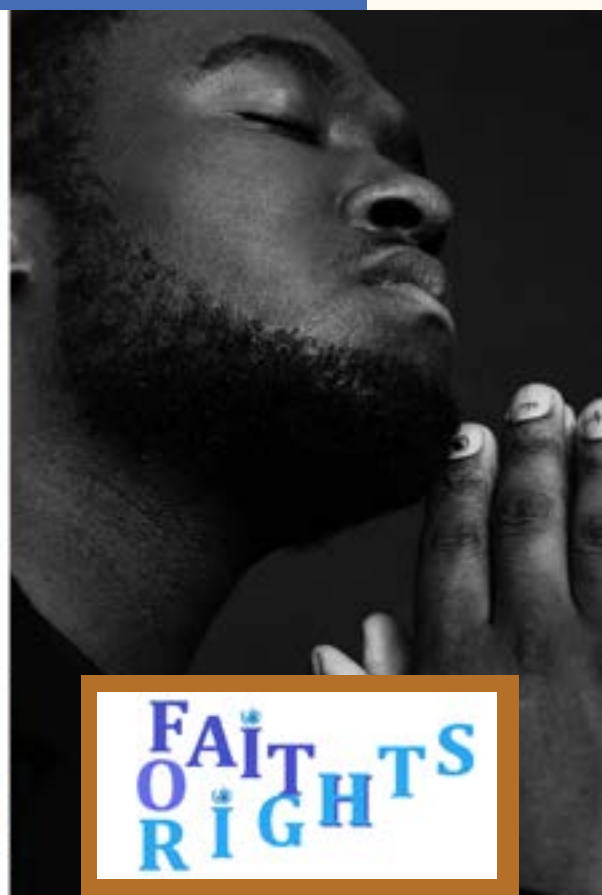


Faith for Rights

TRAINING WORKBOOK VOLUME 2

Module Content



Contents

This workbook is intended for use as a guide and as a resource as you participate in training for the Faith for Rights framework. The contents of this workbook are not meant to be comprehensive of all the information presented in the training or the Faith for Rights toolkit.

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Welcome

The purpose of this training package is to introduce the Faith for Rights framework and to examine the relationship between religion and human rights. This will include an overview of the Faith for Rights Toolkit, the Human Rights framework and peer-to-peer learning activities. The day will conclude with an opportunity for you, as a participant, to begin to develop a plan for using the Faith for Rights toolkit within your own respective community of influence. We hope you find the training materials helpful, enlightening and enjoyable.

About Faith for Rights

The “Faith for Rights” framework provides space for a cross-disciplinary reflection and action on the connections between religions, beliefs and human rights. The objective is to empower faith actors to contribute to fostering peaceful societies, which uphold human dignity and equality for all and where diversity is not just tolerated but fully respected and celebrated. The Beirut Declaration and its 18 commitments on “Faith for Rights”, adopted in March 2017, has been supported by and reaches out to various actors belonging to religions and beliefs in all regions of the world.

The #Faith4Rights toolkit (PDF) aims at translating the “Faith for Rights” framework into practical peer-to-peer learning and enriching capacity-building programmes.

It contains 18 learning modules, mirroring each of the commitments on “Faith for Rights”. These modules offer concrete ideas for learning exercises, for example how to unpack the 18 commitments, share personal stories, search for additional religious quotes or provide for inspiring examples of artistic expressions. The whole concept is interactive, result-oriented and conducive to critical thinking. The toolkit is open for adaptation by facilitators in order to tailor the modules to the specific context of the participants.



Module 4

Religious or Belief Pluralism

Commitment IV

We pledge to support and promote equal treatment in all areas and manifestations of religion or belief and to denounce all forms of discriminatory practices. We commit to prevent the use of the notion of “State religion” to discriminate against any individual or group and we consider any such interpretation as contrary to the oneness of humanity and equal dignity of humankind. Similarly, **we commit to prevent the use of “doctrinal secularism” from reducing the space for religious or belief pluralism in practice.**

Unpacking

In this activity you will break down the commitment into different elements and identify action points necessary to ensure the commitment is met. It is not necessary to resolve all issues related to the topic.

During this exercise, reflect on the following questions:

- Why is Commitment IV important?
- What are the elements of Commitment IV?
- How are "state religion" and "doctrinal secularism" used to discriminate against individuals or groups?
- What can you do to prevent such discrimination?

Hostilities between communities threaten social cohesion, peace and security within and among nations. Such hostilities can be rooted in social, ethnic, religious or on any other ground. History tells us how much damage occurs to the whole society when minority rights are violated. Discrimination plants seeds of hatred in the social tissues. This creates tensions and grievances which are exploitable for political purposes.

-Context, Commitment IV, Faith for Rights Toolkit



Storytelling

What are your personal experiences with discrimination involving "State religions and "secularism"?

Module 4

Religious or Belief Pluralism

Constitution Drafting

A model of 'respectful distancing' as advocated by former Special Rapporteur Ahmed Shaheed, ensures "that the State does not resort to religious exclusivity or bias in culture, identity, schooling, or even symbolism for short-term ends and for vested interests, but will continually strive to create spaces of inclusiveness for all as an active and ongoing endeavor.



Questions to consider:

- Should States constitutionally adopt a religion?
- What are the benefits and limitations of secularism?
- What are the international standards in this area?
- Should the term "religion" be defined in the constitution?
- Are you witnessing a de-secularization in your countries? How and why?

In small groups, work to draft fictitious constitutional provisions which define an ideal relationship between religion and state. Be prepared to discuss your draft with the larger group.

Module 5

Women, Girls and Gender Equality

Commitment V

We pledge to **ensure non-discrimination and gender equality** in implementing this declaration on “Faith for Rights”. We specifically commit to revisit, each within our respective areas of competence, those religious understandings and interpretations that appear to perpetuate gender inequality and harmful stereotypes or even condone gender-based violence. We pledge to ensure justice and equal worth of everyone as well as to affirm the right of all women, girls and boys not to be subjected to any form of discrimination and violence, including harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, child and/or forced marriages and crimes committed in the name of so-called honour.

- “A man should respect his wife more than he respects himself and love her as much as he loves himself.” (Talmud, Yebamot, 62,b)
- "Never will I allow to be lost the work of any one among you, whether male or female; for you are of one another." (Qu’ran 3, 195)
- "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another." (Quran 49:13)
- "In the image of God He created him male and female. He created them." (Genesis 1, 27)
- “The best among you is he who is best to his wife” (Hadith)
- “It is a woman who is a friend and partner for life. It is woman who keeps the race going. How may we think low of her of whom are born the greatest. From a woman a woman is born: none may exist without a woman.” (Guru Granth Sahib, p. 473)
- “The world of humanity is possessed of two wings - the male and the female. So long as these two wings are not equivalent in strength the bird will not fly. Until womankind reaches the same degree as man, until she enjoys the same arena of activity, extraordinary attainment for humanity will not be realized” (‘Abdu’l-Baha)

Module 5

Women, Girls and Gender Equality

“One of the primary challenges in the elimination of harmful practices relates to the lack of awareness or capacity of relevant professionals, [...], to adequately understand, identify and respond to incidents or the risks of harmful practices. A comprehensive, holistic and effective approach to capacity-building should aim to engage influential leaders, such as traditional and religious leaders”

- *Recommendation from the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*

Critical Thinking

- Do you agree or disagree with any elements in Commitment V?
- Are there missing elements that could improve our fights against gender discrimination?
- Are there female religious leaders in your environment? If so, what is their impact? If not, why not?
- What are the obstacles of having more women with responsibilities within the religious sphere?



THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

1 Equality

Everyone is born free and equal in dignity and with rights.



2 Freedom from Discrimination

You should never be discriminated against for any reason.



3 Life, Liberty and Security

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and personal security.



4 Freedom from Slavery

No-one shall be held in slavery or servitude.



5 Freedom from Torture

No-one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel or degrading treatment.



6 Recognition as Person Before Law

You have the right to be treated as a person in the eyes of the law.



7 Equality Before the Law

You have the right to be treated by the law in the same way as everyone else.



8 Remedy by Tribunal

You have the right to remedy by competent tribunal.



9 Freedom from arbitrary arrest

No-one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.



10 Fair Public Hearing

You have the right to a fair public hearing.



11 Innocent until Proven Guilty

You have the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty.



12 Privacy

No-one has the right to interfere with your privacy, family, or home.



13 Freedom of Movement

You have the right to freedom of movement in and out of the country.



14 Asylum

You have the right to seek asylum in other countries from persecution.



15 Nationality

You have the right to a nationality.



16 Marriage and Family

You have the right to marriage and to raise a family.



17 Property

You have the right to own property.



18 Freedom of Belief

You have the right to freedom of belief and religion.



19 Freedom of Opinion

You have the right to freedom of opinion and expression.



20 Freedom of Assembly

You have the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.



21 Take Part in Government

You have the right to take part in the government of your country.



22 Social Security

You have the right to social security.



23 Work

You have the right to desirable work and to join trade unions.



24 Rest and Leisure

You have the right to rest and leisure.



25 Adequate Living Standard

You have the right to a decent life, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care.



26 Education

You have the right to education.



27 Participate in Cultural Life

You have the right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community.



28 Social Order

You have the Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document.



29 Mutual Responsibility

We all have a responsibility to the people around us and should protect their rights and freedoms.



30 Freedom from State or Personal Interference

There is nothing in this declaration that justifies any person or country taking away the rights to which we are all entitled.



HRE USA
Human Rights Educators USA
A national network dedicated to building a culture of human rights.
hreusa.org

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION is a lifelong process of teaching and learning that helps individuals develop the knowledge, skills, and values to fully realize and protect the human rights of themselves and others; to fulfill their responsibilities in the context of internationally agreed upon human rights principles; and to achieve justice and peace in the world. **HRE USA** strives to promote human rights, justice, and peace by cultivating an expansive, vibrant base of support for Human Rights Education (HRE) in the United States.

Module 6

Minority Rights

Commitment VI

We pledge to **stand up for the rights of all persons belonging to minorities within our respective areas of action and to defend their freedom of religion or belief as well as their right to participate equally and effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life**, as recognized by international human rights law, as a minimum standard of solidarity among all believers.

- **What difficulties do members of minority groups face in your community?**
-
-
-

What is a minority?



"An ethnic, religious or linguistic minority is any group of persons which constitutes less than half of the population in the entire territory of a State whose members share common characteristics of culture, religion or language. [...] A person can freely belong to an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority without any requirement of citizenship, residence, official recognition or any other status."

Exploring

In this activity you will explore the role of the religious community in protecting minority rights. Use the space below to map or sketch out the roles and responsibilities of different religious communities and individuals in this regard. Focus on the following questions:

- What role does religion play in this context?
- How can minority discrimination be addressed through religion?
- How can individuals of faith contribute to fighting discrimination?

Mapping

Module 7

Incitement to Hatred

Commitment VII

We pledge to publicly **denounce all instances of advocacy of hatred that incites to violence, discrimination or hostility, including those that lead to atrocity crimes.** We bear a direct responsibility to denounce such advocacy, particularly when it is conducted in the name of religion or belief.



War starts in the minds and is cultivated by a reasoning fuelled by often hidden advocacy of hatred. Positive speech is also the healing tool of reconciliation and peace-building in the hearts and minds."

-The Beirut Declaration

Political and religious leaders have a triple responsibility in denouncing incitement to hatred, violence and intolerance. This responsibility is as follows:

- Refrain from using messages of intolerance or expressions which may incite violence, hostility or discrimination;
- Speaking out firmly and promptly against intolerance, discriminatory stereotyping and instances of hate speech.
- It should be made clear that violence can never be tolerated as a response to incitement to hatred.

In the following activity, you will discuss ways in which faith leaders can preserve their religious expression while avoiding and eliminating speech and actions that would incite situations of intolerance and violence against others.

Linking the Dots

- How can faith-base leaders speak out in defence of others while still preserving their beliefs and religious expression?
- What obstacles may limit the role of faith leaders in countering hate speech?

Module 7

Incitement to Hatred

- “Now this is the command: Do to the doer to make him do.” (Ancient Egyptian Middle Kingdom);
- “Repay injury with justice and kindness with kindness.” (Confucius)
- “What is hateful to you, don’t do to your friend.” (Talmud, Shabat, 31,a)
- “Whatever words we utter should be chosen with care for people will hear them and be influenced by them for good or ill.” (Buddha)
- “By self-control and by making dharma (right conduct) your main focus, treat others as you treat yourself.” (Mah bh rata)
- “You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against your kinsfolk. Love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18)
- “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” (Matthew 7:12)
- “Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou doest not.” (Baha’u’llah)

Exploring

- How can incitement be countered through religion?
- What forms can such initiatives take?
- How should religious leaders react when facing a situation of incitement to hatred?



Storytelling

In the space below, take a few moments to draw, sketch or write about instances in which hate was or was not successfully tackled in your own community/society/neighborhood/institution. Afterward, spend some time in a group sharing personal stories and ideas for combatting hatred and discrimination.

Module 14

Impartiality

Commitment XIV

We pledge to promote, within our respective spheres of influence, the imperative necessity of ensuring **respect in all humanitarian assistance activities** of the Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes, especially that **aid is given regardless of the recipients' creed** and without adverse distinction of any kind and that aid will not be used to further a particular religious standpoint.

Discussion

The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross provides guidelines for faith leaders to follow when acting in the humanitarian field. Discuss the following questions:

- Which of these principles do you think is the most important?
- Are there any principles that you find difficult to be applied in practice?



Module 14

Impartiality

Exploring

- How can the lack of neutrality in a conflict situation be redressed through religion?

- What should be the reaction of a religious leader when facing a situation where aid is not given regardless of the recipients' creed?

"Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. . . . We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed."

-IFRC Code of Conduct



Critical Thinking

- Should faith-based humanitarian aid be all inclusive or should charity remain confined to one's own faith boundaries?
- Can both options be combined? If so, how?
- Are any elements missing from Commitment XIV?
- What are the pitfalls and positives of being a faith or belief based humanitarian organization? How can these pitfalls be overcome?

Module 16

Ethical and Spiritual Leverage

Commitment XVI

We commit to **leverage the spiritual and moral weight of religions and beliefs** with the aim of strengthening the protection of universal human rights and developing preventative strategies that we adapt to our local contexts, benefitting from the potential support of relevant United Nations entities.

Tweeting: How would you summarize this commitment in less than 140 characters? Some points to consider might be: What are the key elements of Commitment XVI? What implied actions are presented in the commitment?

Context

As much as religions are often manipulated in conflict situations, faith actors are powerful agents of peace-building and reconciliation in post-conflict situations. They are certainly best placed to prevent or counter such manipulation in the name of their own religion or belief. Universal values are a common heritage of humanity. This fact can and should be used by faith actors in particular to reconcile divided communities. Faith actors, like any other human rights defenders, are among the custodians of shared values among all religions and beliefs – be they theistic, non-theistic, atheistic or other. Optimizing this custodianship through concrete social engagement is not a deviation from the role of faith actors. It rather lies in its heart and demonstrates its sincerity.

Example in Practice

This most tiny virus, COVID-19, carries an existential test, combined with a huge opportunity for humankind: a test of solidarity and an opportunity to re-think and correct a number of trajectories Our core responsibility as faith actors is to translate ethical values into concrete actions."

-Statement by Religions for Peace on Coronavirus



Consider the following questions in relation to the statement above:

- What role do religious leaders have in pandemics and other global crises?
- What are other examples from your own experience?
- What role did religious actors play in helping bring the pandemic under control?

Module 16

Ethical and Spiritual Leverage

Storytelling

What relevant experience do you have in leveraging the spiritual and moral weight of belief in order to make an impact on a human rights issue? How do the diverse experiences of others contribute to your own understanding?



Exploring

Explore ways in which Commitment XVI can be applied directly to your local context. Use this space to devise a hypothetical project and funding proposal focusing on a specific human rights issue. Consider the following questions as you explore the possibilities:

- What is the specific role and responsibility of religious leaders in the context of the chosen human rights issue?
- How could the project be funded?
- What are the possible pitfalls and how can they be avoided??

"But love your enemies, do good to them and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great"

-Luke 6, 35

"The God-conscious being is always unstained, like the sun, which gives its comfort and warmth to all. The God-conscious being looks upon all alike, like the wind, which blows equally upon the king and the poor beggar."

-Guru Granth Sahib p. 272

"The religion of God and His divine law are the most potent instruments and the surest of all means for the dawning of the light of unity amongst men. The progress of the world, the development of nations, the tranquility of peoples, and the peace of all who dwell on earth are among the principles and ordinances of God."

-Baha'u'llah



Conclusion

Reflection

Take some time to reflect on your experience at the Faith for Rights Leadership Training Workshop. Answer one or more of the following questions:

- What was the most helpful topic of discussion for you?
- How can Faith for Rights benefit those you serve?
- What topic of discussion surprised you?
- How were you changed as a result of your attendance today?



Additional Resources

For more information on the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the #Faith4Rights Toolkit

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/faith-for-rights>

An online resource for individuals who would like to facilitate Faith for Rights events

<https://faith4rights.iclrs.org/>

An online course on Beliefs, Human Rights, and Peacebuilding using the Faith for Rights framework:

<https://usip-global-campus.mn.co/courses/7980875/content?autojoin=1>

For comments, questions and feedback regarding the Faith for Rights Training Package, please email: