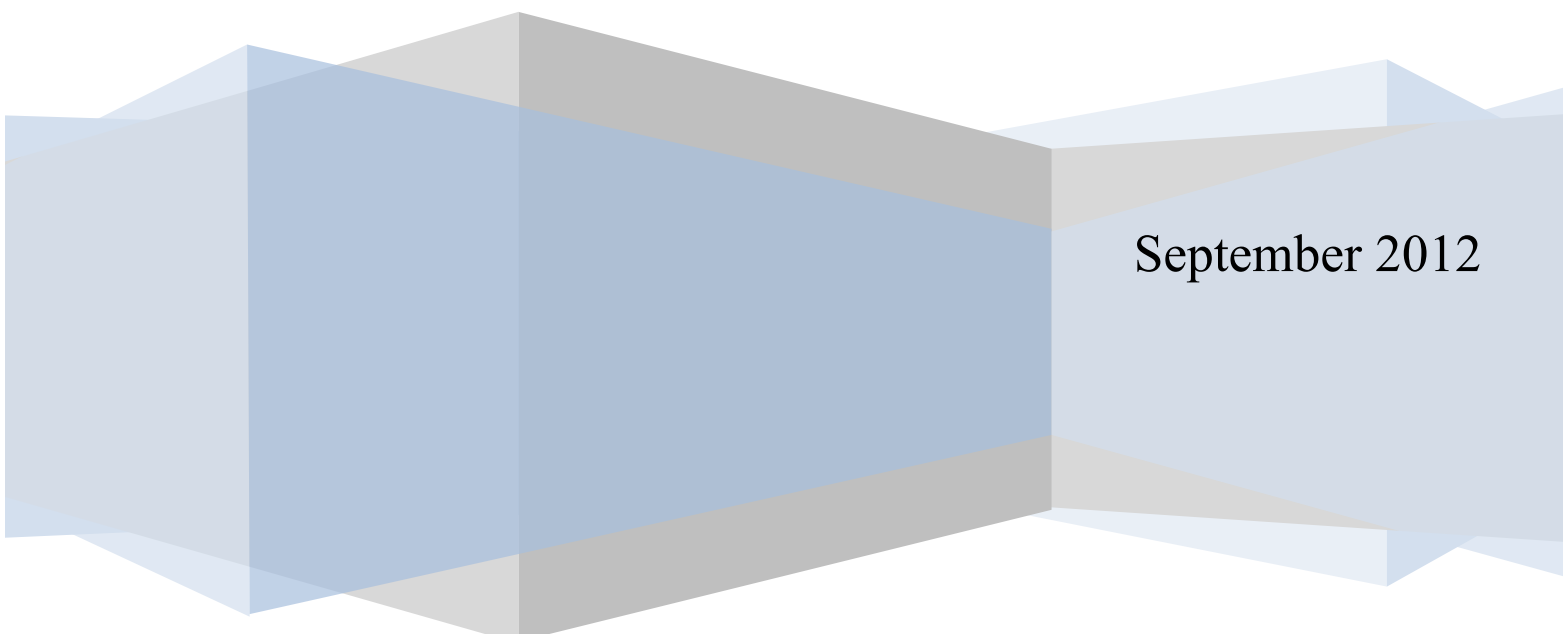


**Impact Assessment of the Human
Rights Education Program
for Women (HREP)
2005-2011**

**Prepared for Women for Women's Human
Rights (WWHR) – New Ways**

**By Felisa Tibbitts, D.Phil.
with the assistance of Ebru Batik**



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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Introduction

The Human Rights Education Program (HREP) was developed by Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) as a transformative holistic human rights education program for women carried out in cooperation with trainers associated with the Turkey General Directorate of Social Services, municipal agencies and in the NGO sector. Incorporating both a legal rights and gender perspective, the program seeks to empower women to know and claim their rights both in the private sphere (including familial relations, sexual and reproductive rights, gender sensitive parenting etc) and the public sphere (including economic rights, political rights, organizing, and access to justice).

This section summarizes key findings from an impact assessment carried out in 2011 that reviewed the previous seven years of HREP programming (2005-2011). The study included data from 251 alumni surveys; 88 trainer surveys; interviews with WWHR staff, trainers and key stakeholders associated with government partner organizations; and case studies of two HREP groups in Kartal (Istanbul) and Van.

The main report contains detailed analyses of survey-based findings, including variations based upon educational level, marriage status and whether the woman worked outside of the house. The following highlights should be reviewed in conjunction with these more detailed analyses.

Key Findings in Relation to Impacts on Learners

HREP had a clear and positive impact on alumni in all of the areas investigated, including knowledge and awareness, attitudes and feelings, skills, and behaviors and actions. Over 90% of the women completing HREP reported that they better understood and could apply Turkish laws to protect women; were more self confident and courageous; felt increased solidarity with other women; and had gained skills that would increase their capacity to claim their rights, including the ability to communicate effectively, to make decisions and to recognize and address problems.

Consistent with the goals of transformative learning, the results showed that women had internalized the women's rights perspective and the empowerment goals of HREP and had applied these directly in their lives. These applications spanned both the private and public spheres and reflected women's emerging identification of problems and new goals for their lives engendered through the critical reflection and dialogic processes of HREP.

In the private domain, over 90% of the alumni indicated that they had undertaken actions that resulted in improved relations with family members; more influence in family decisions; greater sensitivity to gender roles in raising children. For those participants who had experienced violence in their homes, such violence was reduced or ended for 85% of more of these women.

In the private sphere, at least one quarter of the alumni indicated that they had returned to work or continued their education as a result of HREP. The majority of learners reported that they had become actively involved in a women's organization, the women's movement in Turkey and/or become politically active in their environment. Independent of their political activism, alumni reported almost unanimously that they served as an informal source of information and advice about women's rights in their community.

These widespread and compelling results for learners are particularly noteworthy in the following ways:

- With only a few exceptions, women completing HREP almost unanimously reported some degree of positive impact.
- These results were evident regardless of the year that the women graduated from HREP, where they resided in Turkey, the trainer that they had, and their personal background.
- These outcomes were also consistent with the positive results of the 2004 external evaluation, for those questions that were included in both studies.

This suggests that HREP is both effective and robust in fostering knowledge, attitudes and skills that empower women to know and claim their rights in the Turkish setting.

Also noteworthy is that many impacts in the private domain were more pronounced for those alumni who had less education or who did not work outside of the home. These areas included knowledge of women's rights and Turkish laws intended to protect them; how to apply these laws to protect their rights (including the use of protection orders); knowledge about their own sexuality; and increased confidence, courage and sense of self worth. This critical finding suggests that HREP is especially empowering for more vulnerable women in Turkish society. This is a key consideration for WWHR as the organization considers if and how to continue to expand beyond its original target group of more vulnerable women in Turkey to women with more diverse backgrounds.

Key Findings in Relation to Impacts on Trainers

As with the findings for the alumni, HREP had a clear and positive impact on trainers in all of the areas investigated in surveys and interviews, including knowledge and awareness, attitudes and feelings, skills, and behaviors and actions. Trainers almost unanimously reported that HREP had improved their knowledge of women's rights and the Turkish legal documents protecting them. Over 90% of the trainers reported increased knowledge on the topics of reproductive rights, women's sexuality and related government policies. The vast majority of trainers also indicated that because of their engagement with HREP they were more self confident and courageous; had increased solidarity with other women; and had gained skills that would increase their capacity to claim their rights, including the ability to communicate effectively, to make decisions and to recognize and address problems.

The study showed that trainers applied the women’s rights perspectives in their work in ways that extended beyond the facilitation of study groups. Trainers almost unanimously reported in surveys that their involvement with HREP had increased their motivation for their job, had enhanced their ability to carry out their professional work and specifically enabled them to apply a woman’s perspective.

These results are particularly noteworthy in the following ways:

- With only a few exceptions, trainers engaged with HREP almost unanimously reported some degree of positive impact.
- These results were evident regardless of the year the women had completed the HREP trainer training program, how many study groups they had facilitated; whether they were associated with GDSS, an NGO or another organization; and their personal background.

Those trainers who had facilitated at least seven study groups reported stronger impacts in relation to HREP’s influence on their motivation for their professional work and feelings of solidarity with other women. Thus for some women, their ongoing facilitation of study groups both reflected and reinforced their personal benefits of their engagement with HREP.

Key Findings in Relation to Impacts on Government Partner Organizations

Interviews with GDSS managers and trainers showed that their long standing collaboration with WWHR had successfully promoted a “women-focused” set of programming that strengthened other efforts supporting healthy families and children. According to the Vice-Director, over this period of time, concurrent changes in Turkish laws had strengthened GDSS’s ability to reduce violence against women and to promote gender equality. The Vice-Director indicated that her department was “very proud” of the fact that they had been collaborating since 1998 with WWHR and that “this is our longest collaboration with any NGO.”

The implementation of HREP, according to trainers, had influenced the policy and operation of related programming at the community level. Over 90% of the trainers indicated that HREP had resulted in increased demand for GDSS services, collaborations with other organizations on issues of concern to women, and greater sensitivity in addressing women’s issues. These results support the idea that HREP had positively influenced the policy and operation of GDSS community centers.

The perspectives of senior managers in government agencies in relation to relatively new collaborations with WWHR were also very positive in relation to HREP. The directors of the Family Unit of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the ILO Office in Ankara, and the Employment Agency (ISKUR) confirmed their beliefs that women’s equality and empowerment were fundamental to the effective work of their departments. All of the directors enthusiastically supported the prospect of future collaborations with WWHR.

Although quantitative data was not available for these pilot programs, interviews with managers, trainers and some participants suggested positive results for learners. Interview carried out with trainers and Quran instructors in the study confirmed that many learners had critically analyzed their personal lives using a women's rights perspective. Moreover, these directors reported that their internal evaluations had demonstrated to their satisfaction that HREP had positively influenced their constituents. For example, as a result of HREP, Quran instructors were more familiar with women's rights, Turkish laws and agencies designed to protect them, and which state or civil society organizations to contact on behalf of women in their neighborhood with problems.

One problematic area that emerged for some of the Quran instructors was the topic of sexual and reproductive rights. This raises a question concerning potential requests to WWHR in the future to adapt programming in relation to requests from new target groups.

Conclusion

The results of the impact assessment confirms the sustained, wide ranging and robust impacts of HREP on learners, trainers and a longstanding government partner organization. Based on both a legal rights and gender perspective, the program has successfully empowered women to know and claim their rights both in the private sphere (including familial relations, sexual and reproductive rights, gender sensitive parenting) and the public sphere (including economic rights, political rights, organizing, and access to justice).

HREP is currently the most widespread, longest-running and comprehensive non-formal adult human rights education program in the region, and a unique example of sustainable NGO-state partnership in the field of women's human rights in Turkey. The results of the study speak to the feasibility of undertaking such a program successfully over many years and the potential of HREP to continue to empower women through its potential expansion. In a time when the United Nations General Assembly of the United Nations has endorsed the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, HREP provides a compelling example that should inspire replication in other countries and regions.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. 1. Program Background

The Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP) was developed by Women for Women’s Human Rights – New Ways (WWHR) as a transformative holistic human rights education program in 1995. Based on both a legal rights and gender perspective, the program seeks to empower women to know and claim their rights both in the private sphere (including familial relations, sexual and reproductive rights, gender sensitive parenting) and the public sphere (including economic rights, political rights, organizing, and access to justice).

HREP was developed through a series of pilot applications between 1995-97, first in the shantytown areas of Istanbul, and then in the Southeastern region of Turkey. Since its pilot application phase, HREP has expanded to over 50 cities in all seven regions of Turkey, and nearly 9,300 women have participated in the program. The program is implemented in partnership with the Turkey General Directorate of Social Services (GDSS), municipal agencies and the NGO sector. It is currently the most widespread, longest-running and comprehensive non-formal adult human rights education program in the region, and a unique example of sustainable NGO-state partnership in the field of women’s human rights in Turkey.

The training program brings women together for half-day workshops (study groups) weekly over a 16-week period. HREP explores civil, economic, political, sexual, reproductive and sexual rights, gender discrimination towards children, children’s rights, and violence against women within the human rights framework, with a focus on grassroots organizing and mobilization for social change throughout. HREP is based on international feminist teaching and training methods and tools, with an anti-hierarchical approach. It focuses on awareness raising in legal literacy, self empowerment and building solidarity relationships among study group members and other HREP groups in the country. The program aims to provide tools to apply a critical consciousness of human rights to life by facilitating discussions among participants of women’s human rights and violations related to their personal experiences. The program fosters a range of specific skills such as communication, women’s organizing and gender-sensitive parenting.

The themes of the 16 modules/sessions that take place in HREP are:

- Session 1. Orientation to HREP, Self Introductions and Needs Assessment
- Session 2. Women’s Human Rights
- Session 3. Constitutional and Civil Rights
- Session 4. Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
- Session 5. Strategies against Violence
- Session 6. Women’s Economic Rights – Part 1
- Session 7. Women’s Economic Rights – Part 2
- Session 8. Communication Skills – Part 1

- Session 9. Communication Skills – Part 2
- Session 10. Gender-Sensitive Parenting and the Rights of the Child
- Session 11. Women and Sexuality – Part 1
- Session 12. Women and Sexuality – Part 2
- Session 13. Reproductive Rights
- Session 14. Women and Politics
- Session 15. Feminism and the Women’s Movement
- Session 16. Women’s Grassroots Organizing

The HREP group sessions are facilitated by a HREP trainer. These trainers are selected from applicants from the GDSS, municipal agencies and the NGO sector. Successful applicants participate in a 12-day training seminar organized through WWHR. Candidates receive HREP trainer certificates after they have opened and finished their first groups and received a supervision visit from a WWHR supervisor. In addition, WWHR organizes evaluation and coordination meetings with new trainers and regional meetings with all trainers from all over Turkey. These processes – combined with a careful selection process of those prospective HREP facilitators – were established in order to help ensure that the trainers used in the program are of high quality and that they will maintain a long-term commitment to opening HREP groups.

There is some flexibility for trainers to adapt the training program and re-organize the modules for their learner group so that it was both theoretically and practically relevant to the local context. For example, according to Liz Erçevik Amado, the current president of WWHR, exercises might be chosen, adapted, or extended for a group that included a number of young women who have never been married, or for groups that include women who are illiterate.

A trainer from Gölbaşı described the sequence of modules that she used, beginning with the communication one.

We know how to work with these groups. For example, all my groups begin with communication as a way to resolve personal problems, and then I move into the rights section...We focus on the issues with her child and in addition to the module on gender-sensitive parenting we also provide them with information on child rearing. When these issues are out of the way, women can focus on themselves. At that point they want to learn about their rights. Later they want to work on organizing and they grab onto life and they step into life.

HREP employs a variety of training materials developed and produced by WWHR, including a comprehensive 330-page trainer manual with activity-centered modules for each of the 16 weeks; the “We have Rights!” illustrated booklet series on legal, sexual and reproductive rights; a documentary film on domestic violence and sexual abuse in the family; a series of research reports based on WWHR’s research on women’s human rights; and booklets and books on current national and international women’s rights and gender equality issues. The 12-episode documentary series *The Purple Series*, filmed by WWHR in collaboration with the TV channel NTV, is based on HREP and is available

for use in workshops. Program resources are intended to de-mystify legal content through the use of simple language and familiar examples and have been used successfully with women who are unable to read.

According to WWHR literature, the **aims** of the program are:

- Create awareness of global norms and national laws on human rights and women's human rights;
- Fill the gap left by the limited efforts of the state in creating awareness and education programs on human rights and women's human rights;
- Encourage social action leading to remedy of violations of women's human rights, as well as to promote greater respect and application of those rights by both the state and society;
- Enable and encourage women to form grassroots organizations in order to realize their human rights in a holistic manner.

The specific **objectives** are:

- Enable women to gain awareness of their rights as equal citizens;
- Raise women's consciousness of how customary practices, i.e. 'unwritten' laws, often limit or violate their rights;
- Serve as a catalyst for women's organizing efforts on the local and national levels and support grassroots organizing initiatives;
- Support women in developing strategies for the implementation of their legal rights in daily life.

WWHR has identified a range of **primary beneficiaries** in relation to HREP. The primary target group is women throughout Turkey at community centers under GDSS, the long-term institutional partner for HREP implementation. Established mostly in low-income neighbourhoods, community centers have proven to provide a suitable environment for HREP implementation. The identification of participants is largely in the hands of individual trainers.

The program's outreach via community centers extends to approximately 50 provinces around the country. HREP also targets local women who are a part of or in contact with grassroots women's organizations in numerous provinces, where HREP is implemented in collaboration with women's NGOs or municipality centers.

Recruitment takes place through a combination of trainers actively reaching out to women who visit community centers for services and women also become interested in HREP through personal acquaintances who have attended HREP.

WWHR also considers HREP trainers as primary beneficiaries. Since 1998, through seven trainer trainings, 166 women have been certified as HREP trainers. One hundred and thirty seven of these trainers are social workers from the GDSS. Twenty-nine trainers are women based in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), municipalities and other civil society organizations.

Since 2002, primary beneficiaries have extended beyond the original target group of women from a relatively lower socioeconomic background to include professional women such as policewomen, teachers, health workers, NGO workers, local government employees, and labor union members. These HREP groups have been carried out on the basis of local opportunity and demand.

In 2009-10, WWHR piloted HREP with two new target groups - Quran instructors and women participating in vocational training - in cooperation with two other government agencies, the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

WWHR has also identified **secondary beneficiaries** for HREP, that is, those who do not participate directly in the HREP groups but nevertheless benefit from the multiplier effect of the program. They include:

- Families, friends and acquaintances of the HREP graduates who benefit from the knowledge, skills and behaviors of the alumni
- At the local level, neighborhoods and communities in which HREP graduates become active social agents and promoters of equality and rights; on the national level, the women's movement
- Grassroots women's organizations/initiatives that are founded by HREP graduates
- At the national level, the GDSS, a long-standing partner of WWHR since 2001; at the local level, GDSS community centers and other institutions where HREP-trained social workers are based
- Potentially other government agencies that WWHR has partnered with at the national level, such as the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Employment Agency.

1.2. Main Goal and Tasks of the Impact Assessment

The overarching goal of the impact study was to provide an in-depth evaluation of the impact of HREP on its primary beneficiaries as well as its key government partner organizations. WWHR envisioned that this study might contribute to the development of strategies to strengthen and expand HREP and to publicize its results to various stakeholders, including trainers, participants, partner institutions and organizations including the GDSS, donor agencies and international institutions, the media and general public.

WWHR considers all the women involved in HREP to be program participants as the learning process is a mutual one for all the women engaged in study groups, including trainers. However, in order not to confuse the reader in relation to the presentation of results, this report uses the term "participant" only in reference to non-trainers in study groups, and interchangeably with the terms "learner" and "alumni".

In pursuing this overarching goal, the study focused on four primary tasks.

Task 1: To assess the impact of HREP on learners

The impact study would measure to what extent HREP contributed to learners realizing and exercising their human rights, overcoming human rights violations they face, and how gendered notions and perceptions were internalized by HREP alumni. The impact study would also consider the multiplier effect of the program in terms of how participants transformed their families and communities. These results are presented in Chapter 3.

Task 2: To assess the impact of HREP on trainers

As with the alumni, the impact study would assess to what extent HREP contributed to trainers realizing and exercising their human rights, overcoming human rights violations they face, and how gendered notions and perceptions were internalized. The study would also explore how the work of individual trainers was affected by the integration of a gender perspective. These results are presented in Chapter 5.

Task 3: To assess how the program contributed to the gender sensitization of governmental social services and programs geared towards women

The study would collect evidence and associated results of the integration of the gender perspective within GDSS, both at the national and community levels. The study would examine how managers and associated HREP trainers (e.g., social workers, psychologists) perceived the institutional collaboration between GDSS and WWHR. These results are presented in Chapter 6.

Task 4: To assess the impact of HREP implementation with new government partners and the associated target groups of Quran instructors and ILO vocational education participant.

The study would consider how the program impacted target groups associated with two pilot implementations: the Presidency of Religious Affairs; and the International Labor Organization (ILO) Ankara Office and the Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ISKUR). The study would examine how these government managers perceived the institutional collaboration with WWHR. These results are presented in Chapter 6.

1.3. Organization of the Research

The independent evaluator was contracted in November 2010. The evaluation design and instruments employed were finalized following an extensive consultative process between the evaluator and WWHR. Regular communication was maintained between the evaluator, the HREP Coordinator and the program assistant (also working as the evaluation assistant) for the duration of the study.

WWHR provided key HREP program documents and reports, beginning with the year 2005, which are listed in the Annex. The Initial Evaluation Methodology document and Key Tasks timeline were prepared in early December 2010. This methodological

framework, as well as instrument development, took into account the previous external evaluation study, which was published in 2004, as well as WWHR's reflections on the strengths and weaknesses of this earlier study.

During the January and April 2011 site visits, the evaluator conducted the following activities:

- interviews with WWHR staff and Board members (6 total)
- focus group interviews with four groups of trainers (11);
- individual interviews with key stakeholders at GDSS (5), the Presidency of Religious Affairs (1), the Ankara Branch of the International Labor Organization Ankara Office (2) and the Employment Agency, Ministry of Labor and Social Security (1);
- individual interviews with HREP trainers (7)
- paired interviews with case study participants, including pre- and post- (16)
- observations of HREP group sessions (5)¹

Following the qualitative interviews of January, impact questionnaires were developed for trainers and alumni. The trainer questionnaire was administered in February, and the participant questionnaire as of March. These were input and translated by the in-house researcher as they arrived, with all inputting completed as of May 2011.

The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data was completed in May 2011 and the initial draft report was prepared by July 2011. Following feedback given by WWHR, additional statistical analysis was carried out in September and October 2011. A final round of editing took place in 2012 and the report was then finalized.

1.4. Transformative Learning Theory

A distinctive feature of HREP is its holistic, comprehensive nature, linking several areas of human rights through a critical gender perspective lens. The training is conceptualized as an intensive process of four months, a time frame that differentiates it from many other initiatives of human rights education. Operating in some ways as a support group, women meet weekly in this course for a few hours, engaging in the curriculum while sharing their stories and advice with one another.

The training is based on an intensive group process, managed diligently by a specially trained group facilitator. This allows women to express their experiences and needs as individuals, while acquiring a consciousness on the inherent connection between their individual experiences and human rights violations of women in general. It also enables them to share their own problems and develop strategies through the assistance and feedback of group participants, while gaining an understanding about the problems of

¹ As one of the HREP groups observed in January 2011 was discontinued, five rather than six observations were carried out over the course of two site visits. The report includes case study results for two HREP groups.

other participants and assisting them in their search for solutions. In fact, for many women, the first step towards empowerment is the realization that the causes of their problems are not private, but social.

The training includes many group exercises where women can share their individual painful experiences of violations of their human rights, discrimination and violence. The group process enables them to realize that these experiences are not an inescapable part of her individual destiny or a result of her failures, but rather a collective experience shared by many other women as a result of a socio-political system leading to human rights violations of women.

Three models of human rights education have been identified on the basis of practice, and one of these is called the **Transformation Model** (Tibbitts, 2002). The HREP is evidently an example of this approach. In the Transformation Model, human rights education programming is geared towards enabling the individual to both recognize human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention. HRE carried out in the spirit of the Transformation Model places a strong emphasis on personal experiences and human rights change in the immediate environment, including the private domain. In some cases, whole communities – not just the individual – are treated as the target audience.

The Transformation Model is strongly associated with the goal of empowerment and HRE is intended to directly lead the learner into taking action for change at many potential levels: personal, community and societal. “Empowerment” is a term used in the recent UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011) a passage that explains that human rights education and training encompasses education...”for human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others” (Article 2, para 2).²

The Transformation Model of HRE is oriented in particular towards those belonging to marginalized groups who have suffered systematic discrimination and ongoing abuses. Empowerment models are dependent upon sustained community supports of some kind (whether these supports are peers, family members or others). An educational empowerment model has these supports built in through the design of the program – supports provide on an ongoing basis by the teachers/facilitators or sustained contact among the learners.

Moreover, in the Transformation Model of HRE, it is common for learners to consider the root causes of human rights violations (both from cultural and legal perspectives) and to be equipped with concrete knowledge and skills to address violations that they are experiencing or witnessing. Within this model, learners may learn about HRE in conjunction with legal literacy and life skills (such as micro-enterprise development or

⁴Since 1995, elaboration by the UN and other agencies has clarified inherent in human rights education are components of knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with recognized human rights principles that empower individuals and groups to address oppression and injustice (Amnesty International, 2005; Asia-Pacific Regional Resource Center for Human Rights Education, 2008, as quoted in Tibbitts and Kirchschaeger, 2005).

conflict resolution skills) that will enable them to take steps to address human rights violations they or others close to them may be experiencing and to promote their human dignity.

The Transformation Model is linked in orientation and principle with popular education traditions as well as feminist pedagogy. **Popular education** is used to classify an array of non-formal educational activities, typically oriented towards the adult learning, and ranging from single sessions to workshops to extended learning programs. This approach should not be equated with the notion of “common”. Popular education is carried out with less privileged groups with the intention to encourage them to break the cycle of dominance and subservience that can be reinforced through learning that does not promote “questioning” or which reflects the “banking system” of education.³ Popular education is grounded in an agenda of social transformation and applies pedagogical approaches intended to empower the learner through self-directed learning and a critical analysis of surrounding social conditions.

A specialist in adult learning, Mezirow, developed a related theoretical framework for adult learning that he termed **transformative learning**. Mezirow, defined this approach as

the process by which we call into question our take for granted frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action (Ettling, 2002).

Mezirow developed the principal of “perspective transformation” whereby an individual – through experience, critical reflection and rational discourse – has a meaning-structure transformation. This transformation is ‘rational’ insofar as it involves discourse and work with the conscious. Elements are also intuitive, creative and emotional.

Other iterations, such as Boyd (1988), have related transformative learning to adult development theory. Ettling’s study of praxis in relation to transformative changes in women’s groups has recognized the essential role of building bonds of friendship and support within the group in order to help claim “oneself and one’s beliefs.”

In the late 1990s, Edward W. Taylor examined the empirical evidence for practices that fostered transformative learning. Eleven studies were found to focus on this topic and they revealed several essential practices and conditions, not all of which had been identified by Mezirow. Some of these practices included:

1. Conditions that promote a sense of safety, openness and trust.

³ http://puente2014.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/87465079/freire_banking_concept.pdf

2. Effective instructional methods support a learner-centered approach, and promote student autonomy, participation and collaboration.
3. Activities encourage the exploration of alternative personal perspectives, problem-posing and critical reflection.
4. Discussing and working through emotions and feelings before engaging in critical reflection (Taylor, 1998).

The general principles of transformative learning and popular education together provided a theoretical overlay for the impact assessment in the areas of learner and trainer impact and the pedagogy and processes of the HREP study groups. Those elements that were used in the study are introduced in the methods chapter.

1.5. Structure of the Report

The remainder of the report is divided into six chapters.

Chapter 2 presents the methods used in the study. The mixed methods approach involved a range of data collection methods, which are presented according to the key areas of investigation: alumni, trainers, study group processes and government partner organizations.

Chapter 3 presents the survey results for a non-random sample of alumni from the program years 2005-2010. The self-reported impacts on participants are complemented by interviews carried out by trainers in which they were asked to reflect on the results of HREP on learners.

Chapter 4 presents case studies of two study groups in Istanbul (Kartal) and Van that took place between December 2010 and April 2011.

Chapter 5 presents the influence of HREP on trainers, based on survey data and a sample of interviews.

Chapter 6 presents the perspectives of managers in government partner organizations regarding HREP's impact. These perspectives are accompanied by those of trainers as well as a small number of participants in pilot study groups carried out with new partner organizations.

Chapter 7 summarizes the key outcomes and concludes with strategic considerations for WWHR's HREP programming.

2.0 METHODS

2.1. Mixed-Method Research

The study employed a mixed-method approach that incorporated both quantitative (survey-based) and qualitative (interview, observation) procedures in examining the results of HREP on participants and on trainers and government partner organizations.

Quantitative approaches, such as statistical data gleaned through closed-ended survey questions, allowed for the isolation of different aspects of the HREP (e.g., year of HREP group) or background characteristics of beneficiaries in examining and representing numerically any potential relationship with impact. Qualitative approaches, such as semi-structured interviews, observations and open-ended survey questions, allowed for documentation of stakeholder perceptions and perspectives; a more holistic and integrated rendering of programming processes; and explanations of any results (both anticipated and unanticipated) reported. The research methodologies used for participants and for trainers and partner organizations are presented in the following subsections.

2.2. Methodology: Participant Impact

The impact assessment investigated a range of potential impacts on HREP learners along the domains of knowledge and awareness; attitudes and feelings; skills; and behavior and actions. The study looked for evidence of “empowerment”, central to the Transformation Model of HRE, that might be associated with participation in HREP trainings. Thus the principles of transformative learning and popular education were applied within the context of HREP.

Key outcome areas in the women’s lives that were examined included:

- The women’s rights perspective
- Knowledge of laws and organizations protecting women’s human rights
- Self confidence and courage
- Valuing of self
- Ability to express oneself and make decisions
- Identification of problems and solutions to these problems
- A range of actions that women might have taken in relation to family relations, their education, work, and activism

The data presented in this section of the report are based primarily on a questionnaire that was administered to alumni in March and April 2011. WWHR records showed that nearly 4900 persons completed the HREP training program from 2004-2010. The goal was to successfully administer the survey to 5% of these alumni, or 245, including 32 participating in the two case study groups in Kartal (Istanbul) and Van between December 2010 and April 2011 as well as Quran instructors and International Labor Organization (ILO) participants from 2009/10.

In order to reach alumni, trainers were asked to identify alumni whom they anticipated they could locate and administer the questionnaire to. From this pool, the evaluator in consultation with WWHR selected a non-random stratified sample of 575 participants to receive the questionnaire, either in hard copy or electronically. This sample reflected a proportional representation of alumni across region and graduation year according to HREP training concentrations. In other words, those years and provinces that had relatively more HREP graduates had a larger sample pool of alumni requested to complete the questionnaire. The alumni surveys were sent by WWHR to the trainers who then distributed them to former participants identified to participate in the study. Completed surveys were then collected by the trainers and returned to WWHR, where they were input into a database.

In the end, a total of 253 HREP alumni across 17 provinces completed a survey, representing all regions of the country and each graduation year. (Please refer to Tables 1 and 2.) Thus the response rate was a respectable 44%.⁴

Table 1. Alumni by region

| REGION | No. | Percentage of all those completing survey | Percent of women who completed HREP group (2005 – 2011) |
|---------------------|------------|---|---|
| Marmara | 99 | 39% | 23% |
| Central Anatolia | 55 | 22% | 38% |
| Aegean | 33 | 13% | 12% |
| Mediterranean | 31 | 12% | 12% |
| Black Sea | 14 | 6% | 5% |
| East Anatolia | 12 | 5% | 7% |
| South East Anatolia | 7 | 3% | 3% |
| TOTAL | 251 | 100% | 100% |

⁴ A response rate between 30% and 50% of the alumni was assumed. The actual response rate of 44% was about mid-point within this range. These 253 respondents were constituted by 234 alumni and 19 case study participants.

Table 2. Alumni according to year completed HREP

| YEAR COMPLETED HREP | No. | Percentage of all those completing survey | Percent of women who completed HREP group (2005 – 2011) |
|----------------------------|------------|--|--|
| 2005 | 13 | 5% | 9% |
| 2006 | 12 | 5% | 13% |
| 2007 | 20 | 8% | 12% |
| 2008 | 29 | 12% | 8% |
| 2009 | 81 | 22% | 28% |
| 2010 | 76 | 30% | 20% |
| 2011 | 22 | 9% | 10% |
| TOTAL | 253 | 100% | 100% |

The questionnaire contained a set of closed-ended questions that asked participants to rate the impacts that the HREP training had on them, indicating “not at all”, “a little” or “quite a lot” for items. These results are shown across all respondents, according to percentages indicating “not at all,” “a little” and “a lot.”

An analysis of variance procedure was performed in order to investigate if there were statistically significant differences in the responses according to several background characteristics of alumni: how much formal education they had, their marital status and whether or not they worked outside of the home.⁵ This report includes those answers for which any participant background characteristics showed statistically significant differences.

The questionnaire also included an open-ended question that asked participants to indicate the “most significant change” that they experienced based on their involvement in the HREP training. Participants were also invited in a follow-up question to share any other impacts of the training not previously indicated in the questionnaire.

One hundred and ninety-three (76%) of the 253 participants completing the questionnaire provided at least one open-ended answer. These answers were coded and patterns quantified. Open-ended coded responses occurring for 10% or more of those completing open-ended answers are presented in this report to supplement quantitative survey findings.

⁵ A one way ANOVA analysis of variance was performed in order to test if the differences between the means for sub-categories of participants were statistically significant. As certain sub-categories had cell sizes too small to include in the testing, only the following sub-categories were included: education (completed primary, graduated from secondary school, graduated from university); marital status (never married, married); participation in income-generating activities outside of the home (yes, no).

In addition to the administration of the questionnaire, data on participant impact were collected through pre- and post-interviews carried out with participants in each of the case study groups (Kartal/Istanbul and Van). The results of these in-person interviews are presented in the case study section of this report. Trainers also commented on impacts on their learners during their focus group discussions, and quotes from these conversations are incorporated within the findings.

In order to compare the results of this study with those of the 2004 external evaluation, certain questions from the 2004 learner questionnaire were retained. This report briefly compares these results at the conclusion of the chapter on participant impact (Chapter 3), in order to explore the sustainability of results documented in the earlier study.

2.3. Methodology: Case Studies

Two case studies were completed: one for Kartal, a district located in the outskirts of Istanbul, and in Van, a large city in the southeastern part of Turkey. These case studies were included in order to allow for first-hand and “real time” data collection of trainings. Observations for sessions took place towards the beginning and end of the 16-week HREP program and enabled the evaluator to both document and witness key group processes.

These HREP groups were chosen in part because the groups were meeting at a time when the evaluator could carry out site visits. These trainings were also selected because trainers agreed to the evaluation visits and the contexts were different in important ways. One key difference was that the Kartal group was lead by a GDSS social worker and the Van group by an NGO staff member. The local contexts and participant profiles also differed, which will be explained further in the case study presentations. The investigation of impacts in these different settings allowed for a more rigorous “test” of results associated with the core materials and methodologies of HREP.

The evaluator observed two sessions of the HREP group. An observation protocol for the sessions involved a careful recording of interactions with the assistance of an interpreter, and a checklist of descriptions of the session derived from the popular education and transformative learning approaches introduced earlier in this chapter. As only two sessions for each study group was observed it was not possible to closely follow the evolution of dynamics within the group. Nevertheless the following criteria were noted during the observations and integrated within the write-up of the case studies:

- Teaching and learning processes (e.g., lecturing, whole and small group discussions, reading materials, use of videos)
- Group dynamics (participation of women across the HREP group, who initiates questions, engagement level, evidence of safe and caring community, and facilitator as co-learner)

- Transformational learning indicators (e.g., activating events, opportunities to identify underlying assumptions, guided critical reflection, critical dialogue with others, revising assumptions and perspectives, and testing and applying new understandings).

During the two visits to the groups, the evaluator interviewed a subset of the women in order to understand their reasons for participating in the HREP training, their expectations and their perspectives at the conclusion of the program. HREP trainers were also interviewed on both visits and shared their impressions of training processes and results.

The Kartal (Istanbul) women who participated in the interviews were those who volunteered from within the group to speak with the evaluator. In Van, the trainer selected women from among those participants who volunteered to speak those who differed from one another in background (e.g., level of education and socio-economic status). Not all of the women who were interviewed in the January 2011 visit were available in April. Thus from the original pool of four interviews in the Kartal HREP group, only the same two were interviewed a second time; in Van, from an original pool of six interviewees, three women were also interviewed towards the end of their HREP group sessions.

A questionnaire was developed specifically for the women in the case study groups, which, in addition to the questions contained in the alumni survey, contained a section with a five-point Likert-type scale that asked the women to rate their level of knowledge of and attitudes towards a range of human rights areas addressed in the HREP. By asking these questions at the beginning and end of the training program, the study intended to capture immediate results that could be attributed to their participation in the HREP group, by comparing both pre - and post - averages for the women in each group.

2.4. Methodology: Trainer Impact

The impact assessment investigated the results of HREP on the facilitators of the HREP groups, who were also considered primary beneficiaries. The study investigated a range of potential impacts on trainers similar to those for learners, along the domains of knowledge and awareness; attitudes and feelings; skills; and behaviors and actions that might be associated with participation in the original 12-day trainer training seminar followed by subsequent experiences facilitating HREP trainings.

As with the alumni, the study looked for evidence of “empowerment” with HREP trainers along the following key outcome areas:

- The women’s rights perspective
- Knowledge of laws and organizations protecting women’s human rights
- Self confidence and courage
- Valuing of self
- Identification of problems and solutions to these problems

- A range of actions that women might have taken in relation to family relations, their education, work, and activism

As with the participant data, an analysis of variance procedure was performed on the trainer data in order to investigate if there were statistically significant differences in the responses according to several background characteristics: marital status; with or without children; number of people in the household; year participated in the WWHR trainer training seminar; and whether they were employed by GDSS or an NGO.⁶ This report includes those answers for which any trainer background characteristics showed statistically significant differences.

The data presented for trainers are based primarily on a questionnaire administered in February 2011 to the 125 “most active” trainers from within WWHR’s larger pool of 166 trained persons. These “active” trainers had successfully initiated HREP groups between 2006 and 2011 and demonstrated continued engagement in the program. WWHR distributed the questionnaires to the trainers through e-mail and regular mail, and carried out follow-up calls to remind trainers to complete the survey. Completed surveys were sent to WWHR where they were then input in a database.

A total of 88 trainers completed a survey, across 36 provinces, representing all seven regions of the country. These 88 trainers represent 70% of the pool of active trainers. Thirty-nine percent of the trainers were based in either the Ankara or Istanbul metropolitan areas. The comparison between the geographical distribution of trainers completing the survey with the larger pool of “active trainers” shows that the percentages are fairly close, with the exception of Central Anatolia, which was overrepresented among those completing the questionnaire.

Table 3. Trainers by region

| REGION | No. | Percentage of those completing survey | Percent of “active” HREP trainers (2005 – 2011) |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Central Anatolia | 30 | 34% | 27% |
| Marmara | 18 | 21% | 25% |
| Aegean | 12 | 14% | 15% |
| Mediterranean | 12 | 14% | 14% |
| East Anatolia | 6 | 7% | 7% |
| Black Sea | 4 | 5% | 5% |
| South East Anatolia | 5 | 6% | 6% |
| Northern Cyprus | 1 | 1% | 1% |
| TOTAL | 88 | 100% | 100% |

⁶ A one way ANOVA analysis of variance was performed in order to test if the differences between the means for sub-categories of participants were statistically significant. For the category of marital status, only the following sub-categories were included in the analyses: marital status (never married, married) and for employer, only GDSS or NGO (“other” was excluded).

As with the participant survey, the trainer questionnaire contained a set of closed-ended questions that asked them to rate the impacts that the HREP trainings had on them, indicating “not at all,” “a little” or “quite a lot” for items. An open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire asked trainers to comment on the “most significant change” that they experienced based on their involvement in the HREP training. A follow-up question invited trainers to identify any other impacts of the training not previously indicated in the questionnaire.

Sixty nine (78%) of the 88 trainers completing the questionnaire provided at least one open-ended answer. These answers were coded and patterns quantified. Open-ended responses reported by 10% or more of those completing open-ended answers are incorporated into this report.

In order to supplement the information provided in the questionnaire, the views and experiences of trainers in relation to HREP were collected through individual and focus group interviews. Eighteen interviews took place quotes from these conversations are incorporated within the report findings.

2.5. Methodology: Impact on Government Partner Organizations

The study investigated the results of HREP on three government partners: GDSS – a partner with whom WWHR had a 13-year collaboration – and three new partners: the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the International Labor Organization (ILO) Ankara Office and the Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ISKUR).

The impact assessment examined the institutionalization of the gender perspective within the operation of GDSS community centers and staff associated with HREP. These data were collected primarily through trainer questionnaires and interviews. In addition, the views of five GDSS managers at the national level were obtained through interviews, in which they were asked to reflect on how their collaboration with WWHR had influenced the work of GDSS.

In the years just prior to the study WWHR had carried out pilot trainings with new government agencies: the Presidency of Religious Affairs; and the International Labor Organization (ILO) Ankara Office and the Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ISKUR). As with the GDSS managers, interviews were carried out with senior managers in order to obtain their perspectives on the implementation and value of HREP for their constituencies. Interviews were carried out with the Director of the Family Unit of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the Director of the ILO Office in Ankara and the Director of ISKUR.

At the request of WWHR, the study attempted to document the impact of HREP on the new constituencies of the Quran instructors and women participating in the ILO-supported vocational training program carried out by ISKUR. In both cases, the alumni

questionnaire was administered to a small sample. However, the response rates were quite low. Thus the quantitative results of these completed surveys are not presented in this report.

The data presented on the participants in these pilot projects are therefore entirely qualitative, based on the impressions of senior management, as well as the associated trainers (three for Quran instructors and two for the ILO participants) and a focus group interview carried out with three Quran instructors.

2.6. Methodological Limitations

There are two primary kinds of quantitatively based impact evaluations:

- experimental – involving a randomized selection of primary sources; pre- and post-program data collection; and the use of both treatment and control groups
- non-experimental – a non-randomized selection of primary sources; pre- and post-program data collection or use of both treatment and comparison groups.

The HREP impact assessment partially meets the qualifications for the non-experimental approach. The study involved pre- and post-data for participants in the two HREP groups that finished in April 2011, although these numbers do not allow us to compare differences using statistical tests of significance. In some cases, we were able to compare quantitative results on items in the 2004 impact assessment with the current one, referring to basic descriptive statistics. There are no comparison or control groups against which to compare quantitative results recorded for HREP beneficiaries.

The qualitative information provided by participants and trainers in their open-ended responses add validity to the findings that have been captured quantitatively. There is also a high level of consistency of results across alumni and trainers, and also as compared with the vast majority of related results recorded in the 2004 impact assessment. Moreover, the results reported would appear to be prima facie highly associated with participation in HREP. What the assessment cannot take into account, however, is to what extent that participants and trainers exhibiting knowledge, attitudes and behaviors reflective of women's human rights have developed these capacities through trainings or experiences unrelated to WWHR.

In addition to a lack of comparison data for beneficiaries, the other primary limitation of this study is **selection bias**. The non-randomized nature of the study required WWHR to select a subset of trainers, alumni and HREP groups to participate in the study. Presumably, the trainers and alumni who volunteered to complete the post-survey were those demonstrating investment in and appreciation of the program. These sources would therefore be predisposed to have a generally positive view of the program. The result could be a tendency toward overstating the impact of HREP on the individual level,

particularly in ratings on closed-ended questions. Efforts were undertaken to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of survey respondents in order to encourage honesty.

Methodologically, we are **not able to generalize any impacts across the complete set of trainers and alumni** given the non-randomized nature of those participating in the study. Nevertheless, the consistency of the findings suggests that such results will apply to the larger pool of respondents, although the strength of these results cannot be predicted.

Another methodological limitation to this study is the willingness of participants' and trainers' to share their views on highly personal matters, including those associated with trauma and stigma, such as violence in the home. One indication of a potential **under-reporting of experiences with domestic violence** is the discrepancy between the percentages of participants surveyed who report such experiences with the national statistics on domestic, physical for women in general in Turkey. Although it was not methodologically possible to correct for this potential under-reporting, this report makes note of any survey questions for which there were noticeable high numbers of "missing" answers.

Language is an additional factor that may have influenced the accuracy of reported data. All questionnaires were administered in Turkish and translated into English and, in turn, open-ended survey responses were translated back into English. Interpreters were used for interviews conducted during site visits. Although WWHR took great care in selecting these interpreters and translators we cannot know how technically accurately the English language translations were and to what degree movement between linguistic and conceptual constructs may have altered the original, intended meanings of the sources.

The impact assessment attempted to blend approaches and "triangulate" data sources in order to overcome the study's methodological limitations. Multiple sources were used in documenting impacts. In addition to asking alumni to self-report impacts in questionnaires, trainers were interviewed and surveyed about impacts on trainees. Impacts on partner institutions were investigated through corroborative interviews with key stakeholders as well as WWHR staff.

There is one final reminder in relation to the interpretation of report findings. Although the case studies try to document holistically the organization of two HREP groups, taking into account local context and the group profile, general survey data for alumni and trainers does not enable the reader to draw any immediate connections between a combination of features of the HREP and reported impacts. Rather, the survey-generated data allows us to isolate and consider individual impacts and the ways in which these results may collectively look different for beneficiaries with certain background characteristics. In this vein, analysis of variance statistical tests were carried out for certain background characteristics of trainers and participants (e.g., education completed, marital status) in relation to impacts.

3.0. IMPACTS OF HREP ON PARTICIPANTS

It really – but I mean really – helped me find the answer to the question of ‘Who am I?’ I understood how important my wishes and beliefs are for me. I learned to do certain things not because other people or my family wants me to, but because I want to. I identified my aims and goals, and now I walk towards them....Before I participated in this program I used to say ‘One should be born a man into this world’, but I say that no more. I say ‘Fortunately I am a woman.’

– Anonymous quote from participant survey⁷

3.1. Background Characteristics of Participants

For those alumni completing the questionnaire, three quarters were married, slightly over half of them when they were younger than 21 years of age, as Tables 4 and 5 show.

Table 4. Alumni marital status

| MARITAL STATUS | No. | Percent |
|-------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Never married | 43 | 17% |
| Married | 189 | 75% |
| Widow | 4 | 2% |
| Living separately | 3 | 1% |
| Divorced | 13 | 5% |
| TOTAL | 252⁸ | 100% |

Table 5. Alumni age at marriage

| MARRIAGE AGE | No. | Percent |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| <18 | 30 | 16% |
| 18-20 | 69 | 36% |
| 21-25 | 64 | 34% |
| 26-30 | 25 | 13% |
| >30 | 3 | 2% |
| TOTAL | 191 | 101% |

Eighty percent of the alumni completing the survey had children. As Table 6 shows, the number of people in the household varied, but over half of the women lived in homes with at least four people, including themselves.

⁷ All survey and interview responses are anonymized.

⁸ When the total number of respondents is less than 253, this represents missing data.

Table 6. Alumni number of people in household

| HOUSEHOLD SIZE | No. | Percent |
|----------------|------------|-------------|
| 1-2 | 45 | 18% |
| 3 | 66 | 27% |
| 4 | 94 | 38% |
| 5+ | 41 | 17% |
| TOTAL | 246 | 100% |

Table 7 below represents the educational level attained by the respondents. Nearly three quarters of the alumni had graduated from secondary school and almost one third of the alumni had completed a university degree. Approximately 55% of the women completing the survey indicated that they were working for income, either inside or outside of the home.

Table 7. Alumni educational background

| EDUCATION LEVEL | No. | Percent |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Never attended school | 1 | - |
| Some primary | 2 | 1% |
| Graduate primary school | 61 | 25% |
| Graduate secondary or high school | 112 | 46% |
| Graduate university – initial or advanced degree | 70 | 29% |
| Illiterate/barely literate | | |
| TOTAL | 246 | 101% |

In order to explore the potential for trainings other than HREP to have influenced participants in relation to legal literacy and the gender perspective, the questionnaire asked if respondents had participated in women’s rights trainings carried out by other organizations either prior to or following their involvement with HREP. Less than 15% of the alumni reported participating in another women’s rights training either before or after HREP, suggesting that HREP was the only formal training intervention on women’s rights for the vast majority of these women.

3.2. Impacts on HREP Participants

3.2.1. Knowledge and awareness

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a series of questions pertaining to knowledge and awareness. As Table 8 shows, alumni nearly unanimously reported gains for this category of impact, with the especially high levels for items related to legal literacy, a key feature of HREP. Aside from a later item related to women’s

solidarity, gains in knowledge and awareness were the highest for alumni across all other questionnaire categories.

Table 8. Alumni knowledge and awareness – Women’s rights and legal protections

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|--|------------|----------|-------|
| Increased my understanding of the women’s rights perspective | 3% | 12% | 86% |
| Resulted in my learning about the legal documents that protect women’s rights in Turkey | 1% | 10% | 89% |
| Resulted in my knowing how to use government agencies and civil society organizations to protect my rights | 2% | 12% | 86% |
| Resulted in my knowing how to apply Turkish laws (e.g., protection order against domestic violence) to protect my rights. ⁹ | 6% | 21% | 73% |

Statistical analyses revealed that an increase in understanding of the women’s perspective and knowing how to use mechanisms to safeguard rights were significantly higher for those women who did not work outside of the home.¹⁰ Gains in knowledge about how to apply Turkish laws to protect women’s rights were significantly higher both for those women who did not work outside of the home for income and those with lower levels of education.¹¹

A full 36% (69) of the participants completing the open-ended question on wrote that one of the most significant impacts of the training was the knowledge they gained about women’s rights and the gender perspective. Below is a sample quote from the survey, as well as a related quote from a trainer interview:

⁹ The non-response rate for this question was 16%. There were a number of questions that had relatively high non-response rates. These items may have been sensitive ones for participants.

¹⁰ Outside work: $F=4.08, p<.04$ and $F=6.01, p<.01$.

¹¹ Outside work: $F=10.06, p<.002$ and educational level: $F=4.71, p<.01$.

After living my life as someone who has devoted herself to others and lives with the order that they have set up, I realized that I actually have rights too and I am an individual as well.

Even if they don't retain the information, they know where to find the information they need. (trainer from Kocaeli)

An additional 14% (27) of the women completing this open-ended question indicated that one of the more significant impacts was their learning how to apply Turkish laws in cases involving violence against women. As one woman wrote:

Knowing that I am a woman, and that there are laws and justice for me, too, knowing where I can apply and get help if I run into trouble...I can't write down or explain all of the things I've learned from HREP, as there is no end to it.

Zelal Ayman, HREP coordinator, believed that a key result of HREP related to the national and international legal rights that women learn. She recognized that educated women who were already aware of their rights may find it difficult to appreciate how powerful this knowledge can be. The promotion of self efficacy and the overcoming of learned helplessness are empowerment outcomes associated with the transformative learning approach. A trainer from Van said in an interview:

To learn this information, it brings self confidence, power to the women – and right in the first few weeks of the training, when we discuss constitutional and civil rights. The women say “We just didn't know.”

The knowledge gained was itself empowering, according to WWHR President Liz Erçevik Amado. A trainer from Kartal pointed out that this knowledge is transmitted in an environment where women are expected to apply this knowledge.

A trainer from Ankara emphasized that it was important that women learned not only about laws protecting their legal rights, but the role of the women's movement in bringing about legal reform in Turkey:

Another point is learning about laws...Especially talking about how the women's movement has been a driving force behind many legal reforms. They find it incredible. They can't believe it. I ask them: “How do you think these laws changed? Do you think that men suddenly said ‘Let's make these laws better for women?’

A final area of knowledge and awareness examined in the alumni survey related to women's sexual and reproductive rights. This area would prove to be a sensitive one for WWHR's new government partners, which is addressed later in the report.

Table 9. Alumni knowledge and awareness – Women’s sexuality and reproductive rights

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Increased my knowledge about reproductive rights | 5% | 17% | 78% |
| Increased my awareness about my own sexuality | 6% | 20% | 74% |
| Increased my knowledge about how women’s sexuality and reproductive capacities influence the policies of government | 7% | 27% | 66% |

Women with lower levels of education and those who did not work for income outside of the house reported statistically significant higher levels of gains in awareness about their own sexuality.¹²

3.2.2. Attitudes and Feelings

As with the knowledge and awareness categories, participants almost unanimously report gains in questions pertaining to attitudes and feelings related to self efficacy. The open-ended responses, in particular, spoke to the impact of HREP on the inner, emotional lives of the women. The questionnaire results showed that approximately three quarters of the women had “a lot” of increased self confidence and valued themselves “a lot” more. Gains were reported almost uniformly.

Table 10. Participant feelings – About self

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|--------------------------------------|------------|----------|-------|
| Increased my overall self confidence | 4% | 26% | 70% |
| Made me more courageous | 5% | 28% | 67% |
| Made me value myself more | 7% | 18% | 75% |

For all of these areas, levels of impact were statistically higher for women who did not work outside of the home and for those with lower levels of education.¹³

¹² Education: $F=6.13, p<.002$ and Outside work: $F=10.94, p<.001$.

¹³Results for the self confidence question - Education: $F=7.04, p<.001$ and Outside Work: $F=4.86, p<.03$.

A full 36% (69) of the participants completing an open-ended question wrote that one of the most significant impacts of the training was increased self confidence.

My self confidence increased. I learned how to stand on my own feet. For instance, I know what I will do if subjected to violence. I can draw out my own path.

My self confidence increased. It enabled me to embark on a faster and more positive life...I held faster onto life, in order to meet my needs and wishing to create something that will belong to me.

Others associated with HREP had observed such results in participants. A trainer from Çanakkale observed:

Women in Turkey are often put down. What this program does is tells you that you are valuable, that you are worthy. Information is important, yes, but feeling worthy [is also important].

Zelal Ayman, HREP coordinator, commented on the dynamics the trainings:

HREP helps women to feel valuable, special and loveable at the end of the sessions. They can get back their self esteem. Most have been really hurt over their life and this is also a means of recovery... They can have new relations with their husbands, their children, their neighbors.

Another impact area related to community- and trust-building among the members of the HREP study groups. Those women completing the survey unanimously reported that their participation in HREP had made them feel in solidarity with other women, with 82% of the respondents rating this as “a lot”.

Solidarity gains were consistently high across all categories of women participating in HREP. Nine percent (17) of the alumni completing an open-ended question on the survey wrote that one of the more significant impacts for them was that they now valued women’s solidarity or recognized the importance of women organizing. Quotes from two alumni:

I’ve seen that we can get the authorities to accept our demands more easily by uniting our forces. We must pressure the decision making mechanisms by voicing the problems repeatedly and without growing weary.

I learned what solidarity and unity is. I realized that everything is much more beautiful and exciting when we act in unity and share things together.

Results for courage – Education: $F=4.95, p<.01$ and Outside Work: $F=5.55, p<.02$. Results for value self: Education: $F=9.46, p<.001$ and Outside Work: $F=6.83, p<.01$.

Thus the study shows that women not only felt close to the members of their study group but women in general, and that this sense of solidarity was associated with a valuing of women’s organizing.

3.2.3. Skills

At least 90% of the respondents reported gains for each of the skill areas related to self expression, decision making and problem solving. As Tables 13 and 14 show, typically, between 64% and 69% of participants considered that they had “a lot” of skill-related improvements.

Table 11. Participant skills – Self expression and decision making

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Increased my ability to express my thoughts | 6% | 29% | 65% |
| Increased my ability to make decisions for myself | 9% | 23% | 69% |

Self expression and decision making impacts were greater for those women with a lower level of education as well as those who were not working outside of the home.¹⁴

Eighteen percent (34) of the participants completing an open-ended question indicated their improved ability to communicate with others and to express themselves as a noteworthy gain. Some sample quotes.

Previously I wasn’t able to express my feelings. Now I can explain myself. I used not to talk about anything, as I thought no one would understand me. But that’s no longer the case. And the best thing is now I trust and love myself.

Previously I used to keep silent both at home and outside, thinking that I would be silenced if I were to speak or that they would not listen to me. But now I learned that as women we should keep our heads high, have self confidence and express ourselves as we like without hesitation.

While talking to other people I used to shy away and could not express my feelings openly. In the middle of a conversation I would forget what I wanted to say. Now I can express myself without hesitation.

¹⁴ Results for self expression – Education: $F=9.12, p<.001$ and Outside Work: $F=6.45, p<.01$. Results for decision making – Education: $F=13.13, p<.01$ and Outside Work: $F=6.24, p<.01$.

The questionnaire included items that asked participants to express the degree to which their participation in HREP may have influenced their ability to identify and to solve problems, both for themselves and for others. Problem-identification and solving is associated with the “perspective transformation” of the transformative learning approach.

Table 12. Participant skills – Problem identification and problem solving

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Resulted in my recognizing problems in my life | 5% | 27% | 68% |
| Helped me in being able to solve problems in my life | 8% | 29% | 64% |
| Helped me in being able to solve the problems of others around me | 5% | 30% | 65% |

Impacts related to the ability to recognize and solve problems in one’s own life were more pronounced for women with lower levels of education.¹⁵

Nine percent (17) of those responding to the open-ended questions identified improved problem-solving skills as a significant area of impact. Some of the written responses from alumni:

My point of view has changed. If I could have taken this training 20 years ago a lot of things would have changed in my life. After this training, I learned to better recognize my problems and deal with them.

Previously I didn’t know how or whom to tell about my problems. I used to feel like I am unbalanced. Now I am comfortable. I can deal with my problems.

One trainer from Ankara eloquently presented a range of related changes she had observed in participants through their participation in HREP:

When women come to the HREP groups they come focused on their own problems, as if their only problem is what they are experiencing at that moment. But through sharing experiences in the group they come to see first that they are not alone and second that they may actually be experiencing other problems as well – putting a name to these problems, which results in awareness and looking at life from different perspectives, which ends up as a boost to self confidence.

¹⁵ Results for recognizing problems – Education: $F=8.85, p<.0001$. Results for being to solve problems in their own life – Education – $F=4.88, p<.01$.

3.2.4. Behavior and actions – Family relations and domestic violence

A more stringent examination of program impact involves the collection of evidence of changed behavior and actions on the part of the participants. This study examined such potential impacts for both the private and public spheres, and in accordance with key themes of the program. Impact was explored in the areas of family relations, domestic violence, the pursuit of education and/or work and engagement in women’s activism.

Approximately 90% of the alumni reported that HREP had contributed to improved relations with family members and had resulted in their having more influence in family decisions. At the same time, over 40% of the women indicated that their participation in the program had resulted in increased conflict in their families.

Table 13. Participant behavior and actions – Family relations

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|--|------------|----------|-------|
| Enabled me to improve my relations with family members | 10% | 29% | 60% |
| Resulted in my having more influence in family decisions | 11% | 28% | 61% |
| Resulted in increased conflict within my family | 57% | 21% | 22% |

Women with lower levels of education and those who were not working outside of the home reported higher levels of impact in terms of improved relations with family members and increased influence in family decisions.¹⁶ Some representative quotes:

Now I am better off also financially. At first my husband did not allow me, used to get angry. But now, by talking and explaining to him, I made him accept this work. We have a more comfortable, peaceful life at our home.

I’ve been married for 8 months, and I lead a happy life by enriching my marriage with this training. Taking this training before getting married had a very important effect on me.

A trainer from Ankara identified the communication modules as particularly important for participants.

¹⁶ For results of improved relations with family members – Education: $F=8.11, p<.004$ and Outside Work: $F=12.88, p<.0004$. For results of increased influence in family decisions – Education: $F=10.19, p<.0001$ and Outside Work: $F=5.50, p<.02$.

One of the major things is that we go over communication skills and we reinforce them throughout the program, not just in the two modules. This causes their interpersonal relations to improve. This causes them to question what are their rights, how they can exist as an individual.

The finding of improved relationships and increased conflict within families for some women may not be inconsistent. Trainers who were interviewed mentioned that the result of HREP for some women is that their “eyes are opened” to inequalities and pre-existing violence in their families. The trainers believed that the communication module – as well as the direct advice and support that they can provide to the women and their families – helped women to express their needs and to engage in constructive dialogue with partners and instill greater equality in the household. In many cases – often temporarily – there is a period of transition for families as married women re-negotiate power relationships with their partner.

A trainer from Antalya commented on the question of increased conflict in families resulting from women’s participation in HREP:

All this time I’ve only had one participant who left her husband and went back to her parents. She was already in an unhappy marriage...Of course there are difficulties women experience during the implementation but the way the group facilitator carries out the program is very important. I haven’t really experienced any negative impacts per se. On the contrary, I’ve had husbands come to the community center and say ‘I’m so glad she attended the program. Our family life got better, we communicate much better now and our sex life has improved.’ This might sound like a miracle, but the facilitators have their hearts in it and they have their professional background in it so the outcomes seem miraculous.

The questionnaire contained two items related to gender roles in the household – husband involvement in housework and gender-sensitive parenting. Of those completing this question, over two-thirds of married participants reported improvements in their husband’s participation in domestic chores and over 90% indicated that they had become more sensitive to gender in the parenting of their children.

Table 14. Participant behavior – Gender roles

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Contributed to my husband’s increased involvement in housework. | 33% | 31% | 36% |
| Resulted in my being more sensitive to gender roles in raising my children. | 8% | 21% | 70% |

As one example, a woman wrote in her survey, “I sent my girl children to school and saw to it that they each have a vocation.”

One of the main goals of HREP is to equip women with knowledge, skills and tools to overcome human rights violations they face, including that of **domestic violence**, which is widespread. The questionnaire asked women to indicate if they had experienced physical, emotional or economic violence¹⁷ prior to their participation in the HREP training and, if so, whether they were able to stop or decrease the violence they faced following their completion of the program.

As show in Tables 15 and 16, for those participants experiencing either physical or emotional violence, at least three quarters of the women reported that violence had decreased or ended after HREP.

Table 15. Participant – Physical violence

| PHYSICAL VIOLENCE | No. | Percent |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| continued as before | 3 | 8% |
| increased | 2 | 5% |
| decreased | 11 | 28% |
| ended | 24 | 60% |
| TOTAL | 40 | 101% |

Only 16% (40) of the respondents indicated that they had been subject to **physical violence** at home prior to participating in HREP. Eight-eight percent of these women decreased or ended the violence following the training.

Table 16. Participant – Emotional violence

| EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE | No. | Percent |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| continued as before | 12 | 5% |
| increased | 5 | 6% |
| decreased | 39 | 47% |
| ended | 27 | 33% |
| TOTAL | 83 | 101% |

¹⁷ Example of economic violence include women’s limited access to funds and credit; controlled access to health care, employment, education, including agricultural resources; exclusion from financial decision making; and discriminatory traditional laws on inheritance, property rights, and use of communal land. At work women may receive unequal remuneration for work done equal in value to the men’s, were overworked and underpaid, and used for unpaid work outside the contractual agreement. At home, women may be barred from working by partner and men may abandon family maintenance to women. Olufunmilayo I. Fawole (2008) “Economic Violence to Women and Girls: Is it Receiving the Necessary Attention” in *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, 9(3), pp. 167-177.

Thirty-three percent (83) of the participants indicated that they were subject to **emotional violence** at home before participating in the program. Eighty percent of these women were able to decrease or end the emotional violence following the training.

As depicted in Table 17, twenty-three percent (60) of the alumni indicated that they were subject to **economic violence** in the home. For those participants experiencing economic violence, nearly three quarters of the women reported that the level of violence had decreased or ended

Table 17. Participant – Economic violence

| ECONOMIC VIOLENCE | No. | Percent |
|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| continued as before | 15 | 25% |
| increased | 1 | 2% |
| decreased | 28 | 47% |
| ended | 16 | 27% |
| TOTAL | 60 | 101% |

3.2.5. Behavior and actions –Education, work and activism

Over 95% of the alumni who completed the questionnaire felt that the training had helped them to **achieve their potential**, and 64% of the respondents indicated that HREP had helped them “a lot”. A trainer from Izmir shared in an interview that she has noticed participants who had potential and capacity but who had had their paths blocked.

Some wanted to be singers, or social workers or scientists. But, for example, they were married at the age of 13. They now said things like ‘I may not have been able to do it before, but I can now’. [HREP] leads them to go back to school, to secure their own income. Last year, the trainer had graduates in their 40s, whose fathers had forbidden them to dance when they were young. They formed a folk dance group and have even performed on the street.

Those women with less education reported at higher levels than their counterparts the degree to which training had helped them to achieve their potential.¹⁸

The questionnaire asked alumni to indicate if they had returned to their education, returned to work or begun their own business as a consequence of their completion of HREP. Over one-third of the participants indicated that their participation in the HREP trainings had resulted in their continuing their education.

¹⁸ $F=7.02, p<.001$.

Table 18. Participant behavior – Education

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Yes | No |
|--|-----|-----|
| Resulted in my re-starting/continuing my education | 35% | 65% |

Quotes from alumni:

After this training that I've taken, I realized that even at the most impossible times when I feel totally helpless, there are options rather than sitting around and crying. I took my first step to this end by going back to my schooling. Hopefully my life will be different when I graduate.

I know my rights and I am continuing my education in order to stand on my feet despite everyone else. I don't want the women to be held responsible for everything in the society anymore and so I am improving myself.

In focus group interviews with trainers, many of them confirmed these educational outcomes:

There was one participant, where all the men in her family had gone to school. And although they had the financial means, they didn't send her to school. HREP brought out her desire for education. In six or seven years, she finished all her schooling, beginning with primary school through high school, then even took the university exam and won a place in a two-year college. (trainer from Ankara)

While they first ask 'Why couldn't I go to school?' they begin to think 'what can I do about it?' So this awareness leads to transformation. For instance, many women at the community centers wanted to complete their education and went to the public education centers and signed up for courses to complete their education. (trainer from Gölbaşı)

In terms of exercising their economic rights and participating in work life outside the home, one-third of the participants indicated that their participation in HREP had resulted in improvements in their financial situation, either through beginning to work for income or starting their own business.

Table 19. Participant behavior – Work

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Yes | No |
|--|-----|-----|
| Resulted in my returning/starting to work for income ¹⁹ | 26% | 74% |
| Resulted in my starting my own business | 7% | 93% |

Illustrative quotes:

It enabled me to have freedom of thought. It reinforced my wish to work at a paid job, and I succeeded.

Before HREP I was someone who takes care of the children and cleans the apartment, actually I was like a maid. Now I have my economic freedom, I have my own money, my troubles are over.

In reviewing the results according to background qualities of the participants, we found that the impacts were higher for those women with lower educational levels, detailed numerically in Table 20.²⁰

Women who did not work outside of home were also more likely to report that they were engaging anew in educational activities.²¹

¹⁹ The study assumed that those women who indicated an interest in returning to work following the HREP trainings were not among those who began the HREP training already intending to enter the workforce, as was the case, for example, with the ILO-project participants. We also note that there was an unusually high non-response rate for the questions pertaining to going back to work (11% non response rate) or starting one's own business (15%).

²⁰ Results for renewing educational activities – Education: $F=5.84, p<.003$ and for renewing work activities – Education: $F=7.06, p<.001$.

²¹ $F=7.32, p<.01$.

Table 20. Participant behavior – Education and work, by education level

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| EDUCATION LEVEL | Re-started/cont. education | | Returned/began to work | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----|------------------------|-------------------|
| | yes | no | yes | no |
| Attended no/some primary (n=3) | 100% | - | 66% | 33% |
| Graduate – primary (n=58) | 47 % | 52% | 40% | 60% |
| Graduate – secondary, high (n=100) | 35% | 65% | 28% | 72% |
| Graduate – university (n=57) | 18% | 83% | 9% | 91% ²² |

A final area of investigation of impact in the public sphere was **women’s activism**. In the impact assessment, WWHR was particularly interested to capture a range of potential impacts related to women’s activism, including – but not being exclusively measured by – association with a women’s organization. The questionnaire thus included items that attempted to capture behaviors related to HREP graduates demonstrating agency in their communities supporting women’s human rights.

As Table 21 shows, almost unanimously alumni reported that they served as an informal resource person for information and advice about women’s rights in their community. The majority of HREP graduates also reported that they had become actively involved in a women’s organization and/or more politically active.²³

²² This low rate of return to work for university-education women may well have reflected their current presence in the workforce.

²³ There was an unusually high non-response rate for the questions pertaining to women’s activism, with 10%-13% of respondents skipping these questions.

Table 21. Participant behavior – Women’s activism

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Resulted in my informally sharing information and advice about women’s rights within my community | 3% | 21% | 77% |
| Contributed to my becoming actively involved in an existing women’s organization | 41% | 23% | 36% |
| Resulted in my becoming more politically active in my community (e.g., voting, running for office). | 34% | 33% | 34% |

Twelve percent (23) of the women completing an open-ended survey question indicated that one of the more significant impacts was their becoming a resource person for other women, sharing information and helping the people around them, with this impact being significantly higher for less educated women.²⁴

Sample quotes:

Whatever I learned at the HREP training I shared with people in my environment, both with my closest friend and total strangers. It would make me happy if I can also help heal a wound in this country where women live under oppression.

We are able to at least give guidance to women who are really in difficult situations and especially those subjected to violence, and inform them about the assistance that the state provides. We direct them to the correct places and our trainers.

I have never been subjected to violence on account of my being a woman, but I saw that those who have been or might be are actually not that far away from me. This both saddened and surprised me. Now I want to explain things and talk about our rights with everyone, including people I’ve just met or have known for a long time. And I do this every chance I get.

The questionnaire contained additional questions related to women’s activism. These results showed that nearly half of HREP graduates become more involved in the women’s movement in Turkey. However, only one in five formally joined an existing organization (not specifically associated with women’s rights) and only 6% reported forming a new initiative/organization.

²⁴ $F=3.52, p<.03$.

Table 22. Participant behavior – Women’s activism (cont.)

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Yes | No |
|---|-----|-----|
| Contributed to my becoming more involved in the women’s movement in Turkey (for example, organizing seminars, participating in petitions) | 47% | 54% |
| Contributed to my joining an existing organization (not specifically associated with women’s rights) | 21% | 80% |
| Resulted in my forming a new group or organization | 6% | 94% |

The following quotes come from the open-ended response in the questionnaire and comments made by trainers in interviews. These quotes show links between the specific outcomes of HREP’s and the transformative learning approach, namely perspective transformation, self efficacy/overcoming learned helplessness, solidarity and the agency of participants.

After HREP I gained my self confidence. I became a social woman. I freed myself of housework, I started to make time for myself and participate in seminars. I still participate in meetings of women’s branches and seminars on women’s rights.

A lot of things changed in my life...I learned to be able to help people, support women, create solutions, and have a positive outlook...I started to volunteer at the Social Services, then worked on a paid basis. I was very happy, too.

Last year’s participants are now trying to form an association. These women have become involved in politics and they were candidates in the election, although they weren’t elected. (trainer from Kocaeli)

Another example was a woman who was very sensitive to inequalities but didn’t know how to deal with them. She ended up being a muhtar²⁵. So HREP empowers these women, women who are looking for answers to the problems they are experiencing. (trainer from Ankara)

3.2.5. Unanticipated consequences

In the focus group interviews carried out with trainers, they were asked to comment on any unanticipated, potentially negative consequences that they have observed among HREP participants. The purpose of this question was to help overcome the potential

²⁵ The “muhtar” is the elected village head in Turkey.

positive selection bias among trainers who expressed a willingness to be interviewed as well as to uncover new areas of impact not documented in the 2004 study.

There was no identifiable pattern of responses but some of the observations of trainers pointed to emotional responses in learners that can be seen as linked to the discrepancy between the perspective transformation of the women in relation to gender and the challenges they faced in their immediate environment in realizing gender equality. As the quotes below suggest, the negative responses in some women that were observed by trainers can be linked to a wide range of circumstances falling outside the influence of HREP.

“Magic wand” syndrome

One thing I notice sometimes with some women, which makes me sad, is that they begin to think there is a magic wand. They say ‘we learned our rights and we can use our rights.’ But they don’t know how to put this into practice. (trainer from Ankara)

Passivity

Another unintended impact is that some women believe they cannot change their existing environment, which can lead to a sense of hopelessness. If, for example, they live in a very traditional family, they might say ‘this is what I might be living, but I have no choice but to live the life that I have’. With women at points like these, you have to extend the group process and support the women outside of the group setting as well. I definitely do this, either me personally or one of my colleagues at the community center. She is a trained psychologist. (trainer from Ankara)

Isolation

HREP graduates can experience a sense of loneliness because while they come from a specific social setting and culture, what they know changes. When this happens, everything they know about life changes...So women can become somewhat unsure. There are these gender roles that they learned. And then you tell them they have the right to education, the right to work, etc. which brings an end to their previous knowledge. Which is why the participants continue to come to the community center for other trainings, because they feel safe and secure here and in the group setting.

This is because in their personal environment with their neighbors or relatives, they have become different and so they grow more alone. They become resource people or people that other women come and ask questions to. This makes them feel very honored but they themselves cannot go and ask questions about these things or share their problems with people who are not HREP graduates...They

feel bound to the community center. They become assets of the community center.
(trainer from Istanbul)

The trainers who raised these needs of alumni suggested that follow-up support would be important. Because these impacts were not included in the alumni survey, there is no further information on whether these responses are common among participants.

3.3. Comparison of Results with 2004 Study

The design of the 2011 impact assessment differed from the 2004 external evaluation in several ways. The 2011 study explored impact on a broader set of stakeholders, including trainers and partner organizations, and involved two mixed-method case studies. The current study did not document in as much qualitative detail the kinds of behaviors that women carried out in their community following HREP but the alumni questionnaire did include an extended set of closed-questions in relation to follow-up activities. This section of the survey was based on a review of the qualitative results from the 2004 study and interviews with WWHR staff, so that similar results could be systematically explored for alumni.

The external evaluation carried out in 2004 documented a range of outcomes for alumni participating in the program from 2000-2003. These outcome areas included attitudes and behaviors in both the private and public domains. Those questions that the evaluator and WWHR staff agreed were important outcomes to investigate in the 2011 study were used so that a comparison of results between the two studies could be carried out. The 10 questions selected included self confidence, problem-solving ability, influence in family decision making, domestic violence, returning to work or school, and involvement in women's organizing.

3.3.1. Comparison of alumni backgrounds

Before comparing these results, it is important to note that since the 2004 study, HREP had not undergone any major changes in its trainer preparation, session content or 16-week format that would be expected to influence outcomes of the program. In other words, the program design and methodology itself remained mostly unchanged, with the exception of some updating of content in relation to Turkish laws, policies and examples from life.

However, given that the studies involved different sets of alumni, a contrasting of results should be undertaken cautiously. In principle, only general trends should be compared in terms of outcomes for HREP participants from 1995-2003 versus those from 2005-2011. Moreover, before comparing results it is necessary to understand the degree to which the alumni participating in the 2011 study had background characteristics similar to those of alumni participating in the earlier study. This would be especially important to bear in mind in relation to educational level and work status, as results showed earlier in this chapter showed that alumni with a lower educational level and who were not working outside of the home reported higher increases in self worth, self confidence and courage.

A comparison of key background characteristics collected for alumni in both studies reveal similar statistics in terms of marital status. However, as Table 23 below shows, the alumni participating in the 2011 study are better educated overall.

Table 23. Alumni educational background – 2011 and 2004

| EDUCATION LEVEL | No. (2011) | Percent (2011) | Percent (2004) |
|--|------------|----------------|----------------|
| Never attended school | 1 | - | |
| Some primary | 2 | 1% | |
| Graduate primary school | 61 | 25% | 33% |
| Graduate secondary or high school | 112 | 46% | 43% |
| Graduate university – initial or advanced degree | 70 | 29% | 13% |
| Illiterate/barely literate | | | 11% |
| TOTAL | 246 | 101% | 100% |

Another area of difference between the respondents was their participation in non-HREP women’s rights trainings. Whereas only 15% of the alumni involved in the 2011 study had participated in women’s rights trainings offered by groups other than WWHR, over half of the women involved in the 2004 study had participated in such trainings. In summary, the alumni participating in the 2004 study had a lower level of formal education than women in the 2011 study and were more likely to have participated in other nonformal trainings related to women’s human rights. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine how these differences may have influenced the outcomes of the respective studies.

3.3.2. Comparison of participant outcomes

The comparative results of the ten questions administered in both the 2004 and 2011 alumni surveys are now presented. If a question from the 2011 study is not reported, it means that the question was not asked in the 2004 study or it was asked in a different way that did not allow for a direct comparison.

There is no widely accepted standard for what constituted “similar” outcomes when comparing statistical results. In comparing question results for the two studies, the evaluator decided to consider as “similar” those results falling within 5% of one another. Thus, if 93% of the women in the 2004 study indicated “a lot” of improvement in their self expression and 88% of women in the 2011 reported the same, these results would be considered similar and indicative of a trend.

Applying this criteria, the results of eight of the ten questions can be considered similar for the two studies. These results show a remarkable consistency in terms of program outcomes over the 15-year history of HREP represented in these two studies.

Table 24. Comparable results for 2004 and 2011 studies. Percentage of alumni reporting increases in the following areas:

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | 2004 | 2011 |
|---|------|------|
| Increased my overall self confidence | 93% | 96% |
| Increased my ability to express my thoughts | 91% | 94% |
| Helped me in being able to solve problems in my life | 90% | 93% |
| Physical violence decreased or ended following participation in HREP | 85% | 88% |
| Emotional violence decreased or ended following participation in HREP | 75% | 80% |
| Economic violence decreased or ended following participation in HREP | 69% | 74% |
| Resulted in my informally sharing information and advice about women's rights within my community | 96% | 97% |
| Contributed to my becoming more involved in the women's movement in Turkey (for example, organizing seminars, participating in petitions) | 41% | 47% |

These statistics demonstrate consistent impact in the private sphere in the key areas of increased self efficacy and decreases in domestic violence following participation in HREP. These results also show that in the public sphere, women in both studies almost unanimously became a resource on women's rights in their community but less than half of them became more involved in the women's movement in Turkey.

There were two questions that showed disparities greater than 5%, with the 2011 study revealing higher impacts in relation to family relations.

Table 25. Results higher for 2011 study. Percentage of alumni reporting increases in the following areas:

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | 2004 | 2011 |
|---|------|------|
| Resulted in my having more influence in family decisions | 74% | 89% |
| Contributed to my husband's increased involvement in housework. | 41% | 67% |

3.3.3. Trainer explanations of difference in impact for participants

In the interviews carried out with trainers, the evaluator asked if they had observed any characteristics of participants that made them more likely to be impacted by HREP. This question was asked in order to increase WWHR's understanding of this program component, as learner selection is carried out by the trainers and partner organizations rather than WWHR.

All trainers felt that all women benefited from the program.

Age, educational level, status – it makes no difference. The program impacts all women. A woman from the neighborhood group may begin to refuse to stir her husband's sugar into his tea, and a college student may begin not to allow her boyfriend to comment 'you can wear this, you can't wear that.' In the end, the impact is the same. (trainer from Antalya)

However, some trainers identified characteristics that they felt might be related to stronger results. These characteristics might be distinguished between personal qualities and personal experiences of participants.

According to some of the trainers, **motivation** was key and, in this regard, the self-selection of women into the study groups appeared to be an important aspect of participant background. HREP could have particularly potent effects for those women who were open to applying the feminist perspective. According to the HREP coordinator, it is important "that they take their own lives in their hands and act upon it. That they act for themselves and for others in their community." A Kartal trainer considered that **readiness to learn** and to develop themselves contributed to impacts. According to trainers from Canakkale, Gölbaşı and Ankara, women who are more **open-minded** can apply the program further.

Some trainers also felt that timing was important. The HREP trainings might have relatively more impact for those **women in a time of transition in their lives**. Some quotes:

The training is especially effective for women going through a process of change or transition in their life...It shows its effects very fast and enables women to make a decision and ensure that the decision is in favor of the woman. (trainer from Van)

Women who are looking for ways to fulfill their desires, to go to school or to go to work. Some women are open to change and are dynamic...It's like popcorn. When the right amount of heat is administered, the corn pops clear and white. That's a woman open and ready to change. (trainer from Istanbul)

Some trainers felt that HREP might have a greater personal impact on those women who had had **traumatic experiences or regular conflicts within their families** (trainer from Kartal). A Van trainer felt that women who have “more ground to cover” can get more out of the program. Trainers from Kartal and Ankara believed that **married** people often have more problems in their daily life, and can be better positioned to apply some of the skills cultivated in the trainings.

A few trainers observed that **women who enter the program with personal problems seeking help may well be able to experience personal healing and gains in the program**. However, these were **not necessarily the women with the psychological resources to take the program and apply it further in their communities as leaders**. A few trainers observed that groups with women from higher socio-economic backgrounds came to the point of organizing more quickly than groups with lower socio-economic backgrounds.

One trainer noted that single women were able to bring the principles into relationships with partners before marriage. The program then served as a tool for prevention.

Single women are more open to this information and able to use it. Women over 40 keep saying “I wish I had taken this earlier.” (trainer from Van)

In the interviews carried out with trainers, the evaluator also asked if they could identify participant backgrounds or conditions that might impede their participation in the program, and hence the resulting impacts. In interviews, trainers were able to identify several conditions that might impede women’s involvement in the HREP trainings and the subsequent results.

One condition was **linguistic**. Some participants might not know the Turkish language well and if the trainer did not speak this other language, for example Kurdish, there might be “gaps.”

A few trainers mentioned some negatives associated with **participants already knowing each other prior to the training**. Under these conditions, some women might feel reluctant to share personal information out of concern that it might be shared outside of

the group with others who know them. With homogenous groups, there can also be less of a diversity of ideas and, consequently, less enrichment.

Involuntary participation in the study groups can create problems. In interviews, trainers occasionally mentioned groups that had been “pre-formed” by others, which resulted in a high drop-out rate. One of the original case study groups had been formed by a community center director who had required women in the sewing class and certain center staff to join the HREP group. This group dissolved after the fourth session due to group resistance.

Trainers mentioned that participation in study groups can be impeded by typical **family pressures**, such as childcare needs, caring for elderly family members and household responsibilities. Working participants have demands on their time as well. Some participants may not be able to attend all of the sessions, or remain for the entire time. WWHR had clear guidelines about the number of excused and unexcused absences allowed within the program, in order to emphasize the necessity of regular attendance. HREP groups had also become quite resourceful at trying to solve such problems, for example, through organizing car pools. One trainer believed that such challenges can be a good thing.

I sit down with the women and I say ‘how can we solve this?’ We find a solution and we put it into action. So such obstacles are good and illustrate one of the goals of the program, which is community and solidarity building.

In some instances, resistance from family members, in particular husbands, can impede participation. Some women attended the trainings clandestinely or concealed the nature of the training from family members. When women stopped attending, a trainer called the home to inquire why. In cases where family members began obstructing participation, trainers sometimes interceded, drawing on their social work skills. However a Van trainer (associated with an NGO and not trained as a social worker) acknowledged that women had to try to solve any problems that they had in their families and sometimes they had difficulty doing so. This is why she began each of her sessions by asking “What have you done for yourself this past week?”

In some cases, participants dropped out simply because of other responsibilities or because of a change in plans, such as employment or re-location.

4.0 CASE STUDIES: ISTANBUL (KARTAL) AND VAN

This chapter presents two case studies. Based on observations and interviews with trainers and a subset of participants, these are partial “stories” of these HREP study groups that took place between January and April 2011.

4.1. Istanbul (Kartal)

4.1.1. Background

Kartal is a district of Istanbul and is densely populated with a population of approximately half a million. Kartal is considered to be an industrial area and sections of the district have been undergoing a “green” urban renewal.

The HREP training was lead by a GDSS worker in a recently built government building. The meeting room was spacious and pristine, with tall windows that allowed a view of the water in the distance. The chairs were arranged in a large circle so that every participant could see one another, and the trainer was part of this circle. The furniture appeared relatively new and the “break” that took place about halfway through the training session contained appealing snacks and hot coffee or tea. The atmosphere was welcoming and congenial.

Most of the 17 participants who attended the Kartal HREP group were women from the surrounding neighborhoods who were receiving government services of some kind. In addition, six of the 17 participants were counselors attending the program in order to benefit from the training as part of their preparation for integrating women’s human rights into their work and, specifically, into the establishment of a new women’s shelter. Thus, across the HREP group, one could see young, professional women sitting alongside housewives in their 50s.

The marital status of the group members illustrated this diversity, with 65% married with children, 18% single, and 18% living separately or divorced. Of those who were married, nearly half had been married 20 years or longer and had married before the age of 20. Eleven of the women were secondary school graduates and four had university degrees. One participant had not completed primary school. Regardless of their educational level, the vast majority of the women were not employed.

The trainer was T. a 43-year-old social worker, married with two children. She used to work at community centers but was promoted to an administrative position and was now deputy director of a local kindergarten for orphans. She remained committed to continuing as a HREP trainer, despite the fact that it means that she has to carry this out in addition to her other responsibilities.

T. had carried out six HREP trainings previously. She explained that approximately half of the women who attend her groups had Kurdish backgrounds (as did she) or were of the Alevi faith. According to T., the socio-economic situation of this group was somewhat

higher than in previous groups she had facilitated, despite the fact that most of the women were not working.

4.1.2. The sessions

The evaluator visited the study group two times – during the 4th session and during the 16th (the final one). Interviews with the trainer were semi-structured, including an open-ended question in relation to the composition and dynamics of the study group.

In the initial interview with T., she focused on the element of self expression as a special challenge for the women. She was aware that getting the women to open up with one another within the group was essential. She felt that this particular set of participants might take a bit longer to open up. In her experience women from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (perhaps referring to the counselors) were not as immediately forthcoming in such public venues. Moreover, T. felt that the women with Kurdish and Alevi backgrounds had less experience with self expression in public settings because of their experience being a minority. She was already seeing progress by Session 4, the first one visited for the study.

They are expressing themselves and are aware of the others and what they are doing. The mutual interaction and process of learning is in the group. Any judge or lawyer can give information about legal rights but to do it in a group context is different. Participants are aware of what the others are thinking. Not just theoretical knowledge but taking on the knowledge through interactive games.

In her interview in the final session of the training program, T. expressed satisfaction that the participants had been active. She witnessed the evolution of a sense of belonging within the group, and the development of close friendships. T. felt that the self confidence of many of the women had been strengthened.

Yet despite the progress in self expression with the group, T. recognized that there had been some self censorship. She knew that many of the participants were from the same circle (either as housewives or counselors) and knew each other quite well. Some women might have been reluctant to share personal information for fear that it might travel outside of the HREP group, even though the social contract of the group prohibited this.

For each of the sessions, a brief overview representing a characteristic flow of the activities is presented, integrating naturalistic examples of the categories above. The evaluator has inserts comments that identify processes representative of transformative learning.

Selective Summary of Session 4: Communication

The first session observed for the Kartal HREP group was their fourth session and the topic was Communication. According to the HREP director, many trainers choose to

offer this module fairly early in the training program as it helps to build core skills for the group and their work together.

T. began the session by identifying who was not present that day and the reasons why. She emphasized the importance of attendance and arriving on time. T. then checked in with the group, asking how they felt, how their previous week had been and if they had shared any of the learnings in the group with others. H., one of the women interviewed for the case study, shared that she had asked for “more space” from her husband and informed him that she had rights. She said that her son had then informed her husband that if he were to ever beat her that he would be put in prison for two years. According to H. her husband encouraged her son to tell others. Several other women shared how they had begun to discuss women’s rights among family members and friends.

[Evaluator note: The trainer facilitates 100% participation of group members and the disclosure of real-life experiences.]

T. then moved into the main theme of the session – communication – and lead the group through an introduction to different forms of communication and two brief exercises – one a role play that had two group members extemporaneously demonstrating “inactive” and then “active” listening. The group analyzed how they could identify each, and the participants doing the role play shared their feelings after they had played their roles. The trainer then carried out two brief activities with group members involving handouts, and which allowed the group to discuss how miscommunication can occur. These activities lay the foundation for the more intensive activities and discussions planned for after the break.

[Evaluator note: Use of role play.]

Following the break, T. facilitated the “Who am I” activity. She asked the women to close their eyes and to be silent, and she guided them through a series of questions related to early memories. She asked the women to think about things that their parents had said to them when they were little, or nicknames that the women had been given, and to consider what message they had received from their parents in terms of who they were. The participants were then asked to write these messages down and to then share them with a person sitting next to them. The atmosphere was silent and tender.

T. then asked the women to make a drawing that revealed something about how they saw themselves, and to place the message that they had received from their parents within the drawing. After the group had finished, she asked for volunteers to share. Women began to share their stories. Some excerpts:

I was very naughty. I remember my father having tears in his eyes and saying ‘my god, why did you give me a daughter like this?’ They used to say ‘If this was a boy, he would be in jail.’

I was very thin and fearful of animals. I didn't like to eat. I was very stubborn and very jealous. I was very fearful of other people. I was an only child.

My parents called me 'he man' and 'crazy' because I could take care of myself and I began to hang out with the boys.

As they told their personal stories, T. was quiet, only occasionally probing the women about what they were thinking or feeling. She asked the group to reflect about whether they considered themselves to be the same today as when they were little. She asked if they could confirm that these messages from their parents were valid for their current life.

I remember my childhood. My traits are very different from my parents.

I had forgotten I was a strong person. They had called me a "boy." I used to be. With tough experiences, I have withdrawn from my environment. But that is not me. I am strong.

When I compare with how my parents were with me and how I treat my children, I do not do the same things...But this is the training that they got.

[Evaluator note: Use of critical reflection and dialogue on early life experiences and how these are related to self image. Preparation for perspective transformation.]

Later as she wrapped up the session, she reminded the participants that identity and personality are in part shaped by the messages that we received from our parents when we were children. T. made the connection that our preferred style of communication illustrates these aspects of our inner world.

She concluded the session by emphasizing to the group that the training program is about their learning about their rights. However in order to implement them, the women have to be able to express themselves.

Selective Summary of Session 16: Feminism and the Women's Movement

In the final session of the HREP training in Kartal it was evident that the women had come to know each other quite well. The whole group was mixing and chatting before the session began. On the previous Friday evening, there had been a "girls' night out" event over dinner, for those who could make it. Members of the group were trying to organize a follow-up social event in order to keep the friendships going.

[Evaluator note: Group members initiating contact with one another outside of HREP – a sign of community building.]

The trainer announced that in addition to the presence of the evaluator, the group would be visited by the Deputy Mayor of Kartal, who was a woman and highly supportive of the program. T. primed the group for the mayoral visit by telling them that three of the

deputy mayors of Kartal were women, as well as 39% of municipality employees, and that she was personally very supportive of women's issues.

T. began the session by asking the group to share their understanding of the term "feminism." Individuals in the group brainstormed their associations, sharing "women's solidarity," "freedom for women," "women's rights," "equality" and "purple." T. then addressed the topic of gender equality, sharing examples that illustrate the ways in which women can have less decision making power or be more controlled in their behavior, as compared with men.

When men make money, no one questions how he makes it and how much. But a woman, even when she makes the money, she has to account for it. A woman takes a coffee with a friend, she has to say where she is....In choosing a place to live, he decides on the basis of his new job and does not consult with his family.

[Evaluator note: Elicitation of participant associations with "feminism".]

T. asked for other examples from the group, and they were forthcoming. After members of the group had shared, she made her point: "Everyone who is aware of gender discrimination, and has that consciousness, they are a feminist." The group discussions then lead the women to acknowledge that men could be feminists and that any stereotypical images they may have had about feminists being "ugly," "hater of men," "a Westerner" or "lesbian" were mistaken ones.

The women began to describe how they connected to the term 'feminist.' This relationship was a complex one for some.

I am not a lesbian and I'm not ugly but I am a feminist!

I am also a feminist. I want to do what my husband does – get on the roof and clean the roof. My husband holds me back but he is afraid of heights so I do the work anyway!

I too have some of these attitudes but I am not a feminist politically. I am a 'natural feminist.'

The women's problem is a social problem and should be solved this way. But with the definition you [the trainer] read, we are all feminists. What we are doing here is part of feminist group work. Based on this definition, we are all against all gender discrimination but actively, I am not a feminist.

[Evaluator note: Elicitation of participant associations with "feminists", inviting members implicitly to revise their earlier associations, if negative ones, and to consider "feminists" in relation to their own self image.]

As T. moved the group along in reflecting on their images of feminists, individual women continued to share their stories of discrimination. Even in the final session, there was no shortage of stories.

Even the traffic, if there is an accident, people say: 'a woman caused it'.

My daughter wanted to study to go into the navy. I said to her 'this will be a stressful job, why do it?' But I said she should go to school and study and see how it goes. I said 'I trust you and have confidence in you'. My husband would not support her and would not sign the papers to allow her to attend school. So I signed instead of him. My daughter finished the navy school and has been working there for five years!

The Deputy Mayor arrived and spent 20 minutes interacting with the group and discussing the presence of women in municipal positions and learning about the HREP group. Following a group photo and her departure, the women settled back into the final minutes of the session.

T. presented on feminism in Turkey, beginning with examples from the 19th century Ottoman Empire into the 20th century. She took the group into the Civil and Penal Code reforms of the past 10 years, which she identified as being a result of the women's movement and its struggle. "Rights are not given to you. You take your rights." She mentioned that WWHR was an organizing force in the Penal Code reform of 2004. She also related the women's movement in Turkey to other women's rights struggles that have taken place in the UK, the USA and India. T. pointed out that the struggle for women's equality was an ongoing one.

[Evaluator note: Emphasis on taking action in the public sphere.]

4.1.3. The women

Of the seventeen women who attended the Kartal HREP group, ten completed the pre- and post-questionnaire. Unless otherwise noted in the tables that follow, the number of HREP group members completing an item in the initial questionnaire was 17 and the number in the final questionnaire was 10.

The Kartal HREP group as a whole began with a relatively high level of knowledge about and positive attitudes towards rights, which increased over the course of HREP. Relatively greater gains were reported for items that the women had rated lower at the outset of the training (e.g., the right to association).

Table 26. Knowledge of rights- 1

*Please rate your level of knowledge about the following 10 "rights" areas
1=none, 3 =some, 5=a great deal.*

| | Right to education | Right to work | Right to freedom from gender-based violence | Sexual and reproductive rights | Right to freedom of movement |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pre-program average (n=17) | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.6 |
| Post- average (n=10) | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.6 |
| Total gain | .6 | .5 | .3 | .2 | - |

Table 27. Knowledge of rights – 2

Please rate your level of knowledge about the following 10 “rights” areas
 1=none, 3 =some, 5=a great deal

| | Right to association | Right to political participation | Right to seek accountability from the state | Right to freedom of expression | Children’s rights |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pre-program average | 3.2 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4.6 | 4.5 |
| Post- average | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.7 |
| Total gain | .9 | 1.0 | .8 | - | .2 |

The questionnaire also contained questions relation to these same rights area, asking women to rate how important each of these rights were to them personally.

Table 28. Attitude towards rights- 1

How important are each of the following “rights” to you personally?
1=none, 3 =some, 5=a great deal.

| | Right to education | Right to work | Right to freedom from gender-based violence | Sexual and reproductive rights | Right to freedom of movement |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pre-program average | 5.0 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 4.9 |
| Post- average | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| Total gain | -.1²⁶ | .2 | .4 | -.1 | -.1 |

Table 29. Attitude towards rights – 2

How important are each of the following “rights” to you personally?
1=none, 3 =some, 5=a great deal.

| | Right to association | Right to political participation | Right to seek accountability from the state | Right to freedom of expression | Children’s rights |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pre-program average | 3.8 | 3.9 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.8 |
| Post- average | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.7 |
| Total gain | .7 | .6 | .1 | - | -.1 |

The questionnaire also contained seven questions regarding the women’s self image and relations with family members. These questions were formulated somewhat differently than those included in the alumni survey (which these women also completed) and also used a five-point Likert rating scale that allowed us to investigate short-term reported changes with the women in the HREP group.

The Kartal group demonstrated substantially higher gains in their attitudes towards themselves and their personal relations, as compared with the results associated with the 10 rights.

²⁶ For items that participants had rated quite high initially (e.g., 4.8 or higher), post- results in some instances showed lower ratings. This counter-intuitive result was interpreted as a “no change” result as the difference was .1 point.

Table 30. Attitudes towards self

| | I am a self confident person | I am able to solve problems | I like that I am a woman! | It is important to be a useful member of society |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Pre-program average | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.4 | 2.7 |
| Post- average | 4.3 | 3.6 | 4.7 | 4.4 |
| Total gain | 1.4 | .6 | 1.3 | 1.7 |

Table 31. Attitudes of family members towards participant

| | My husband's attitude towards me is positive | My children's attitude towards me is positive | Other family members' attitudes towards me are positive |
|---------------------|--|---|---|
| Pre-program average | 2.9 (n=14) | 3.0 (n=14) | 4.2 |
| Post- average | 4.3 (n=7) | 3.6 (n=7) | 4.1 |
| Total gain | 1.4 | .6 | -.1 |

In order to gain a qualitative understanding of the ways in which women understood and valued their participation in the HREP group, the evaluator carried out pre- and post interviews with a small number of participants. In the initial interviews, women were asked to present their personal backgrounds, how they had come to hear about the HREP training, if there were any problems in their life or around them that they would like to solve, and what they would like to be different in their life in one year. The latter open-ended questions were developed in order to see which problems were foremost on the minds of women as they began the training and to see how if and how these issues might have shifted as a result of their participation in HREP. Problem identification and problem solving are associated with transformative learning.

In the interview carried out at the end of the training, women were once again asked if there were problems in their life that they would like to solve and if there were any new goals that they had set for themselves. In addition, participants were requested to share what they considered to be the “most significant change” in them resulting from their participation in HREP. Additional questions probed for features of the training that the women found to be especially positive, as well as aspects that they had found to be challenging or difficult.

H.

H. was a 54-year old woman who presented herself as a housewife, with three grown children and a retired husband. She said that she heard about the HREP training by coincidence, when she was visiting the municipal office on other matters. She had run into T. who told her about the training program. She was interested in the theme of women's rights. She liked the idea that it would be a women-only training, that it would be about “us.”

H. said in her initial interview that she didn't have any domestic issues or problems to solve. However, she recognized that she was a "taciturn" person not prone to expressing her opinion. She attributed this to having been brought up in the cultural environment of Anatolia. She said that she wanted to be able to express herself more.

When asked what she might like to be different in her life one year from now, H. referred to family member needs. She initially expressed concern for her older son who was having problems with his wife and in-laws, and suffering financially. When probed for things she might want to be different in her own life, she said that it would be good if she could get a job. This would allow her to be more active and could benefit her children. H. was asked to expand upon what she meant by benefitting her children more. She explained that she and her children were financially dependent upon her husband. If they wanted money they had to go and ask him for it and he decided whether or not to give it to them. H. referred to examples where her husband had denied additional financial support to their children, against her personal wishes. She wanted to be sufficiently financial independent so that she would be able to give money to her children if they asked for it.

In the interview that took place at the final session of the training, H. was highly animated. She began the interview by saying "I no longer say 'we,' I say 'I'!" and declared that the training had been very good but regretted that "it came to our lives too late." She spoke of being able to stand up for herself, to defend herself. She identified that her self confidence had increased and that she could say things like "I can do anything."

When asked to focus on the most significant change in herself that she could identify as a result of the HREP training, H. referred to an increased sense of self confidence in relation to her original goal to get a job. At the same time, she expressed some realism about the challenge in obtaining work.

Most important was my self confidence. It increased. Also the knowledge that I can do things. For example, right now I don't have a job but I know that if I had the opportunity, I could have a job. But it's too late, because of my age. I do want to be a businesswoman.

H. was also more direct about her previous lack of confidence in expressing herself and how this had influenced her relationship with her husband.

My husband is from the east. He has the traditions there, which I also have. It was always what the husband said that we did. But after the training, as I have more self confidence, I can say "I". I told my husband that his ideas are old fashioned and that I should be able to say what I think. If I had been able to do this earlier, I would have raised my children better.

H. had not identified any new problems to solve since the first interview. However, she shared a new goal. She wanted to remain in dialogue with people working in women's organizations. She knew that there were branches and she had received this contact information in the HREP training.

G.

G. was a 36-year-old housewife with two children. In her initial interview, she shared that she had graduated from secondary school but had married when she was 19. She had worked for five years running a boutique but was now home with her children full-time. At the time of her first interview she was preparing for her entrance exam into university.

G. had heard about the HREP training through a friend. She said that she had heard about women's rights in the past and wanted to become more informed. The problems that she was facing were financial. In the past three years, the business that her husband had worked for had closed and economics had become difficult for them. She said that her family relations were fine but that in a year's time she wanted to "see myself standing on my own two feet, employed and in a happy family."

In the interview that took place at the final training session, G. was not able to identify any changes that had taken place in regards to problems she wanted to solve in her life or goals that she had set for herself. She had made a connection between her goal of going back to school and getting work and the themes of the HREP training. She now thought that it would be nice to work with a women's organization. She felt that it was valuable for women to organize themselves so that they could express their needs. She believed that the information shared in the HREP group would be combined with vocational training so that it would help the women get jobs.

G. spent some time in her last interview sharing impressions of what had taken place in the training. She mentioned that she had gotten good information about women's rights, including legal processes. Before she had not known how to report a case of violence against women and how to follow up with the prosecutor. G. related that in the past she had heard about such incidences on television but she found out that some of the women in her HREP group had also experienced physical violence. "I was very affected when I learned that." She had also learned about the relatively low number of women in certain occupations, such as politics. G. was struck by the awareness raising that had been carried out by women's groups. She referred to a national women's group that was aiming to send 275 women to Parliament in the upcoming election. "Even if these women don't get into Parliament, the idea has found a life."

4.2. Van

4.2.1. Background

Van is a city in eastern Turkey that borders the plain of Lake Van, the largest lake in Turkey. The population of Van is estimated to be approximately 400,000, with around 1 million inhabitants in the metropolitan area. Van's history and current demographics

included a cultural mix of people, but it is predominantly inhabited by people of Kurdish descent, with other groups such as ethnic Turks, Armenians, Iranians and Afghans. Local politics are influenced by the Kurdish nationalist movement, which has reduced the presence of government-sponsored community centers. This is one of the explanations offered for the hosting of the HREP training by a local women's rights NGO, Van Women's Association (VAKAD).

VAKAD was established by alumni of some of the earliest HREP trainings in Turkey, in the late 1990s, when the women's movement in that part of the country was largely nascent and where there were few places for women to turn to in cases of domestic violence. This organization is a partner of WWHR's in this area of Turkey and regularly carries out HREP trainings with local women.

The HREP training took place in the meeting room in VAKAD's offices, located on the first floor of a building near the center of the city. The room was just large enough to fit a conference table that seated up to 20 women, with extra chairs in the back. The view from the window was of the striking Anatolia mountains, and down the hall from the meeting room was the reception area of the NGO and their kitchen, where the women spent time socializing during their break. The literature on the bulletin boards reflected the work of VAKAD, announcing upcoming events and showing clippings of domestic violence cases that had been brought to court.

The trainer was N., a volunteer at VAKAD, who explained that this HREP group was organized as a consequence of spillover from another HREP group that had begun a few weeks earlier and was being lead by a VAKAD staff member. N. was 41 years old and married with two children. She worked as an accountant and was in training to become certified through an educational program requiring an additional three years. This was the fourth HREP group that she was leading.

4.2.2. The sessions

The evaluator observed two sessions, the third one and the 16 (final) one. In her initial interview, the trainer N. explained that one of the distinctive features of this study group was that nearly all of the members were well educated and associated in some way with a women's rights NGO. A full third of the members were aspiring volunteers with VAKAD, which required that all volunteers complete a HREP training. She anticipated that the educational backgrounds and interests of the participants would facilitate easy discussions in the group.

According to the initial questionnaires completed by the women, 80% were single and two thirds held university degrees and were working. Seven of the 10 working women were employed in a professional occupation (e.g., teacher, lawyer, counselor), two were staff of an NGO, and one was engaged in craft work.

One of the few non-NGO-affiliated members was a women interviewed as part of the case study. The trainer mentioned that this woman (V.) was illiterate and unfamiliar with

much of the terminology that would be used in the training. However, N. believed that the participant had “a lot of real life experience” that would link with what the group would be discussing.

N. revealed her concerns about being able to have lively discussions in the group. She explained that in previous HREP groups she had sometimes been challenged to keep participants engaged in conversation and had several explanations: the low level of education of some women, which might have inhibited their confidence and experience in expressing their views; the fact that some women wanted to come together to socialize rather than apply themselves to the training themes; the fact that the training was organized at an NGO rather than a DSS-affiliated community center; and political tensions that sometimes arose around Kurdish nationalism.

In the Van area and surrounding region, Kurdish residents have had decades of struggle for civil rights, with some calling for a separate state. The result is a politicized atmosphere around the status of the Kurds in Turkey.

Some participants that come here believe that once the Kurdish issue is resolved, the women's issues will be resolved. So their priority is to address the Kurdish issue.

In the final interview with the trainer she confirmed that group discussions had gone well. There had been a great deal of “mutual sharing” and the discussions had been “efficient.” N. expressed respect for the women in the group, and identified moments when she as a trainer had benefited from the discussions.

In one of the sessions, they were talking about some of their negative experiences of being a woman. The problems from their past. Then one participant said 'Instead of repeating the problems over and over again, let's carry the discussion to a different level. Yes, there is the patriarchic system, the oppressive social and moral values, but now let's carry that a step further and create new discourses.' She was suggesting we change our methods. She suggested that we have a brainstorm. She is expanding my horizons.

In speaking about her group at the end of the training, N. continued to view her group as a political one.

There are people with graduate degrees, with PhDs, very active in the Kurdish cause, and Turkish participants. Their sensitivities are very different. In this training, instead of meeting at a common denominator, they tried to understand each other and reach a consensus within the group. For example, one of the women – who comes from the western part of Turkey – used to say 'I hate Kurds. I hate living in Van.' Now she is saying 'This group made me understand the Kurds, the people.'

Selective Summary of Session 3: Constitutional and Civil Rights

The first session that the evaluator observed for the Van HREP group was their third session and the topic was Constitutional and Civil Rights. The trainer explained that this theme was selected for the observation because it was unlikely to raise sensitive personal topics for the women, which they might be reluctant to discuss in front of strangers.

[Evaluator note: Trainer protecting privacy of learners.]

N. began the session by explaining why certain members of the group were not present and the policy in relation to excused absences. She then asked the group what they had ‘done for themselves’ since the last HREP session. One of the women shared that she has been studying for exams, and another that she paid a visit to an art exhibition. Several of the women confessed that they have not done anything for themselves, that they have been fully occupied with their work.

[Evaluator note: Trainer facilitating participation of group members and sharing of “real life” experiences”.]

N. then introduced the topic for the session – Constitutional and Civil Rights – and reminded the group that in the previous session they had talked about women’s rights and international standards. In today’s session they would be focusing on laws and regulations at the national level protecting women’s rights.

She passed out a handout on the Constitution and explained that this document outlined state responsibility to its citizens and citizen duties towards the state. She pointed out that the Turkish Constitution established the basic rights and freedoms of all citizens, and that Article 10 pertained to the principle of equality.

It is one of the most fundamental principles of the Constitution. Men and women have equal rights and this is prescribed in law. But there are problems in enforcing the law...

N. continued to present on fundamental principles outlined in the Constitution and shared that women’s groups as well as the CEDAW committee in Turkey were working to reinforce Article 10 of the document so that it specifically prohibited discrimination against women.

Different advisory groups are working with feminist lawyers in order to change this for the better. If we have a document and need your signature, I will ask you for your signature and I will ask you to collect signatures.

She asked that the group go around the table and read aloud one of the articles of the Constitution presented in the handout. As the articles are read out loud, discussion sparked about the intended meaning of constitutional law as well as its implementation.

The enforcement of the law, this is what is problematic.

This is the case with everything in Turkey. Everything becomes different than what was intended. Our legal system is not that bad, I understand.

It depends a lot on the judge in question. In the last ten years there have been many changes in the laws. Some judges may not be fully aware of these challenges.

(Trainer) This is what happens when the law is not written clearly.

N. reminded the group that women can play a role in changing laws and seeing that laws are enforced. Over the next hour, the group worked its way through articles of the Constitution: the right to communication, the right to settle and travel, the right to religious faith and conscience, the right to form an association. The trainer sprinkled in real-life examples from Van and other parts of Turkey that illustrated inconsistencies or dilemmas.

[Evaluator note: Content focus but link with examples from everyday life that illustrate the contrast between the law and practice. An implicit message that the law should be known and understood by everyone.]

The group discussion did not leave enough time for the women to get through all of the Constitutional articles, so N. asked the group to finish reading them on their own and to bring any questions they might have to the next session. She then shifted to the topic of democratic participation methods in the Turkish political system. She reviewed the principles of representative versus direct democracy, overviewing key citizen rights: the right to petition, the right to information, the Ombudsman system, referendums, associations and NGOs, political parties and elected representatives. N. emphasized the role of citizen action and civil society and made references to activities taking place in Van. “This year we will use the right to petition and apply for a children’s court in Van.”

The session had been content-heavy, but the women were focused. In the final segment of the training, N. focused on the Turkish Civil Code. She passed out a handout on the Code and signaled that this was the key national legislation pertaining to marriage and divorce. She summarized the dynamics of the reform effort that had taken place beginning in 2001 and the group then began to work its way through the language of the actual Code.

When the topic of legal age of marriage came up, the group got lively. The law specified that both women and men needed to be at least 17 years of age. The consensus in the group seemed to be that even age 17 was too young. One of the two women in the group from a traditional background who had married young spoke up. She said that in her neighborhood girls as young as 14 were getting married. She did not want to be too strict about setting the minimum age too high: “What about people who are 18 but very

mature?” But she could not settle on an ideal minimum age for marriage: “18 can be too young to have children, so 20 is good.”

[Evaluator note: Group discussions result in differences of opinion and unresolved complexity.]

The group continued to grapple with clauses in the Civil Code and the topic of arranged marriages came up. The vocal women in the group believed that arranged marriages were never marriages based on love. The lawyer in the group explained that in instances when there was opposition to a forced marriage, a complaint could be filed with the district attorney. If the girl was forced into the marriage, she was legally entitled to refuse sexual intercourse and could file a complaint to have her marriage annulled. N. pointed out that many women were unaware of their rights. An annulment of a forced marriage might be much easier than seeking a divorce.

[Evaluator note: Group members share problem-sharing strategies with one another.]

Towards the end of the session, the woman in the group with the ‘traditional’ background who had voiced her opinions about early marriages revealed that she had left her husband because he wanted to take a second wife. She has taken her daughter and could not return to the household. The lawyer in the group offered her legal assistance. The atmosphere in the group was electric.

N. ended the session by asking each member of the group to share their feelings about the session. The group confirmed that merging personal experiences with the written law makes things much more concrete and easy to learn. N. mentioned that they would be addressing violence against women the following week.

Selective Summary of Session 16: Women’s Organizing

N. began her final training session as she had begun each previous session, asking each member of the group to share what they had done since their last session. Women mentioned carrying out a training, being sick, doing spring cleaning. N. shared that she herself participated in events associated with the anniversary of VAKAD and told a story about her family.

[Evaluator note: The facilitator’s participation in the group and personal disclosure contributes to a sense of equality within the group.]

N. had shared in an earlier interview with the evaluator that she felt that enabling the women to address existing problems within their family was critical to the success of the HREP group. This is why she began each week’s session with the question: “What have you done for yourself this past week?” N. believed that the internationalization of solidarity was a primary outcome of the training program as was the development of strategies within the group for addressing the concerns of the women. “When one person shares a strategy they have used and someone else uses it, it is mind expanding.”

In the final session, N. turned to the topic of women's organizing and asked what came to mind for group members when they heard this phrase. A fairly intellectual conversation ensued in which the women analyzed the contexts for women's organizing within organizations: protections guaranteed through national laws, whether the organizing was happening within and through an independent women's organization or a union. N. allowed the conversation to flow uninterrupted, and occasionally asked probing questions: "Is there a difference between organizing from the bottom or the top? Which is more important?" She also shared her views, treating herself as an equal member of the group.

Organizing from the top is a certain hierarchy, decision-making mechanisms. Working from the bottom is based on individual labor, structures like VAKAD. Here we don't really have a hierarchy....Women have a more limited space in working within unions, for example.

The group discussion continued, touching on local government, women's commissions and the ways in which grassroots organizing might be improved. Women commented:

If we are going to make grassroots organizations more effective, we have to make the hierarchy more transparent so they can be broken down.

The organizing of grassroots should be improved. I am speaking here about networks of communication.

After an extended discussion about hierarchy and how to analyze the effectiveness of organizations, N. introduced the idea that activism can take place outside of formal organizations. Women can organize informally with their neighbors. She then handed out the Turkish Penal Code and presented some history on reform efforts in 2004, explaining the ways in which the women's movement provided feedback and worked with politicians to ensure that the Penal Code protected women. Although not all of the suggestions proposed at the time were accepted, improvements included: the re-definition of sexual crimes (reflecting violations of bodily integrity, not the moral values of society); clarifications about minimal forms of violence; recognition of marital rape; and the criminalization of virginity testing without the consent of the woman.

[Evaluator note: Integration of academic treatment of grassroots organizing with practical approach.]

The women immediately got into a heated discussion about virginity testing and the discrepancy between the law and practice in terms of obtaining a woman's consent. They also returned to a point made by the trainer, that the previous version of the Penal Code included language such as "immoral behavior," which had been used to prosecute women.

What was "immoral behavior" in the previous law?

(Trainer) Wearing a revealing bra in public or having an open shirt that revealed cleavage. Now the only people who can be prosecuted for revealing flesh are “flashers.”

When we say immoral behavior we think of women. But when we say exhibitionism we think of men.

Public displays of affection and wearing mini-skirts – is this shameful behavior or exhibitionism?

[Evaluator note: Sharing of different values and views within the group, with a tolerance for unresolved issues.]

The trainer steered the conversation back to the Penal Code and shared with the group the clauses proposed by women’s groups that ultimately not been included by lawmakers, which included the de-criminalization of homosexuality. Prior to 2004, women could not participate in the labor force without the consent of the male head of household (husband or father). In the revised version, this permission was no longer necessary but a clause allowed for one spouse to object to the other entering the labor market if they felt that it would have negative effects on the family.

[Evaluator note: Signal that additional legal change was necessary, that women could lobby.]

Following the break, N. divided the women into two groups. Their task was to develop a plan for local organizing. Each woman received a handout with a list of planning steps that they had to address: aim; principles; approach to women; and plan of work. The evaluator sat in on the group that had the three women who were interviewed. V. was quiet in this group, but listened carefully to the planning ideas proposed by S. and M.

S. and M. decide that they are going to develop a plan to address sexual abuse against girls in the family. They would do this by establishing a hotline and a legal aid office, as well as a counseling center. M. pointed out that it will also be important to set up a safe space for the girls to come to, in case they are in danger. V. proposed that they should be supported so that they can support themselves financially. It is the only contribution she made to the group discussion.

Within 20 minutes, a plan had been sketched out that included the establishment of a new NGO that would have a cooperative relationship with other, existing organizations in the environment. Their plan included where they would be located, hours of operation, how they might generate funds, how to carry out outreach, what kind of staff they would need to hire, and the decision-making processes of the organization. The women were enthusiastic about their plan.

[Evaluator note: Practical examples related to women’s organizing.]

4.2.3. The women

Of the fifteen women who attended the Van HREP group, nine completed the pre- and post-questionnaire. For the “knowledge” tables that follow, the number of HREP group members completing an item in the initial questionnaire was 15 and the number in the final questionnaire was nine.

As with the Kartal HREP group, the Van participants reported relatively higher gains for those rights-related knowledge and attitude items that they had rated as lower (less than 4.0) as the outset of the training program.

Table 32. Knowledge of rights – 1

*Please rate your level of knowledge about the following 10 “rights” areas
1=none, 3 =some, 5=a great deal.*

| | Right to education | Right to work | Right to freedom from gender-based violence | Sexual and reproductive rights | Right to freedom of movement |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pre-program average (n=15) | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 4.1 |
| Post- average (n=9) | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.2 |
| Total gain | .2 | .7 | 1.0 | 1.2 | .1 |

Table 33. Knowledge of rights - 2

| | Right to association | Right to political participation | Right to seek accountability from the state | Right to freedom of expression | Children’s rights |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pre-program average | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 4.3 | 3.5 |
| Post- average | 3.9 | 4.0 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 3.8 |
| Total gain | .3 | .5 | 1.3 | - | .3 |

The questionnaire also contained questions relation to these same rights area, asking women to rate how important each of these rights were to them personally. For the “attitude” tables that follow, the number of HREP group members completing an item in the initial questionnaire was 15 and the number in the final questionnaire was eight.

Table 34. Attitude towards rights- 1

How important are each of the following “rights” to you personally?
1=none, 3 =some, 5=a great deal.

| | Right to education | Right to work | Right to freedom from gender-based violence | Sexual and reproductive rights | Right to freedom of movement |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pre-program average (n=15) | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.9 |
| Post- average (n=8) | 4.7 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.8 |
| Total gain | - | - | .3 | .1 | -.1 |

Table 35. Attitude towards rights – 2

How important are each of the following “rights” to you personally?
1=none, 3 =some, 5=a great deal.

| | Right to association | Right to political participation | Right to seek accountability from the state | Right to freedom of expression | Children’s rights |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pre-program average | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.7 |
| Post- average | 4.8 | 4.6 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| Total gain | .6 | .3 | .3 | .2 | .3 |

For attitudes towards self, the Van participants had a generally positive self image at the outset of the training program, as compared with the Kartal group. Comparatively lower gains were reported, consequently, with the exception of the ability to solve problems.

Table 36. Attitudes towards self

| | I am a self confident person | I am able to solve problems | I like that I am a woman! | It is important to be a useful member of society |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Pre-program average (n=14) | 4.4 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 5.0 |
| Post- average (n=8) | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.9 |
| Total gain | -.3 | .6 | .3 | -.1 |

In the category of family relations, only two participants completed the items related to husbands and children (presumably the only two married persons in the group). The

ratings for husband’s attitude towards the women are troublingly low, although respondents reported that they had improved slightly by the end of the training.

Table 37. Attitudes of family members towards participant

| | My husband’s attitude towards me is positive | My children’s attitude towards me is positive | Other family members’ attitudes towards me are positive |
|---------------------|--|---|---|
| Pre-program average | 1.0 (n=2) | 4.0 (n=2) | 4.2 (n=14) |
| Post- average | 1.5 (n=2) | 4.5 (n=2) | 5.0 (n=8) |
| Total gain | .5 | .5 | .8 |

S.

S. was a single, 21-year-old volunteer at a women’s NGO located four and a half hours away by bus. She took the long bus ride on Friday evenings in order to attend the Saturday HREP training in Van. In her initial interview, she explained that she was attending the training because violence against women in her town was extremely high. Her feeling was that training about women’s rights would help in addressing these root causes and she wanted to begin by learning in greater detail about women’s rights.

When asked what she wanted to address in the training, S. said that she wanted to “change men’s brains.” Her experience of men was that they were cruel and violent against women.

For example, yesterday a woman came to the association. She had been beaten so badly – you wouldn’t believe it. We took her to the doctor, but other than that I couldn’t do anything. It made me very sad and I cried a lot...She’ll stay at my house tonight and with another friend on Sunday night. And on Monday she’ll be moved to a shelter. Men do this. I don’t know how this will change. But the situation that women are in right now is very bad.

When asked what she might like to see different in a year’s time, S. focused on her own education and skills. She explained that she was an artist but had not been able to gain entry into an arts education program. She very much wanted to learn drawing.

In the interview carried out the last day of the training, S. was asked what had been the most significant change for her. She said that she had originally signed up for the HREP training in order to be more useful to the people around her and to be able to better contribute to her association. But she then realized that she had a lot to learn for herself in relation to women’s rights. S. said that a new goal that she has set for herself was to directly educate others about women’s human rights.

This training was very important to me. Every week I went back and shared everything I learned here with my friends. I was sharing the notes because I think these are rights everyone should know about. So my new goal is to teach about these rights.

S. also recognized that she had learned information that would be useful to the work of her women's association.

I know what women can demand in case of a divorce and what she should be doing in terms of procedures. I didn't know any of these things before. I also learned about CEDAW. I didn't know about this and I continue to read about this.

S. identified the communication module as having a special impact on her personally. She realized in this particular session that she was someone who was easily frustrated and tended to lash out at family members. After the communication module

I realized that I have to restrain myself, hold myself back a little. So now I do. It's been very good for me. I actually have better relations at home. We can talk.

V.

V. was a 31-year-old mother of five. In addition to caring for her school-age children, she looked after her sister-in-law who was disabled. V. was the only woman in the HREP group wearing a head scarf. The trainer had explained in the first interview that she had selected V. as one of the women to follow because she was typical of the women coming from traditional cultural backgrounds who approached VAKAD for assistance.

V. explained at the outset of her initial interview that she was participating in the HREP group because she found it difficult to get along with her husband. They had "different understandings of life." She felt alone in her marriage and had come to the HREP group in order to experience solidarity with other women. In the final interview V. related that she had not told her husband that she was attending the HREP group. Rather, she had told him that she was taking a ceramics class, so that he would not disapprove.

When asked what problem she wanted to solve, V. referred to violence against women. She said that she had been married before she was 18 and had experienced a lot of oppression and violence in her life. In a year's time she wanted to get along better with her husband, as well as her children, and to have a "peaceful and happy home." At the same time, her affect did not convey optimism.

Where I come from, you can't divorce. There is a saying in [village]. You come into your marriage in your wedding gown but you leave in a shroud.

In her interview at the final session of the HREP training, V. identified increased self confidence as the most significant change in her. She said that her self confidence had

increased specifically when the group had discussed violence against women. She now felt stronger, relating “I believe that I must fight.”

V. felt pessimistic about the city of Van changing, and about men changing. She had concluded that women must change themselves, to become more powerful and stand up against men who use violence against them. She related how she had used to feel bad much of the time but that she had seen that there are “many women who share my destiny” and that she felt less alone.

In her first interview, the trainer had mentioned that she had already observed changes in V.’s outlook, after just a few HREP sessions.

She is becoming more and more aware, not only of physical violence but other kinds of violence she has been subjected to...The reason why I think Minerva and women like her get so much out of the program is because they have so much ground to cover. For participants who are not where Minerva is in her life, this is more preventive.

In her final interview, V. said that she had not identified any new problems or set new goals for herself, although her interview contained many goals that had not been mentioned in the first interview. She spoke of being a mother “before I got here and after the training.” She said that a main aim for her four boys was to enable them to “have a good education and to live a good life.” This goal now encompassed gender equality.

Here I found out about gender equality. Now I raise them differently. Now my goal is that my boys understand that women and men are equal. My goal is that they treat their wives as equals in the future. Already they help out at home, they help their sister, they help out with the housework. My goal is that they live a life that is peaceful and happy, that their world view has equality.

V. concluded the conversation by admitting that she could read a little but that she could not write. She wanted to take a literacy course. She felt that this would be key to her future.

I have had a difficult life. I struggled with life. I had a bad husband. I was married very young. There was poverty. But none of them crushed me like not being able to write. I just wanted to say that. I have done everything on my own, but I need to be able to write.

M.

M. was 31 years old, a single woman working as a teacher. She explained that she was already interested in women’s issues before she heard about the training. She had attended educational events on this topic while at university. She hoped to become a HREP trainer herself.

When asked in her initial interview what problem she might want to solve, M. related that she was both Kurdish and an Alevi. “I carry three of the most sensitive issues in our society, including being a woman.” She laughed in response to the question about what she would like to see different in a year’s time. “Shall I let my imagination run wild?” she asked, and then proceeded to outline “an equal world” where there would be equality between the sexes and economic and social equality among all people. In terms of her own life, she wanted to be re-assigned as a teacher to another location. M. mentioned that she was living happily with her boyfriend and did not want to get married, although she was getting pressure from her mother. In this respect, especially, she wanted to be “free of gender roles.”

In the interview at the final training session, M. identified becoming stronger as the most significant change for her.

It was a good feeling to be together with strong women. Because indeed these were strong women and their strength made me more powerful. I was at a weak period in my life when I first joined.

As a result of the training, M. had set a new goal in terms of integrating the HREP training approach within her work as a guidance counselor in schools.

Now I have a plan to develop techniques for transforming the powerless women that I come across – in the form of parents, the mothers that I give counseling to – transforming them into something powerful. With the HREP training, I was able to observe the profiles of both powerful and powerless women. In this process, I saw that by gaining self confidence, women became powerful... The plan is to develop methods that will manifest the self confidence and transform the powerless to the powerful...I no longer think that it is important to empower women in a certain life situation, but women in all situations need to be empowered.

4.3. Discussion

Interviews with a subset of learners revealed a wide ranging set of expectations as they began their involvement in the study group. At the conclusion of the training, most women had recognized the immediate results of HREP on their lives and established new personal goals. These outcomes reflect the underlying transformative learning model of HREP. Interviews with WWHR staff and trainers confirm how this approach was integrated within HREP program design and implementation.

WWHR staff recognized that self knowledge and self expression were foundational for making perspective shifts during the HREP training. Group processes encouraged participation of each member of the group. As some trainers commented in interviews:

Many women come to the group thinking that what happens to them happens only in their family. But in the group they see that other women experience these issues.

They no longer feel alone, which enables them to voice things, sometimes for the first time in their lives, even things they have hidden for years. (trainer from Ankara)

The ability to talk, to express yourself in the group is very important. It makes the women feel valuable - especially taboo subjects. Any questions they might have. It all comes out. (trainer from Van)

HREP successfully drew on examples of personal and social transformation, beginning with the trainer and embracing examples from the Turkish human rights movement. Quotes from trainer interviews:

I give a lot of examples from the women's movement, not only in Turkey. Hearing what women have succeeded in doing, achieved in their struggles, it increases the power they feel. Even if they know they have rights, learning about the struggle that resulted in their gaining these rights empowers them. (trainer from Van)

I come from a closed, feudal family. We came from a village and I didn't have a father. I'd never worn short-sleeved t-shirts or halter tops or tight jeans until the 1998 training of trainers. There was a question at the training where we were asked 'what is something you would like to do but can't do because you are a woman?' And I said 'wearing a halter top'. And the whole group told me to come to the training the next day wearing one – so I did. I give this example because family types, or styles, influence us and our outlook on life. I am a woman who has been able to break this. And so when I see other women trying to break this in the group, I identify with them very much, feel closer and support them more. (trainer from Ankara)

Within the HREP groups, women developed a sense of closeness and belonging. A Kartal trainer observed that this environment encouraged the sharing of personal experiences.

Their self-confidence increases because of the "safety zone" they have in the training to express themselves. Here they know they won't be judged. They will be listened to. (trainer from Van)

A feature of group dynamics that occasionally emerged was the importance of anonymity. For some women, it was important to be part of a group where no one was a friend or family member, so that personal information could be disclosed without fear of it being passed along. Due to the personal nature of some of the session topics, initial anonymity may be a positive foundation for trainings.

In my recent group there were women who didn't really know each other. They were not neighbors or from the same tribe or family. They have less social pressure within the group. They express themselves more easily and comfortably. This also leads them to see the pressure they experience among their relatives or family. (trainer from Van)

A trainer from Trabzon mentioned that she was careful not to include siblings and other family members in groups and, if possible, restrict the number of women who might already know each other to two or three. Another trainer felt that maintaining anonymity was important not only to help reinforce the confidentiality shared between women in the group but to prevent the groups from becoming “family meetings.”

As women in the HREP group begin to share their challenges and struggles, the women work together to create strategies. This was a naturally occurring process that was evident in the Van group but it is generally promoted within HREP.

One woman started coming to the group right after she had filed for divorce. She had been anxious and worried about the legal outcomes. There is a lawyer in the group who gave advice and assistance. (trainer from Van)

A group of women come together to discuss their troubles for a few sessions and then they stand together to find solutions to their problems. (trainer from Van)

The program internalizes solidarity. This is in every single module. The same in the TOT. To be in solidarity both for ourselves as women and all women as well. (trainer from Van)

Interviews revealed that the support that some women found in the weeks of study were sometimes extended through new friendships, links with NGOs, and staying in touch with the trainers.

In interviews, most trainers indicated that they remained in contact with at a small number of participants from each training. Trainers based in GDSS community centers came into contact with alumni when they came for services. Trainers based in NGOs said that participants could join or volunteer with the NGO, thus providing an opportunity for further contact with the trainer, as well as engagement in women’s rights organizing.

5.0. IMPACTS OF HREP ON TRAINERS

I am no longer the old Fatma. It's like what happens with a piece of rock thrown in the water and the ripples it causes...I am a Fatma who resists more in order to stay on her feet, a rebel at times, mostly acting with empathy, and thinking with a focus on rights...Seems like now I formulate sentences that say "I am an individual, I'm a woman" ever more often.

– anonymous quote from trainer survey

5.1. Background Characteristics of Trainers

Similar to the marital status of the alumni, nearly three-fourths of the trainers indicated that they were married and had children. Trainers almost unanimously has a university degree (initial or advanced). Of the 87 trainers completing a survey, 77% were employed by GDSS, 17% by an NGO and remaining 6% by another kind of organization.

As Table 38 shows, there was a distribution across the trainers in terms of the year they completed the WWHR trainer preparation program and the number of study groups that they had lead.

Table 38. Trainer – Year of completion of TOT & HREP groups

| YEAR COMPLETED TRAINING-OF-TRAINERS | No. | Percent | NUMBER OF HREP GROUPS LEAD | No. | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|----------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Between 1996-2000 | 25 | 28% | 0 groups | 15 | 17% |
| Between 2001-2005 | 30 | 34% | 1-3 groups | 21 | 24% |
| Between 2006-2011 | 33 | 38% | 4-6 groups | 24 | 27% |
| | | | 7-9 groups | 17 | 19% |
| | | | 10 or more groups | 11 | 13% |
| TOTAL | 88 | 100% | | 88 | 100% |

The trainers completing the questionnaire were relatively experienced in facilitating HREP groups, with more than half having lead four or more groups. Approximately half of all respondents had completed the TOT since the 2003 impact assessment.

5.2. Impacts on HREP Trainers

HREP trainers have the opportunity to engage in HREP in a series of ways, beginning with the trainer training program, the facilitation of groups and periodic refreshers and evaluation meetings organized by WWHR. For some trainers their first engagement with HREP is as a learner in a study group. It is thus reasonable to expect that the program will have some impact on trainers. Moreover, those trainers who facilitate multiple study groups would have prolonged experience with the program, this experience potentially resulting in greater impacts and, at the same time, reflecting a high motivation on the part of these trainers to conduct these study groups.

As one trainer wrote in her questionnaire:

HREP is something that I can never give up. There's a date on which you were born and a date when you realize who you are. That's what this program gave to me...I have a need to share and to reach other women...If I don't open up a [HREP] group, I feel restless.²⁷

Because of the potential association between the number of study groups lead and impacts on trainers, this background characteristic for trainers was used in the analysis of questionnaire results.

5.2.1. Knowledge and awareness

This section contains the results for all questionnaire items, clustered according to the domains of knowledge and awareness; attitudes; feelings/images of self; skills and behaviors. These results are first shown across all respondents, according to percentages indicating “not at all,” “a little” and “a lot.” The report then indicates if there were any variations in these results for sub-categories of trainers that may suggest an interaction between background characteristics of the women and the level of HREP results.

Trainers were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a series of questions pertaining to knowledge and awareness. Similar to the results found for alumni, trainers nearly unanimously reported gains for this category of impact, with levels especially high for items related to legal literacy, a key feature of HREP. Aside from a later item related to women’s solidarity, gains in knowledge and awareness were the highest for trainers across all other questionnaire categories.

Table 39. Trainer knowledge and awareness – Women’s rights and legal protections

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Helped me in developing a critical consciousness about gender roles in Turkish society | 0% | 15% | 85% |
| Increased my understanding of the women’s rights perspective | 1% | 13% | 88% |
| Resulted in my learning about the legal documents that protect women’s rights in Turkey | 1% | 14% | 85% |

²⁷ Quotes in this section that do not identify where the trainers come from (anonymous) surveys. Quotes that identify where the trainer is from come from in-person interviews.

In interviews, trainers sometimes made direct reference to knowledge of women’s rights and the ways in which they apply this lens in analyzing the events around them.

The way I look at society – this changed. I found it difficult to see the injustices against women and children in the past. Now I find them completely intolerable.
(trainer from Gölbaşı)

When I’m doing HREP groups, I’m also questioning myself. To what extent am I able to enjoy my rights – at home, at work, in daily life? So the groups are triggers that keep the process alive. Otherwise in the daily routine of life, these kinds of things might go unnoticed. The women in the group empower me...
(trainer from Antalya)

An area of impact that emerged through the coding of open-ended answers and not incorporated within the closed-ended items was heightened sensitivity towards women in general and the elimination of pre-existing prejudices against other women as well as feminism. Eleven (15%) of the trainers participating in the study identified this area of impact.

[L]ed me to see how both men and women are insensitive or prejudiced on the subject of “women’s human rights.” I decided that I must change these prejudices starting from my own circle.

The survey asked trainers about their knowledge and awareness of women’s sexuality and reproductive rights. As Table 40 shows, trainers almost unanimously reported some gains in these areas.

Table 40. Trainer knowledge and awareness – Women’s sexuality and reproductive rights

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Increased my knowledge about reproductive rights | 3% | 28% | 69% |
| Increased my awareness about my own sexuality | 7% | 30% | 63% |
| Increased my knowledge about how women’s sexuality and reproductive capacities influence the policies of government | 1% | 9% | 90% |

Those trainers coming from the NGO sector reported relatively higher impacts in new knowledge about reproductive rights, as compared with trainers who worked for GDSS.²⁸

Open-ended results further substantiated the importance of this outcome. Twenty (29%) of the respondents who completed an open-ended question in the survey wrote that a significant impact on them had been gained knowledge about women's rights and the gender perspective in the trainings.

Through the program, my level of awareness increased regarding the issues I already knew about (gender inequality, violence against women and strategies against violence, etc.) I also gained access to new information on civil and constitutional rights by way of enhancing my relatively low level of knowledge on the law.

5.2.2. Attitudes and Feelings

As with the knowledge and awareness categories, trainers report almost unanimously gains in questions pertaining to attitudes and feelings.

Trainers almost unanimously reported feeling more **solidarity with other women** following HREP, and at a level similar to those reported by alumni. The tendency to report “a lot” of increases in solidarity were highest for those trainers who had facilitated 10 or more study groups.

Fifteen (22%) of the trainers who completed the open-ended questions wrote that a significant impact on them was an increased sense of solidarity with women and knowing the importance of women's organizing. Sample written responses:

I used to think that my experiences were more of a personal problem rather than systematic repression, and that I had to overcome my problems on my own. Only after this training I saw that the situation at hand was beyond me as a single individual, and that many of these problems were indeed problems of the country...I understood that instead of on my own, we the women must act together.

As a woman who always objected and refuted things, I came to realize the importance of group consciousness and collective action in creating solutions to the problems. I saw how open women are to innovation and change.

Similar to the alumni, the trainers reported many positive changes in relation to the impact of HREP on their inner resources. The questionnaire results showed that approximately half of the trainers rated as “a lot” increased self confidence, valuing of themselves, and courage, as shown in Table 41.

²⁸ $F=4.59, p<.04$.

Table 41. Trainer feelings – About self

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|--------------------------------------|------------|----------|-------|
| Increased my overall self confidence | 6% | 43% | 51% |
| Made me more courageous | 7% | 45% | 48% |
| Made me value myself more | 6% | 32% | 62% |

These results also emerged in trainers reporting of the “most significant change” in them in relation to their participation in HREP. Sixteen (23%) of respondents wrote in their open-ended responses that a significant impact on them was feeling better or stronger. One trainer wrote:

It enabled me to become a stronger woman, and work more for women’s empowerment.

Eleven (16%) wrote that their participation in the HREP had increased their sense of self-confidence. For example:

My self confidence increased. I recognize my feelings, and know what I want. Even if I can’t fully realize my wishes I believe that in time I can solve certain things.

5.2.3. Skills

As presented earlier in this report, problem identification and problem solving can be seen as associated with the perspective transformation process of transformative learning. Questions in the trainer survey, as with the alumni survey, asked respondents to report if and how much they were better able to identify problems in their lives, and also if HREP had made them better able to address them. As Table 42 shows, at least 85% of the respondents reported gains in the skill areas related to problem solving.

Table 42. Trainer skills – Problem identification and problem solving

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Resulted in my recognizing problems in my life | 9% | 47% | 44% |
| Helped me in being able to solve problems in my life | 15% | 50% | 37% |
| Helped me in being able to solve the problems of others around me | 1% | 31% | 68% |

An area of impact identified by trainers in their open-ended answers not already reflected in closed-ended items related to communication. Nine (13%) of respondents indicated in their open-ended answers that they had improved their ability to communicate and express themselves.²⁹

HREP enabled me to express myself, demand my rights, and most importantly to address my clients more clearly.

Eight (12%) identified an improvement in their ability to apply a critical woman’s perspective. A representative quote from the survey:

I internalized the concept of “women’s perspective”. Being able to look at everything through the women’s eyes, ability to criticize, to question and most importantly to want....

5.2.4. Behavior and actions – Family relations

Over 95% of the trainers who completed the questionnaire felt that the training had helped them to **achieve their potential**, and 60% of the respondents indicated that HREP had helped them “a lot”.

Approximately 90% of the trainers reported that HREP had contributed to improved relations with family members. At the same time, over one-third of the women indicated that their participation in the program had resulted in increased conflict in their families, although not at the same level of intensity as that reported by alumni (see Table 13).

Table 43. Trainer behavior and actions– Family relations

²⁹ Although an item on self-expression had been included in the participant questionnaire, this was not the case with the trainer questionnaire.

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|--|------------|----------|-------|
| Enabled me to improve my relations with family members | 16% | 55% | 30% |
| Resulted in increased conflict within my family | 66% | 26% | 8% |

Those trainers who were married reported higher gains than did their unmarried counterparts.³⁰ Some sample quotes from the interviews that were carried out:

Back when I attended the HREP training, my husband was my boyfriend then. HREP helped me to establish a more democratic home life. (trainer from Istanbul)

I previously had not been aware of the inequalities that come with the traditional family structure and I began to question everything about my family, my upbringing and my marriage...My son, I am trying to raise him as a self-sufficient individual – as a human being – rather than simply as a boy or man. (trainer from Gölbaşı)

I'm working very hard to raise my daughter to be really smart. And at home, my husband is an intellectual, he's a democrat. And so we have been working to establish a more democratic relationship at home without fighting or hurting one another. People from the outside say 'oh, you have a wonderful husband!' And even though we have a women's perspective, it's not easy to achieve this wonderful husband. (trainer from Antalya)

I don't know how I would have turned out if I had not attended the [TOT] but one thing that I notice now, for example, when I read my son stories I find myself modifying them so that the female isn't the victim and the man isn't the hero. This is something we tell the group – to question the stereotypical roles. (trainer from Istanbul)

One of the main goals of HREP when it was initiated was to address the question of domestic violence against women in Turkey. The questionnaire asked women to indicate if they had experienced physical, emotional or economic violence prior to their participation in HREP and, if so, if there were any changes in this level of violence following their completion of the TOT.

For those participants experiencing any form of violence, at least 80% of the women reported that the level of violence had decreased or ended.

³⁰ $F=6.87, p<.01.$

Only one of the trainers indicated in the questionnaire that she had been subjected to **physical violence** in her home prior to participating in the training-of-trainers program. This trainer indicated that this physical violence then stopped.

In an interview with one trainer:

Once after I attended the program, my husband tried to prevent me from going out. He put pressure on me a lot, tried to limit my every move. I think that this is the initial outcome of empowerment and it might increase the violence experienced at home. But we also learn in the program coping strategies for dealing with violence against women, which is very important. This was my experience and my solution was to be in solidarity with my friends and gain strength from them, and to protest and say no to my husband...In all my groups I share my experiences because they often look at me with awe – how do you live your life like this? So I tell them my story so they can see that they can also change their life. (Van trainer)

Thirty-one percent (27) of the trainers indicated that they were subjected to **emotional violence** in their home before participating in the HREP program. Of these, all but one (4%) of the trainers had a decrease (63%) or complete ending (33%) of emotional violence.

Fourteen percent (12) of the trainers indicated that they were subjected to **economic violence** in the home, a number that might be considered low if not for the fact most trainers were university educated and professionals. Eighty-three percent of those previously experiencing economic violence reported a decrease (33%) or ending of economic violence (50%). One trainer reported that the economic violence had not changed, and one trainer indicated that the economic violence had actually increased.

5.2.5. Behavior and actions – Work and activism

Trainers nearly unanimously reported that their participation in HREP had increased their ability to perform their professional responsibilities.

Table 44. Trainer behavior and actions – Within their organization

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|--|------------|----------|-------|
| Increased my motivation for my professional work | 1% | 33% | 66% |
| Enhanced my ability to carry out my professional work | 2% | 31% | 66% |
| Resulted in my applying the woman’s perspective to other areas of my professional work | 2% | 17% | 80% |
| Resulted in members of my community seeing me as a resource person for women’s issues | 1% | 26% | 72% |

Those trainers who had carried out seven or more HREP trainings reported a higher level of increased motivation for their professional work as compared with trainers who had facilitated fewer groups.³¹ Those trainers who had facilitated higher numbers of study groups also reported higher impacts in relation to their being seen as a resource person as well as being able to apply the woman’s perspective to other areas of their professional life.³²

In their open-ended questions on the survey, eight (12%) of the trainers highlighted that their association with HREP had enabled their bringing a gender perspective to their professional work and many of these women also indicated that they were now a resource person in their community on women’s rights.

The training increased my professional capacity. It made it easier for me to do my work. It opened up new venues for me in terms of carrying out my work.

HREP makes you more professional. It gives you more capacity and skills to direct cases that come to you to the right places, and when the problem first arises. You impact women’s policies because you discuss things with your supervisor.

In this impact assessment, WWHR was particularly interested to capture a range of potential impacts related to women’s activism, including – but not being exclusively measured by – association with a women’s organization. The questionnaire thus included items that attempted to capture a range of potential behaviors related to HREP

³¹ $F=2.79, p<.03$.

³² $F=3.40, p<.01; F=3.74, p<.01$.

participants – both learners and trainers - having sustained agency for supporting women’s rights in their communities.

As Table 44 shows, the majority of trainers reported that they had to some degree become actively involved in a women’s organization, the women’s movement in Turkey and/or become more politically active in general as a result of HREP.

Table 45. Trainer behavior and actions– Women’s activism

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Contributed to my becoming actively involved in an existing women’s organization | 40% | 38% | 22% |
| Contributed to my becoming more involved in the women’s movement in Turkey (for example, organizing seminars, participating in petitions) | 16% | 40% | 44% |
| Contributed to my becoming more engaged with an existing organization (not specifically associated with women’s rights) | 37% | 41% | 22% |
| Resulted in my forming a new group or organization | 69% | 19% | 12% |

In comparing these results with those of alumni (Tables 21 and 22), the study shows that both trainers and alumni were involved in an existing women’s organization at the same levels following HREP. However trainers reported higher levels of involvement in other forms of activism.

Those trainers already associated with an NGO reported relatively higher impacts in relation to becoming involved in an existing women’s organization.³³

It became my philosophy of life to follow up on the works geared towards women’s issues, organize women around things that can be done to this end, and train girl children with this point of view. (quote from survey)

I’m a member of a labor union. I worked very hard for a woman’s secretariat to be established at the union, although beforehand I really didn’t feel the need for it....I’ve carried out work related to women’s issues at our village’s association....Everywhere I work hard to break the feudal structure. (trainer from Antalya)

³³ $F=4.26, p<.04$.

6.0. IMPACTS OF HREP ON GOVERNMENT PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

WWHR's contributions to Turkish organizations in the public and non-profit sector are through two primary mediums: preparation of staff from these organizations for facilitating HREP groups in collaboration with WWHR; and involvement of staff and constituents of these organizations as regular participants in HREP groups.

WWHR's network is well developed and widespread in Turkey. In particular, relationships with women's NGOs in Turkey – including many initiated by HREP graduates – were well documented in annual reports. This study aimed to document impact on government partner organizations through the eyes of the trainers as well as leaders of the partner organizations, as well as the input of a small number of learners.

The impact assessment examined the institutionalization of the gender perspective within the operation of the General Directorate of Social Services (GDSS) community centers and staff associated with HREP, based on the 13-year collaboration. In addition, the study looked at the initial results of the pilot trainings carried out with three new government partners: the Presidency of Religious Affairs; and the International Labor Organization (ILO) Ankara Office and the Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ISKUR).

This chapter presents the views of senior management in relation to HREP and the program's relevance and value for the work of the partner organization. These views are complemented by those of the HREP trainers associated with these organizations. For the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the perspectives of a small number of Quran instructors who were interviewed are also incorporated.

6.1. Impacts on General Directorate of Social Services

The initial collaboration between WWHR and the GDSS was through work carried out in community centers operating in disadvantaged neighborhoods. This partnership has extended to other GDSS sites such as family counseling centers and women's shelters. In 2011, 85 community centers in 46 provinces and 43 women's shelters in 40 provinces were attached to HREP. Staff members of GDSS who participate in the WWHR TOT are given permission to carry out trainings as part of their regular work.

In an interview, the Vice-Director of the General Directorate of Social Services pointed out that the public mission of GDSS was related to gender equality and efforts to reduce violence against women, and that the general atmosphere in Turkey has shifted over the past years in this direction, as reflected through changes in Parliament and legal reforms.

The Vice-Director indicated that her department was “very proud” of the fact that they had been collaborating since 1998 with WWHR and that “this is our longest collaboration with any NGO.” In 2008, the protocol enabling the government-NGO collaboration was renewed for another 10 years.

Several of the long-term trainers could identify impacts that HREP had had on the General Directorate of Social Services nationally over time. A trainer from Çanakkale said in an interview:

I feel that the perspective of the General Directorate of Social Services itself has changed at the national level, in terms of how these issues are addressed. HREP opened up a professional space to breathe, provided information and a sense of purpose, because it takes a long-term perspective.

The Çanakkale trainer went on to explain that ten years ago the GDSS had no specific goal or policy for working with women and empowering them. HREP had helped to open up a space where such matters could be discussed. The trainers and WWHR's HREP coordinator acknowledged the unique, long-term relationship that they enjoyed, and the evolution of GDSS policy so that it now encompassed a "women focused" set of programming in addition to its "family focused" or "child focused" work.

As a sign of their faith in HREP, the GDSS Vice-Director pointed out that they had promoted the program with other government institutions. The 2008 regional meeting they organized in Ankara included invitees who would become future collaborators with the training program, including the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

An Istanbul trainer pointed out that because HREP is a long-term program rather than a one-off training, it is sustained at the grassroots level.

I have been working with women for 19 years, but HREP is the only program that reaches women at home, women in the neighborhoods. Others organize one-day seminars, panels, conferences. But HREP is 16 weeks long and once it enters a neighborhood or shantytown area, it stays. So in terms of continuity, it's the only program for women in Turkey. (trainer from Istanbul)

The results of the study showed that those trainers who remained engaged in HREP and continued to facilitate groups apply the goals of the program in other areas of their lives, by serving as a resource person in their community and applying the women's perspective in their work. Thus the degree to which WWHR engaged, motivated and supported GDSS trainers over time was important not only in relation to the immediate effects of carrying out HREP trainings but in supporting women's rights more generally in their community and workplace.

The GDSS Vice-Director recognized that working with women had enabled their local staff to reach even more family members:

When you reach one person, you reach the whole family. For instance, we said we reached 7,500 women but given that these women live in a family of maybe 3 or 4

or 5 people, you should actually multiple that 7,500 with 3 or 4 or 5 to get the real number of people reached through the program.

According to the Head of the Family Affairs Unit:

All of our strategy and our efforts to reach the public and promote the gender perspective is part of the results of this cooperation.

According to the former Branch Director for Family Services at GDSS – a post she held from 1995-2010 – HREP was a “preventive service.” She said:

Women who have taken HREP and who have not are very different. I wish all the women who work at shelters would take HREP...HREP graduates who work with these women say ‘She can be empowered, she can make her own decisions.’ And this becomes the policy and perspective of that organization.

The GDSS Branch Director for Community Centers described how the women’s perspective has affected their work:

We go outside of the perspective of providing traditional services for women who suffer from violence. We don’t consider them victims but we provide them a service that is their right. So this is a new perspective....A feminist perspective that includes the possibility of recognizing discrimination.

As Table 46 demonstrates, over 90% of the trainers indicated that their involvement with HREP had increased the demand for the services of their organization, resulted in increased collaborations with other organizations on issues of concern to women, and increased the sensitivity of their organization in addressing women’s issues.

Table 46. Impact on trainer organizations

My participation in the HREP training program has....

| ITEM | Not at all | A little | A lot |
|---|------------|----------|-------|
| Resulted in greater sensitivity to women’s issues within the work of my organization/agency | 7% | 28% | 65% |
| Resulted in increased demand for the services of my organization/agency | 7% | 46% | 48% |
| Resulted in my organization/agency collaborating with other organizations on issues of concern to women | 9% | 43% | 48% |

These results support the idea that HREP has influenced the policy and operation of GDSS community centers.

Eleven of the 14 trainers interviewed for this study were GDSS staff and they shared many results in relation to HREP and the quality of the work carried out by their organization. Some quotes from the interviews:

HREP has re-structured our whole working style and our approach to the women staying at the shelter...Beforehand the services at the Ankara shelters had no structure. Women would come and it was haphazard. Now what we do is we sit down with the women and plan together with her what she will be doing from this point forward. We don't make decisions on her behalf as was done in the past and then expect them to just do them. We gently push her to make her own decisions, to enable her to participate in society and in life. So we are like a driving force. (trainer from Ankara)

We have integrated a woman's perspective into our work. We have become more sensitive to women's problems such as violence, a lack of economic independence, honor killings and judgments on women's morality. (trainer from Kartal)

[HREP] increases the quality of the services provided at the community center. It increases the respectability of the center and strengthens the actual services provided. (trainer from Antalya)

Some trainers related that in some cases their colleagues had had some hesitations about organizing HREP groups on site, for fear of possible resistance from some members of the local community. But when no “rocks and stones” were thrown at the center, and when men involved in another program at the community center related that their wives’ participation in the study groups had improved their family relations with less fighting, colleagues were converted. A trainer from Trabzon said in an interview: “HREP helps our community center to be functional.”

Some trainers also related that that sponsorship of HREP trainings had increased the status of their community center and, in some cases, increased local demand for and support of their services.

A principle of our community center is that all women personnel must have HREP training. Currently of the 15 staff, nine have attended a HREP training and the rest are attending one now. In the neighborhood, the community center has become an ‘expert’ on violence against women. The muhtars in the area, the schools, the health clinics...Whenever there is a case of violence or suspected violence, they direct the women to the community center. It is HREP that has brought this about. (trainer from Istanbul)

A trainer from Izmir felt that holding the HREP trainings in her center contributed a sense of prestige and added recognition of the center within the local community. “It makes the social service profession become better known in the community, which is a good thing.” A trainer from Ankara felt that offering the HREP trainings in her community center had helped the center to be part of the women’s lives and a place where they come for guidance.

The women who attend the HREP here later support the community center. They become volunteers of the community center and carry out activities that empower the community center. (trainer from Kocaeli)

Consistent with the trainer survey results shared in the previous chapter, trainers and partners mentioned WWHR’s support as an important ingredient of program success, including the information flow to and from the office as well as assistance provided by WWHR (trainer from Çanakkale). WWHR support was also identified by the Head of the Family Affairs Unit of the GDSS as an important factor for the sustainability of the program.

In terms of HREP, once the program implementation is over, WWHR offers us support in making the program sustainable. We are responsible for following up all of the programming that we run, but the materials, the regular meetings and other activities [of WWHR] help us make the program more sustainable. Where we have difficulty doing this, WWHR is right by our side. So our program never loses its impact.

6.2. Impacts on Family Unit, Presidency of Religious Affairs

In 2009 WWHR initiated a new partnership with the Presidency of Religious Affairs. The partnership was intended to introduce a women’s rights discourse – specifically, gender and equality - into the services offered by Quran instructors. Quran instructors are employees of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, educated in religious affairs, who offer courses throughout the country, typically in association with the local mosque.

The Director of the Family Unit of the Presidency of Religious Affairs shared her belief in an interview that it was women who kept the family together. Therefore, for the family to be empowered, women needed to be empowered.

We don’t only mean that women need to know their rights but they need to know where and when and how they can use their rights in the correct way. They need to know how to resolve any problems at home, in society, or with their children in a healthy manner. And so any family empowerment perspective must prioritize women’s rights.

The Director of the Family Unit believed that the HREP trainings had helped her unit in preparing female Quran instructors for their responsibilities. The instructors already had university degrees; her unit offered supplementary seminars on topics such as domestic

violence, laws protecting women, economic rights and inter-familial communication. However, these other seminars were typically constituted by guest speakers rather than a comprehensive training program. Before HREP, if her unit did sponsor trainings, they were oriented towards the empowerment of the family as a whole, rather than women as actors within the family. The Director indicated that they had “embraced the program” and would like to make it sustainable.

According to the Director, Quran instructors needed to be knowledgeable about a number of issues in order to be able to provide guidance to local women. In some cases, women experience difficulty accessing other services for women, due to constraints placed by husbands/fathers, especially in rural areas where religion and tradition play a great role in determining how women live their lives. Although they were trained in religious education, Quran instructors found that they had to help women address a range of psychological and emotional issues, including family relations.

The Director indicated that in the past, instructors had contacted her office on topics that women had raised that were non-religious in nature. However, those Quran instructors from the Ankara region who had participated in the HREP training now knew which state or civil society organizations to contact in relation to personal problems raised by the women. “It made it possible for them to collaborate with the other stakeholders related to whatever issues were at hand.”

The Quran instructors, their trainers, and the Director of the Family Unit affirmed in interviews the value of gaining legal knowledge in the HREP trainings. The Quran instructors understood that a key reason for their attending the trainings was to become more knowledgeable in this area so that they could better serve the women who came to them with their personal problems.

One focus group interview took place with a set of Quran instructors, who shared their experiences in HREP. These women affirmed the relevance of HREP for their work, particularly in relation to learning about Turkish laws and services related to women. A Quran instructor who participated in the HREP training held at the Gölbaşı community center said:

We come face-to-face with women in our work. They come to us with many questions. As opinion leaders in society, women trust us more and open up to us more. So instead of answering some of their questions, for example on legal issues, with ‘I think’ or ‘I heard’, I wanted to learn what the correct information was. I especially didn’t know much about the laws so my aim was to become more beneficial in providing information to these women.

One of the trainers for Quran instructors, based near Ankara, said that she has had some follow-up contact with some of the participants, who had reached out to her in relation to problems that they had encountered with those they informally counseled. The three major issues were violence and how to stop it; familial problems; and forced marriage. The familial problems were in relation to traditional family structures: ‘How can we

bring about change without hurting our parents? How can we keep the family happy?’ According to the trainer, the Quran instructors want to help their students solve their problems, but in accordance with religious doctrine.

The Director of the Family Unit of the Presidency of Religious Affairs said in an interview that their internal evaluation of the trainings revealed the Quran instructors to be:

more empowered, more self confident and better at carrying out their work. Because these women are technically Quran instructors but women come to them with all kinds of problems. So their role is not just as an educator. Women come to them to find out how they can merge living life with a religious orientation. So the program enabled them to be better at doing their job. Their knowledge of women’s human rights issues had been superficial previously – not wrong, but not deep enough. When this improved they were able to provide better services.

The interviews that took place with Quran instructors revealed anecdotal evidence of the impact of HREP on their behavior and actions. In Gölbaşı, some of the Quran instructors graduating from HREP took the initiative to organize a meeting on March 8th (International Women’s Day) in which a lawyer presented on women’s rights and the Turkish Civil Code. This took place at the community center and approximately 150 women attended, according to the instructors.

Interviews carried out with Quran instructors suggested that their participation in HREP had encouraged some to apply a critical women’s perspective to their lives. A Quran instructor from the Gölbaşı study group shared one personal development in an interview:

I became more self confident. I understood what I should and shouldn’t be doing as a mother and as a wife. By that I mean I learned that I value myself as a human being first and foremost.

A Gölbaşı Quran instructor said:

The section on gender-sensitive parenting was very important because the children of today are going to be the men and women of tomorrow. For instance, women who are currently having problems with their husbands can raise children who won’t experience such problems in the future. If a husband doesn’t do any housework and the son learns this, he’ll be a bad husband in the future. And in raising daughters, mothers raise their daughters to never leave the house as children and women who are not self sufficient, who depend on men. This is what they shouldn’t be doing....Because I don’t think if men do housework they’ll forget their gender!

The Ankara trainer had observed some personal revelations for the Quran instructors. Some of the instructors began to notice that they had never been promoted because they were “muftu” women, and some realized that they found it difficult to speak in front of

male supervisors. One of the trainers from Gölbaşı felt that the theme of economic rights was personally illuminating for some of the Quran instructors.

Some of them noticed that they did not manage their own income and they were unaware of this previously. Also some noticed that although both husband and wife were working, any property they bought was registered in the man's name.

Quran instructors recognized that their religious beliefs were consistent with HREP's message of gender equality. According to the Ankara trainer, some of the Quran instructors directly rejected gender inequality on the basis of their religious beliefs. According to this trainer, her students knew of "intellectual Islamists" who adhered to a superior moral lifestyle that did not tolerate violence or sexism, among other evils. Thus, the fact that the Quran instructors were university educated and highly familiar with religious texts contributed to them distinguishing between values based on traditions versus religious doctrine.

One of the trainers of the Quran instructors said that she had seen considerable overlap between the principles of human rights and what the Quran contained. She had observed many "hadiths" that coincide with gender equality and said that a few of the instructors had volunteered to gather these hadiths so that they could be referred to in future HREP trainings with Quran instructors.

One of the Gölbaşı participants, who is a Quran instructor:

I knew the topics [of the training] beforehand and in many ways it overlaps with Islam. Women are being excluded or denigrated in the name of religion but there is no place for this in Islam. This is only tradition. It is similar to reverting back to a time when the Prophet was trying to eliminate a period of ignorance. We used to tell them that women are equal, strong and the same as men in Islam. After HREP we've been able to answer their questions about the Civil Code as well.

Although there were indications through the interviews that Islamic religious text endorsed gender equality, problematic issues emerged for some of the Quran instructors in relation to sexual and reproductive rights. According to the Ankara trainer, her participants wanted adultery to be made a criminal offense (although for both women and men, not just women, as was the case in the past) and abortion to be illegal. The instructors were opposed to premarital sex, and there was even some ambivalence, particularly among the older Quran instructors, about sexual pleasure.

The Director of the Family Unit of the Presidency of Religious Affairs confirmed the sensitivities that arose for some of the Quran instructors in the HREP trainings around this topic. The module on sexuality, which did not prohibit sex outside of marriage, contradicted the framework provided by the Quran, which sanctioned sex only within marriage.

Yet the interviews suggested there were potential areas of convergence regarding sexuality and reproductive rights and Islamic teachings. Such an overlap might pertain to a woman's control over her own body. One of the Quran instructors participating in the Gölbaşı training said in an interview "The section on sexual rights, it was extremely informative and very, very good." Another Quran instructor who had been part of this HREP group felt that the information about sexual rights was one of the main areas of impact in her own work:

Sexual rights, especially the perspective of looking at women as human beings who have the right not to have sexual intercourse or not to have children, as opposed to men who view women as a commodity.

6.3. Impacts on Employment Agency, Ministry of Labor and Social Security

WWHR initiated a collaborative relationship with the International Labor Organization (ILO) in order to carry out a pilot project in 2009-2010 in which HREP would complement the vocational training already taking place. The Ankara ILO director felt that HREP would provide motivation and skills to women living in communities where social and cultural barriers had kept them from entering the work force. HREP taking place with women in vocational training was intended to fill a gap in empowerment and legal literacy, considered to be essential for the integration and sustainability of women's participation in the labor market. This aspiration was consistent with one result of the 2004 study, which had confirmed that many women completing HREP had either entered or re-entered the workforce or set up their own business.

WWHR collaborated with the ILO within the framework of their "Project on Active Labor Market Policies for Advancing Gender Equality through Decent Employment for Women in Turkey," conducted in cooperation with the Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR). ISKUR was based within the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. As of 2009, 150,000 persons had attended vocational trainings at one of the agency's 31 branches. This project involved occupational trainings for women and men between the ages of 18 and 40.

In the framework of an agreement signed between the ILO and WWHR, HREP trainers implemented 32 HREP groups in three cities: Ankara, Gaziantep and Konya. Ten to fifteen hours of HREP trainings were incorporated within pre-existing vocational courses that typically met nine to eleven times (rather than sixteen). Seven hundred and eleven women participated in an adapted version of the HREP. WWHR was especially interested to investigate participant results, as the original 16-week program had been slightly reduced and modified to fit into nine to eleven training sessions.

Of the over 700 ILO-related alumni who completed a HREP training in 2009 or 2010, a sample of 35 were approached to complete a questionnaire and 17 did so. Based on this low response rate, as with the Quran instructor, the quantitative survey data results were not incorporated within this report. However 15 of the 17 questionnaires included a

response to the open-ended question regarding the most significant changes for them associated with the training and the results were analyzed.

Two thirds of these respondents identified a knowledge gain as the most significant result of HREP. As with other HREP graduates, the knowledge areas were related to either women's rights in general or specifically to the knowledge of how to use the Turkish legal system to protect the rights of women.

With the HREP training I learned more about women's rights. I learned that we have very important rights that I didn't know about, and what I must do in case of a difficult situation.

The HREP training lead me to learn women's rights. I had no idea about this because I had never taken such a training. It expanded my horizons. Even if not sufficiently, I am now able to protect and defend myself on this subject.

About one quarter of those respondents providing an open-ended response to "the most significant change" question also mentioned that they had increased self-confidence as a result of HREP.

I regained my self confidence that I had lost. Being able to stand on my feet despite all sorts of obstacles that I might come across...

I became aware of the strength that I have within. It showed me that I can stand on my own feet, both as a woman and a mother.

These qualitative results suggest that in some areas, the impacts on the ILO project participants are similar to those reported by the larger pool of alumni completing the survey. Given the small number of survey respondents, however, the study unfortunately cannot address the impacts of HREP on the larger pool of ILO participants or contrast results with other HREP learners.

Ideally, this study would have been able to track the ability of graduates to obtain and retain work. However, this information was not available in the Employment Agency, as such statistics, when available, were kept in branch offices and not in a centralized database.

Although the results of the piloting were incomplete and inconclusive, the perspectives of the directors of the partner organizations were uniformly positive. The ILO Office Director said that the HREP training element was the most "exciting" part of the one-year women's empowerment project. She indicated that the ILO had sponsored the HREP trainings because her office felt that women's empowerment was important for helping to ensure that women are motivated to join the workforce and to remain employed. The perspective of the Director of the ILO office in Ankara was positive about HREP, based on the internal evaluation that their office had carried out. In principle, she wanted to see

this kind of training continue, and perhaps integrated within an ILO program on youth employment.

The Director of the Employment Agency (ISKUR), in an interview, expressed satisfaction with the results of this pilot, which gave his office the opportunity to reach women. His office wanted to improve the participation of women in the labor market and has set a goal of 50% by 2023. A Constitutional change in 2010 had approved positive discrimination, and a National Employment Strategy was under development at the time the study was carried out, which might provide an additional policy platform for a continued emphasis on strategies to improve women's participation in the workplace.

The Director of ISKUR shared the informal feedback that he heard from participants in private meetings in the provinces. Although this feedback was secondary in nature, it was interesting to note that the director perceived that some participants felt discriminated against when seeking jobs. He implied that increased awareness of women's human rights and the importance of non-discrimination might have benefits in the future.

Women had been prevented from participating in the labor market and didn't know where to get support from decision makers. They obeyed what they heard in their family or around them. They didn't know before how to participate in the labor market, how to get information, know new labor provisions, which sectors in Turkey could help them to set up their own business. They explained they were encouraged to set up their own business in their homes. [The workshop] also gave them new ideas about how to look for jobs.

6.4. Impacts on Other Local Government Employees

The original target group for HREP was women in poorer neighborhoods. As of 2005, HREP trainings began to involve increasing numbers of representatives from professional groups, including policewomen, female health workers, local government workers, NGO staff and labor union members.

In interviews carried out as part of this study, trainers reported that they had been called upon as resources for a range of professional groups, as well as public figures such as muhtars and members of women assemblies. The trainers considered that through such trainings, HREP had had impacts on state organizations other than just the GDSS. Quotes from interviews carried out with trainers referred to discrete impacts on police departments, municipalities and labor unions.

Police departments

HREP's impact is felt in all the groups that we open outside of the community center. For example, we have opened groups in other public institutions, at the university, and with female police officers. For instance, with the police officers, they were so distinctive [following the training] that the new captain appointed there was very impressed and contacted us about continuing the training...

Previously in the police department, the female officers did not provide good services to women....There is a form that police officers have to fill out when women come to the police station for domestic violence and while they used to just fill out the form and file it, they are now much better at taking in that initial request and responding to their needs... So HREP changed their perspective and the quality of services provided. (trainer from Antalya)

A group in Ankara has a HREP with female police officers, which was very influential in changing the female police officers who were very 'masculine' – sometimes even swearing or yelling at women who came to them as a result of domestic violence. (trainer from Ankara)

Labor unions

I worked with women at the Marine Workers Labor Union. This was very patriarchal, where women are mostly office workers or 'token sellers' and they are very few in number. The labor union requested that HREP be implemented...Once we started, sexual harassment at the workplace began pouring out of the women. None of the women had said anything about this previously because they were afraid of losing their jobs...Following the HREP training, the women sat down with the president of the labor union, who was a very democratic man, and a women's commission was founded. (trainer from Istanbul)

Municipalities

In the greater municipality of Istanbul there was a Women's Coordinating Center and, despite their name, they were doing nothing specifically for women. The director – who was a young woman – contacted WWHR...The HREP group was 20 women who were responsible for receiving requests for aid. But this had been carried out electronically, through laptops. Before HREP, they had never questions the condition of the women....Now they want to make HREP part of on-the-job training. (trainer from Istanbul)

A trainer from Izmir felt that in her city, HREP had influenced branches of state agencies other than the GDSS. In her city, municipal staff had noticed that HREP graduates were especially skillful and active and subsequently requested that the trainings be carried out with all members of the women's assembly. She said that in some cases, graduates of HREP groups go on to initiate or to join a local women's assembly.

These qualitative data, although limited, point to HREP positively influencing the behavior and actions of local government employees. Although this subcategory of alumni was not incorporated within the questionnaire design, the uniformity of positive results for gains in knowledge, attitudes and skills across all HREP alumni suggest that these results also apply to those local government employees who completed the survey.

7.0. DISCUSSION OF KEY OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR HREP

7.1. Key Findings in Relation to Impacts on Learners

HREP had a clear and positive impact on alumni in all of the areas investigated, including knowledge and awareness, attitudes and feelings, skills, and behaviors and actions. Over 90% of the women completing HREP reported that they better understood and could apply Turkish laws to protect women; were more self confident and courageous; felt increased solidarity with other women; and had gained skills that would increased their capacity to claim their rights, including the ability to communicate effectively, to make decisions and to recognize and address problems.

Consistent with the goals of transformative learning, the results showed that women had internalized the women's rights perspective and the empowerment goals of HREP and had applied these directly in their lives. These applications spanned both the private and public spheres and reflected women's emerging identification of problems and new goals for their lives engendered through the critical reflection and dialogic processes of HREP.

In the private domain, over 90% of the alumni indicated that they had undertaken actions that resulted in improved relations with family members; more influence in family decisions; greater sensitivity to gender roles in raising children. For those participants who had experiences violence in their homes, such violence was reduced or ended for 85% of more of these women.

In the private sphere, at least one quarter of the alumni indicated that they had returned to work or continued their education as a result of HREP. The majority of learners reported that they had become actively involved in a women's organization, the women's movement in Turkey and/or become politically active in their environment. Independent of their political activism, alumni reported almost unanimously that they served as an informal source of information and advice about women's rights in their community.

These widespread and compelling results for learners are particularly noteworthy in the following ways:

- With only a few exceptions, women completing HREP almost unanimously reported some degree of positive impact.
- These results were evident regardless of the year that the women graduated from HREP, where they resided in Turkey, the trainer that they had, and their personal background.
- These outcomes were also consistent with the positive results of the 2004 external evaluation, for those questions that were included in both studies.

This suggests that HREP is both effective and robust in fostering knowledge, attitudes and skills that empower women to know and claim their rights in the Turkish setting.

Also noteworthy is that many impacts in the private domain were more pronounced for those alumni who had less education or who did not work outside of the home. These areas included knowledge of women's rights and Turkish laws intended to protect them; how to apply these laws to protect their rights (including the use of protection orders); knowledge about their own sexuality; and increased confidence, courage and sense of self worth. This critical finding suggests that HREP is especially empowering for more vulnerable women in Turkish society. This is a key consideration for WWHR as the organization considers if and how to continue to expand beyond its original target group of more vulnerable women in Turkey to women with more diverse backgrounds.

7.2. Key Findings in Relation to Impacts on Trainers

As with the findings for the alumni, HREP had a clear and positive impact on trainers in all of the areas investigated in surveys and interviews, including knowledge and awareness, attitudes and feelings, skills, and behaviors and actions. Trainers almost unanimously reported that HREP had improved their knowledge of women's rights and the Turkish legal documents protecting them. Over 90% of the trainers reported increased knowledge on the topics of reproductive rights, women's sexuality and related government policies. The vast majority of trainers also indicated that because of their engagement with HREP they were more self confident and courageous; had increased solidarity with other women; and had gained skills that would increased their capacity to claim their rights, including the ability to communicate effectively, to make decisions and to recognize and address problems.

The study showed that trainers applied the women's rights perspectives in their work in ways that extended beyond the facilitation of study groups. Trainers almost unanimously reported in surveys that their involvement with HREP had increased their motivation for their job, had enhanced their ability to carry out their professional work and specifically enabled them to apply a woman's perspective.

These results are particularly noteworthy in the following ways:

- With only a few exceptions, trainers engaged with HREP almost unanimously reported some degree of positive impact.
- These results were evident regardless of the year the women had completed the HREP trainer training program, how many study groups they had facilitated; whether they were associated with GDSS, an NGO or another organization; and their personal background.

Those trainers who had facilitated at least seven study groups reported stronger impacts in relation to HREP's influence on their motivation for their professional work and feelings of solidarity with other women. Thus for some women, their ongoing facilitation of study groups both reflected and reinforced their personal benefits of their engagement with HREP.

7.3. Key Findings in Relation to Impacts on Government Partner Organizations

Interviews with GDSS managers and trainers showed that their long standing collaboration with WWHR had successfully promoted a “women-focused” set of programming that strengthened other efforts supporting healthy families and children. According to the Vice-Director, over this period of time, concurrent changes in Turkish laws had strengthened GDSS’s ability to reduce violence against women and to promote gender equality. The Vice-Director indicated that her department was “very proud” of the fact that they had been collaborating since 1998 with WWHR and that “this is our longest collaboration with any NGO.”

The implementation of HREP, according to trainers, had influenced the policy and operation of related programming at the community level. Over 90% of the trainers indicated that HREP had resulted in increased demand for GDSS services, collaborations with other organizations on issues of concern to women, and greater sensitivity in addressing women’s issues. These results support the idea that HREP had positively influenced the policy and operation of GDSS community centers.

The perspectives of senior managers in government agencies in relation to relatively new collaborations with WWHR were also very positive in relation to HREP. The directors of the Family Unit of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the ILO Office in Ankara, and the Employment Agency (ISKUR) confirmed their beliefs that women’s equality and empowerment were fundamental to the effective work of their departments. All of the directors enthusiastically supported the prospect of future collaborations with WWHR.

Although quantitative data was not available for these pilot programs, interviews with managers, trainers and some participants suggested positive results for learners. Interview carried out with trainers and Quran instructors in the study confirmed that many learners had critically analyzed their personal lives using a women’s rights perspective. Moreover, these directors reported that their internal evaluations had demonstrated to their satisfaction that HREP had positively influenced their constituents. For example, as a result of HREP, Quran instructors were more familiar with women’s rights, Turkish laws and agencies designed to protect them, and which state or civil society organizations to contact on behalf of women in their neighborhood with problems.

One problematic area that emerged for some of the Quran instructors was the topic of sexual and reproductive rights. This raises a question concerning potential requests to WWHR in the future to adapt programming in relation to requests from new target groups, which is addressed later in this chapter.

7.4. Key Findings in Relation to the Application of the Transformative Learning Approach

The study found evidence of components of transformative learning and popular education in both the design and the results of HREP, both central to the Transformation Model of HRE. The feminist methodology that underscores the study group processes

also inform HREP as a whole, including peer learning, a democratic culture, community building/solidarity and discussion of issues of personal concern to women.

The research documented the following key empowerment outcomes for women:

- The women's rights perspective
- Knowledge of laws and organizations protecting women's human rights
- Self confidence and courage
- Valuing of self
- Ability to express oneself and make decisions
- Identification of problems and solutions to these problems
- A range of actions that women took in relation to family relations, their education, work, and activism

According to HREP coordinator Zelal Ayman:

HREP enables women to feel motivated to transform their way of thinking about themselves and the social life around them...Feminism has a special strength – promoting self awareness and the skills and capacities to change myself...To understand what has been done to her, why she experienced discrimination in her family by her parents...If she could not analyze the experiences that hurt her, that affected her, then she cannot find solutions.

Study group processes reflective of the transformative learning and popular education approaches were documented in the case study chapter, including self reflection, critical dialogue and discussion of issues of relevance and importance to women. According to WWHR co-founder Pinar Ilkkaracan:

I was much more interested in how they can transform themselves than what they can learn...Once you transform you can do learning yourself.

WWHR President Liz Erçevik Amado agreed that the methodologies of transformational learning by Mezirow and colleagues were all present in the program. Activating events include examples of discrimination against women, and critical dialogue and reflection were embedded within group discussion and exercises. The revising of assumptions and perspectives is done individually by participants. According to a trainer from Istanbul:

HREP initiates a process where women question everything, which is the prerequisite to change. Many participants say during the group process 'I didn't know that before' or 'I knew it but I didn't know how to put it into practice.'

Critical reflection and dialogue were essential for bringing the women's rights perspective to life within the study groups. Weekly workshops meant that women could bring back into the study groups their life experiences over the 16-week period. According to WWHR President Amado, participation in the HREP training is a period of life spent with the other members of the study group, rather than an incident.

7.5. Strategic Considerations for HREP Moving Forward

Consistent quality of HREP

The findings from this study point to clear and robust outcomes that are presumably related to a range of HREP program features, such as trainer preparation, learner selection, and program content and methodology. It is remarkable that the program has maintained its quality over time and through a period of growth. Although program components were not examined as part of the study, interviews with WWHR staff and trainers revealed a culture that encouraged honesty, teamwork and problem-solving between staff and trainers. Moreover, ongoing internal evaluations carried out by WWHR in conjunction with trainers and learners have provided regular feedback on HREP operation and outcomes.

It seems evident that the longevity of the program, the WWHR staff and many of the trainers, combined with the self-evaluation efforts of WWHR, have very likely contributed to its success. This combination has facilitated the program remaining sensitive to the needs of women in Turkey while at the same time benefiting from the wisdom and judgment that comes from long-term engagement with HREP.

The program continues to remain highly relevant for women in Turkey, in the context of improved protection of women in the Civil and Criminal Codes and the development of a women's human rights movement. Such legal and political shifts invariably present new opportunities as well as challenges for improving women's rights. WWHR's vigilant analysis of the implications of such changes for women's equality and empowerment will undoubtedly continue to inform strategic decisions in relation to HREP.

Diversification of HREP Programming

WWHR staff and trainers receive ongoing requests to carry out HREP with new target groups and in potentially new formats (e.g., shorter trainings, the inclusion of men). Trainers are already carrying out study groups that include women with university educations and in professional jobs. The pilot projects with the new target group of Quran instructors and the shortening of session numbers for women participating in ILO-sponsored vocational training were formally included in this study, and the modest data that was collected indicated positive outcomes on learners.

Whether or not WWHR might continue to diversify its target group and approach invites a complex set of questions. The first is in relation to impacts. This study has demonstrated that many results in the private domain were more pronounced for those alumni who had less education or who did not work outside of the home. These women can be considered to be especially vulnerable. Their participation in HREP may, in some instances, make life changing differences.

On the other hand, WWHR's work with multipliers – including Quran instructors, police officers, assembly members, social workers, NGO staff, and others whose professional work involves and affects other women – can be essential for implementing the women's rights perspective and protection more broadly in Turkey. The impacts for HREP trainers showed that the program influenced their personal lives and enhanced their ability to integrate and apply the women's rights perspective in their work. Many of these women, such as the Quran instructors, work with vulnerable women whom HREP would not otherwise be able to reach directly.

Social change strategies call for the ongoing empowerment of individual women so that they can know and claim their rights as well as the integration of women's rights into the policies and practices of civil servants and other government officials so that these rights can be respected and protected. Thus both of these outreach strategies seem essential for promoting women's rights in Turkey and should be retained for HREP.

Given that WWHR has been able to successfully expand programming and maintain quality in the past, there is every reason to be optimistic that the organization has the capacity to move forward with a deliberate diversification of target groups, provided that the number of WWHR staff and trainers are expanded as necessary, and carefully, and that quality controls are put in place.

There are, however, additional considerations. New government partner organizations, such as those where HREP was piloted, may ask WWHR to implement HREP on a wide scale basis. WWHR would then need whether they have the capacity to fulfill such requests.

WWHR would also need to carefully consider the degree of control they would have in relation to the implementation of HREP with trainings organized by partner organizations. For example, the partnerships with the Ankara Office of the ILO and the Department of Employment Services required that the number of sessions be shortened in order to fit into the vocational education training schedule. Because the trainers are associated with GDSS, it was challenging for WWHR to get information about how these sessions were adapted. WWHR would need to work closely with their trainers in helping them to make decisions for these modifications, should WWHR feel comfortable with any change in the format.

Some considerations that will naturally emerge concern the coverage of all module themes; the degree of coverage; the length of the sessions and how these might affect group processes (too short might inhibit the use of participatory methodologies; too long might result in learner fatigue); and the spacing out of sessions so as to allow women to process and apply the critical reflections from HREP in their everyday lives. In principle it seems possible that the transformative learning methodology of HREP could be applied in a program that is less than 16 weeks long. The study does not directly inform such a decision other to indicate that any adaptations would need to retain all of the key components of transformative learning and popular education.

One standard that WWHR might insist upon is the principle of voluntary participation. Women who self select into HREP are personally motivated to do so, a predisposition that trainers have associated with openness, self reflection, critical dialogue and willing participation in group processes. This finding serves as a caution to WWHR against collaborating with partners who will “require” their staff or clients to participate in HREP.

Women’s Activism

HREP’s empowers women to know and claim their rights in both the private and public spheres. The widespread and profound impacts documented in this study reaffirm the potential for transformative education programming to cultivate agency in women and their ability to identify and act upon areas of their lives where human rights are unmet. The study revealed that despite the differing backgrounds and life circumstances of learners and trainers, the vast majority of women benefitted from HREP in similar ways. Across the case studies and the questionnaire items, the vast majority of alumni reported impacts related to legal literacy, self confidence, gender-sensitive child rearing methods, the renegotiation of power within relationships with partners, and becoming an informal source of information on women’s rights in their community.

The exception appeared to be in activism. Although two thirds of the learners reported that they had become more politically active in their community (for example, by voting or running for office), slightly less than half presented themselves as actively involved in an existing woman’s organization or the women’s movement in Turkey.

To some degree, this is a “glass half empty” problem, as statistically very few individuals become engaged in activism. The HREP results are likely to be substantially higher than the national average in Turkey. Yet, WWHR may feel that this figure would ideally be higher. The fact that nearly all of the alumni reported that they became resources for women’s rights in their community suggest that HREP alumni are willing to represent the woman’s perspective in the public domain. The apparent fact that this does not naturally lead to activism would need to be analyzed separately, taking into account factors such as the personality and backgrounds of the women, their available time, and environmental conditions.

Some trainers had observed that women with fewer personal problems and/or who already demonstrated a sense of personal agency (as evidenced in their higher education levels) might be more likely to immediately engage in women’s rights in the public domain of NGOs and activism. However, the study did not show that those women with higher levels of education were more likely to become engaged in women’s activism. The study results do not appear to be able to directly inform any strategic decisions in regards to interesting learners who might subsequently become involved activities such as becoming more politically active or forming an NGO. The conditions resulting in these outcomes appear to be more complex and beyond the scope of this study.

Conclusion

The results of the impact assessment confirms the sustained, wide ranging and robust impacts of HREP on learners, trainers and a longstanding government partner organization. Based on both a legal rights and gender perspective, the program has successfully empowered women to know and claim their rights both in the private sphere (including familial relations, sexual and reproductive rights, gender sensitive parenting) and the public sphere (including economic rights, political rights, organizing, and access to justice).

HREP is currently the most widespread, longest-running and comprehensive non-formal adult human rights education program in the region, and a unique example of sustainable NGO-state partnership in the field of women's human rights in Turkey. The results of the study speak to the feasibility of undertaking such a program successfully over many years and the potential of HREP to continue to empower women through its potential expansion. In a time when the United Nations General Assembly of the United Nations has endorsed the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, HREP provides a compelling example that should inspire replication in other countries and regions.

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HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear HREP Graduate,

This questionnaire is part of an impact assessment that is being carried out for WWHR. We are asking for your name in order to track the completion of these surveys. However, your name will not be associated with any of the information that you share.

Thank you in advance for honesty and for participating in this research. Your answers will not influence your status with the HREP training program.

Thank you for your participation!

YOUR PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. First name, Family name _____

2. Year of birth _____

3. City of residence _____ 4. Province of residence

5. Marital status

Never married

Married

Please indicate which applies: Official marriage Religious marriage

Widow

Living separately

Divorced

6. If you have been married, how old were you when you were first married? _____

7. Do you have children? Yes No

8. Total number of people living in your household (including yourself) _____

9. Educational background

(Please indicate highest level of attainment)

Have never attended school

Attended some primary school

Graduate of primary school

Graduate of secondary school

Graduate of high school

Graduate from university with initial degree

Graduate from university with advanced degree

10. Currently do you carry out work outside the home for getting income?

Yes ___ No ___

11. Currently do you carry out home-base work (e.g., sewing, embroidery) for getting income?

No ___ Yes ___ If yes, what kind of work do you do?

YOUR BACKGROUND AS A HREP PARTICIPANT

12. Year that you completed the HREP training _____

13. Before you participated in the HREP training, had you participated in any other trainings related to women's rights? Yes ___ No ___

14. Since you participated in the HREP training, have you participated in any other trainings related to women's rights? Yes ___ No ___

IMPACTS OF YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE HREP TRAINING

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. As you answer these questions, please keep in mind that we are looking for ways in which your participation in the HREP training (and not other experiences in your life!) may have influenced you.

15. My participation in the HREP training program has....

15a. increased my understanding of the woman's rights perspective.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15b. resulted in my learning about the legal documents that protect women's rights in Turkey.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15c. resulted in my knowing how to use government agencies and civil society organizations to protect my rights.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15d. resulted in my applying Turkish laws (e.g., protection order) to protect my rights.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15e. made me feel in solidarity with other women.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15f. increased my knowledge about reproductive rights.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15g. increased my awareness about my own sexuality.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15h. increased my knowledge about how women's sexuality and their reproductive capacities influence the policies of government.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15i. resulted in my recognizing problems in my life.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15j. helped me in being able to solve problems in my life.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15k. helped me in being able to solve the problems of others around me.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15l. increased my overall self confidence.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15m. made me more courageous.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15n. helped me to achieve my potential.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15o. made me value myself more.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15p. increased my ability to express my thoughts.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15q. increased my ability to make decisions for myself.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15r. resulted in my having more influence in family decisions.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15s. resulted in increased conflict within my family.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15t. enabled me to improve my relations with family members.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15u. contributed to my husband's increased involvement in housework.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___ Does not apply (not married) ___

15v. resulted in my being more sensitive to gender roles in raising my children.
Not at all___ A little___ Quite a lot___ Does not apply (no children)___

15w. resulted in my re-starting/continuing my education.
Yes___ No___

15x. resulted in my returning/starting to work for income.
Yes___ No___

15y. resulted in my starting my own business.
Yes___ No___

15z. resulted in my informally sharing information and advice about women's rights within my community.
Not at all___ A little___ Quite a lot___

15aa. contributed to my becoming actively involved with an existing women's organization
Not at all___ A little___ Quite a lot___

15ab. contributed to my joining an existing association or organization (not specifically associated with women's rights)
Yes___ No___

15ac. resulted in my forming a new group or organization.
Yes___ No___

15ad. resulted in my becoming more politically active in my community (e.g., voting, running for office).
Not at all___ A little___ Quite a lot___

15af. contributed to my becoming more involved in the woman's movement in Turkey (for example, organizing seminars, participating in petitions).
Yes___ No___

16. Before the HREP training, were you subjected to physical violence in your home?

16a. Yes ___ No ___

16b. If yes, which of the following was true following the training?

___ The physical violence continued the same as before.

___ The physical violence increased.

___ The physical violence decreased.

___ The physical violence ended.

17. Before the HREP training, were you subjected to emotional violence in your home?

17a. Yes ___ No ___

17b. If yes, which of the following was true following the training?

___ The emotional violence continued the same as before.

___ The emotional violence increased.

___ The emotional violence decreased.

___ The emotional violence ended.

18. Before the HREP training, were you subjected to economic violence in your home?

18a. Yes ___ No ___

18b. If yes, which of the following was true following the training?

___ The economic violence continued the same as before.

___ The economic violence increased.

___ The economic violence decreased.

___ The economic violence ended.

19. Looking back over the years since your participation in the HREP training, what would you say is the most significant change that this has had on you? (Please write clearly and limit your answer to 2-3 paragraphs.)

20. Please feel free to share below any other impacts that the HREP training has had on you.

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN TRAINER QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear HREP Trainer,

This questionnaire is part of an impact assessment that is being carried out for WWHR. We are asking for your name in order to track the completion of these surveys. However, your name will not be associated with any of the information that you share.

Thank you in advance for honesty and for participating in this research. Your answers will not influence your status with the HREP training program.

Thank you for your participation!

YOUR PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. First name, Family name _____
2. Year of birth _____
3. City of residence _____ 4. Province of residence _____
5. Marital status
 Never married
 Married
 Widow
 Living separately
 Divorced
6. Do you have children? Yes No
7. Total number of people living in your household (including yourself) _____
8. Educational background
(Please indicate highest level of attainment)
 Graduate of secondary school
 Graduate of high school
 Graduate from university with initial degree
 Graduate from university with advanced degree
9. Current profession
 Employee of General Directorate of Social Services
 NGO volunteer or staff person
 Other: _____

YOUR BACKGROUND AS A HREP TRAINER

10. Year that you completed the “training of trainers” organized by WWHR _____

11. Approximate number of HREP groups that you have led

___ 1-3 groups

___ 4-6 groups

___ 7-9 groups

___ 10 or more groups

12. Prior to participating in the WWHR “training of trainers” program, had you participated in any trainings related to women’s rights? Yes ___ No ___

13. Since you participated in the WWHR “training of trainers” program, have you participated in any other trainings related to women’s human rights? Yes ___ No ___

IMPACTS OF YOUR ASSOCIATION WITH THE HREP TRAININGS

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

14. My association with the HREP training program has....

14a. helped me in developing a critical consciousness about gender roles in Turkish society.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14b. increased my understanding of the woman’s rights perspective.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14c. resulted in my learning about the legal documents that protect women’s rights in Turkey.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14d. made me feel in solidarity with other women.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14e. increased my knowledge about reproductive rights.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14f. increased my awareness about my own sexuality.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14g. increased my knowledge about how women’s sexuality and their reproductive capacities influence the policies of government.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

- 14h. resulted in my recognizing problems in my life.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14i. helped me in being able to solve problems in my own life.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14j. helped me in being able to solve the problems of others around me.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14k. increased my overall self confidence.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14l. made me more courageous.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14m. helped me to achieve my potential.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14n. made me value myself more.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14o. enhanced my ability to carry out my professional work.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14p. increased my motivation for my professional work.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14q. resulted in increased conflict within my family.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14r. enabled me to improve my relations with family members.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14s. resulted in members of my community seeing me as a resource person for women's issues.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14t. resulted in my applying the woman's perspective to other areas of my professional work.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14u. resulted in greater sensitivity to women's issues within the work of my organization/agency.
Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___
- 14v. resulted in an increased demand for the services of my organization/agency.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14w. resulted in my organization/agency collaborating with other organizations on issues of concern to women.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14x. contributed to my becoming actively involved with an existing women's organization

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14y. contributed to my becoming more involved in the woman's movement in Turkey (for example, organizing seminars, participating in petitions).

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14z. contributed to my becoming more engaged with an existing organization (not specifically associated with women's rights).

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

14aa. resulted in my forming a new group or organization.

Not at all ___ A little ___ Quite a lot ___

15. Before the HREP training, were you subjected to physical violence in your home?

15a. Yes ___ No ___

15b. If yes, which of the following was true following the training?

___ The physical violence continued the same as before.

___ The physical violence increased.

___ The physical violence decreased.

___ The physical violence ended.

16. Before the HREP training, were you subjected to emotional violence in your home?

16a. Yes ___ No ___

16b. If yes, which of the following was true following the training?

___ The emotional violence continued the same as before.

___ The emotional violence increased.

___ The emotional violence decreased.

___ The emotional violence ended.

17. Before the HREP training, were you subjected to economic violence in your home?

17a. Yes ___ No ___

17b. If yes, which of the following was true following the training?

- The economic violence continued the same as before.
- The economic violence increased.
- The economic violence decreased.
- The economic violence ended.

18. Looking back over your years of association with the HREP trainings, what would you say is the most significant change that this work has had on you? (Please write clearly and limit your answer to 2-3 paragraphs.)

19. Please feel free to share below any other impacts that the HREP training program has had on you.

20. Please share your suggestions for ways in which the impacts and efficiency of the HREP trainings can be improved.

21. We will be asking trainers to distribute surveys to graduates of the HREP trainings. Please indicate the number of HREP graduates that you would be able to locate/reach, according to their year of graduation from a HREP training that you organized:

- Year of graduation 2005. Approximate number of graduates you can locate/reach: _____
- Year of graduation 2006. Approximate number of graduates you can locate/reach: _____
- Year of graduation 2007. Approximate number of graduates you can locate/reach: _____
- Year of graduation 2008. Approximate number of graduates you can locate/reach: _____
- Year of graduation 2009. Approximate number of graduates you can locate/reach: _____
- Year of graduation 2010. Approximate number of graduates you can locate/reach: _____
- Year of graduation 2011 (forthcoming). Approximate number of graduates you can locate/reach: _____