational websites to see what made them effective, the following set of recommendations are proposed:

### **Linking**

A member organisation should take advantage of the possibility of having a link to its website from the EMHRN website **www.emhrn.net** Members Section. If an organization does not have a website it should exploit the possibility of having information on the organisation posted on the EMHRN website.

### **Approach to Human Rights Education**

Organisations which have HRE programmes are recommended to state this clearly in the mission and vision of the organisation. In order to increase the visibility of this component. Furthermore, the education components could be highlighted in specific sections with links from the main page such as: Human Rights Education, Human Rights Trainings, Courses, etc.

### **Access to Training Materials**

Member organization's website should provide access to training materials used at their educational/training events. Educational/Training materials should be accessible from member website, or if one does not exist yet, information on training materials should be made available to the EMHRN Secretariat. Not only will it increase visibility of material, but also avoid duplication of already existing knowledge and materials. Furthermore, it can ensure life-long-learning to all those interested in human rights as individuals unable to attend an event, enabling access to the learning materials on the website.



## Activities

Training schedules should be clearly visible and published as far in advance as possible. It will enable prospective participants ability to adequately plan their possible attendance, whilst the organization will have a visible program to all employees, and it will facilitate the creation of reports. Links to planned, current and previous activities should be established. It will allow participants to get an impression about the organization's work in the field of HRE, and on the other side, it will give to the donor community an overview about the continuity of the programmes and their respective funding, and it will also create an environment for the positioning and the branding of the programme.

An organization's website can be used for interactive purposes (tutorials, self-paced learning models, electronic information, etc). Organizations should think about new ways of delivering programmes. Besides traditional ones in form of courses or seminars, self paced instruction should be available where appropriate, online courses should be developed for those who are not able to travel, or simple (non interactive) webpage should be created consisting of educational materials with guides on how to use it.

## Stakeholders

Member organization's websites can provide lists of organizations that have sent participants or delegated trainers for certain training. This feature will allow the organization to track cooperation with others.

## Reporting

All data about activities should be present in both narrative and tabular form. Short narrative report will have two roles: to inform and to be used later on for reporting (annual or similar). Tabular data is a great tool for instant screening.

## Communication

Participants as well as trainers/educators at the training events should be able to request a form of interaction with organizers and/or other trainers. It is highly desirable that prospective participants/lecturers have contact with organizers at all stages – from preparation to finalization, evaluation and follow-up.

The organization's website can provide links to other sites that may be relevant to the participant's needs. The role of providing links is threefold: it will give participants the possibility to locate similar institutions and to get familiar with their work; it will give visibility to partners; and it will be a networking tool. Also, websites can provide links to other educational events/activities.

The organization's website should provide a feedback mechanism. Contact list should be visible, as well as (where possible) feedback form on the website where interested individuals can contact the organization.

## According to Clift (1999) always keep in mind that:

- Organized information is strength.
- Accurate information is essential.
- Up-to-date, new information is valuable.
- Communication is vital.
- Ongoing communication is organization.
- Intentional communication is strategic.
- Expanding communication is growth.
- Many-to-many communication is vibrant.

Therefore..

Intentional, ongoing, expansive, many-to-many communication within the context of organized accurate, up-to-date information is power.



## Updating

The organization's website needs to have the date of last update. The website should be updated regularly. Out of date information on the web or no updates for longer period can send wrong messages to a prospective audience: either the organization is not active – or it has no new programmes.

## Possible structure of educational component on the website

Recommended structure of the webpage dealing with human rights education could follow issues discussed in previous recommendations, and can be structured as follows:

- **About the HRE programme**

Background Information on the programme (why it is established, local HRE situation regarding HRE, etc.), Aims and Goals of the HRE programme, Project Outcomes and Results.

- **Partners**

List partners with a short description and contact details; List donors with a short description and contact details, and summary of the contribution to the programme.

- **Trainings**

Training Schedule (Forthcoming, Current and Previous Training Events); Participating Institutions (List of Institutions that have sent Trainers and Attendees); Report on Training Events.

