

**Draft Training Manual**  
**on**  
**Women's Human Rights Education**

Written by

*Manisha Gunasekera*



A Publication of:

**Women and Media Collective**

**No 5, Jayaratne Avenue,  
Colombo  
Sri Lanka**

**THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE  
THE PEOPLE'S DECADE OF HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION  
1991-2001**

**HRE/GENDER/1R/6**

## Contents

<i>Introduction</i> .....	iii
 <b>PART 1      TRAINING METHODOLOGY</b>	
<b>Workshop No. 1</b> .....	3
Participants.....	3
Identifying the Target Group in Formulating the Methodology.....	3
Training Methodology.....	4
Format.....	4
Chronological Order of Methodology Adopted.....	5
 <b>Workshop No. 2</b> .....	19
Target Group.....	19
Methodology.....	20
Chronological Order of Methodology Adopted.....	20
 <b>Workshop No. 3</b> .....	27
Video Program on Human Rights Education.....	28
Format of Video.....	28
Violence against Women, Structural Violence and Women's Human Rights.....	29
Training Methodology.....	29
Using the Video as a Training Tool.....	31
 <b>Appendix I      Program of Workshop No. 1</b> .....	33
<b>Appendix II      Universal Declaration of Human Rights                     (Abbreviated) (1948)</b> .....	34
<b>Appendix III      Convention on the Elimination of All                     Forms of Discrimination against                     Women (Abbreviated) (1979)</b> .....	36



<b>Appendix IV</b>	Women's Charter (Sri Lanka) (The Broad Topics) (1992).....	39
<b>Appendix V</b>	Women's Charter (Sri Lanka).....	40
<b>Appendix VI</b>	Human Rights Exercise (Case Studies).....	41
<b>Appendix VII</b>	Skit (Extract from Brecht's <i>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i> : Sinhala adaptation by Henry Jayasena).....	45
<b>Appendix VIII</b>	Program of Workshop No. 2.....	49
<b>Appendix IX</b>	Human Rights Documents.....	50
<b>Appendix X</b>	Exercise (Case Studies).....	51
<b>Appendix XI</b>	Program of Workshop No. 3.....	56
<b>Appendix XII</b>	Human Rights Video (Script).....	58

## **PART II PARTICIPANT RESPONSE**

<b>Participant Response</b> .....	69
Workshops 1 and 2.....	69
<i>Participant Response (Overall)</i> .....	69

## **PART III STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE**

<b>Strategies for Change</b> .....	83
Introduction.....	83
<i>Strategies Developed by the First Workshop Group</i> .....	83
<i>Strategies Developed by the Trainers</i> .....	83

## ***Introduction***

It is important to emphasize first and foremost that this particular Women's Human Rights Education Manual targets *both* women and men. This is only the preliminary draft of what we at Women and Media earnestly hope, would be a much more comprehensive and ambitious Women's Human Rights Education Manual which ideally, could be most effectively used as a Training of Trainers Manual.

This Draft Manual is the outcome of a series of Women's Human Rights Education Workshops conducted by the Women and Media Collective for the People's Decade of Human Rights Education, since June 1995. By the time this Manual reaches Beijing (in late August 1995), the Collective would have conducted three Women's Human Rights Education Workshops (two in Colombo and one in Kandy, Sri Lanka) for the People's Decade of Human Rights Education. The primary objective of conducting these workshops is the promoting of women's rights as human rights among personnel involved in human rights education, the media and community development work, etc.

In conducting these workshops, it goes without saying that we, as resource persons,<sup>1</sup> took care not to confine our training strategies to the lecture mode. Thus, prime attention was paid to the development of a "lively" training methodology.

This Manual is in three parts: Part I records the gist of the training component, and the training methodology developed and used by us in the Human Rights Education Workshops. Part II records the responses of the trainees to the training methodology adopted. Part III records strategies for change and possible ways of improving the adopted strategies, especially incorporating the views of the workshop trainees, and speculates briefly on the development of

---

<sup>1</sup> Kamalini, Sepali, Sunila, Hemamali and Manisha were the resource persons involved in conducting these workshops.

more ambitious, alternative strategies for the promotion of women's human rights education. Thus, Part 111 in that sense, would perhaps be the most valuable component of the Draft Manual because it is a flexible arena which speculates on the development of a more dynamic women's human rights discourse. (Part 111 has yet to be developed comprehensively.)

It has also to be noted that most of the material included in the Draft Manual are English translations of the original(s), since all workshops were conducted in the two vernacular languages--Sinhala and Tamil.

We welcome comments on this draft manual which should be sent to the following address:

**Women and Media Collective**

No 5, Jayaratne Avenue,

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Tel: 94-1-595224, fax: 94-1-580721

**Manisha Gunasekera**  
*Editor*

## **PART I**

### **TRAINING METHODOLOGY**

## Workshop No. 1

<i>Topic of Workshop:</i>	Women's Rights as Human Rights (with emphasis on Violence against Women)
<i>Date:</i>	16 June 1995
<i>Venue:</i>	Hotel Janaki, Colombo 5
<i>Type of Workshop:</i>	Training of Trainers
<i>Target Group:</i>	Human rights activists, women's activists, media/advertizing personnel (women and men, mostly based in Colombo)
<i>Trainer(s):</i>	Kamalini Wijetilake Manisha Gunasekera

On 16 June 1995, The Women and Media Collective conducted a One-Day Training of Trainers Workshop on Women's Rights as Human Rights in Colombo, with special emphasis on Violence against Women.

### Participants

Twenty participants, eighteen women and two men, from human rights organizations, various nongovernmental organizations, legal institutions, advertizing firms and the media participated in the workshop.

### Identifying the Target Group in Formulating the Methodology

In formulating the methodology, our initial concern was in identifying the target group. Once we understood that the target group already possessed a certain knowledge of human rights as well as an awareness of women's rights as human rights, we decided to develop the training methodology accordingly.

Another significant aspect which marked the present workshop as "different", was the participation of both women and men in this workshop. Since we had little experience in conducting gender awareness programs (leaving aside women's human rights programs) with male participants, we felt that this workshop would be a catalyst for change: one step taken in the direction of imparting gender education to both women and men.

## **Training Methodology**

### **Format**

We decided to adopt, as far as possible, a participatory methodology. Three basic principles to which we paid prime attention in this context are as follows:

1. That the workshop is to be a learning process for the trainer(s) as well as the trainees, perhaps more so to the former.
2. That the trainer(s) should, at all times, grant adequate space for the trainees to express their opinions to the fullest, in whichever medium they are most comfortable in. In this context, that the trainer(s) should try, as far as possible, to convince the trainees by using the same "logic" used by the trainees themselves.
3. That the trainer(s) should, as far as possible, adopt a "lively" methodology.



## **Chronological Order of Methodology Adopted<sup>1</sup>**

### **a. *Introductions/Use an ice breaker***

It is important that all participants feel comfortable with their colleagues and the surroundings before launching onto the session proper.

### **b. *Expectations test***

Hand over thin, long strips of paper to the participants complete with marker pens, and ask them to jot down in one sentence their expectations of the workshop. Give them ten minutes for this. The trainer(s) can utilize these ten minutes to jot down their own objectives on similar pieces of paper.

### **c. *Synchronize trainer objectives/expectations with trainee objectives/expectations***

Collect the slips of paper and stick them up on the wall/magi board, and with the help of the participants, categorize these into three or four broad topics. The topics could be human rights, the law, women's rights, women's empowerment, etc. Leave room for the broad categories to emerge out of the participants' response, and as far as possible, let the participants categorize their own observations.

[Assumption: that most participants would at this point desire to gain a greater knowledge of the legal implications of human rights education.]

---

1

See Appendix 1 for the Program of Workshop 1.

As the next step stick up the trainer(s)' own objectives/expectations of the workshop. It is important to note that the trainer(s) must not be too forthcoming with their own objectives/expectations, since this could lead to the participant response being unconsciously directed along the lines of

the objectives set down for the workshop by the trainer(s). Thus for example, the trainer(s) can briefly state that they expect to make the link between women's rights and human rights, and also focus on the issue of violence against women in this workshop. They can further state that they hope there would be an effective sharing of the knowledge/experience of the participants.

**d. *Brief introduction to human rights***

[Assumption: We based our introduction on the assumption that the participants already possessed a fair knowledge of human rights as well as an idea of women's human rights. Thus, we were confident that we would be able to make the link between human rights and women's rights in one session (1-2 hours).]

*What are human rights?*

Ask the participants what they understand by the term human rights. Tell them to give an example each of what they understand to be a human right. Make a list of the rights that they come up with and stick the list up on the wall/magi board for all to see.

[Assumption: that at this point the participants would come up with mostly first-generation rights, and also with rights that are of current political relevance.]

*UDHR*

As the second step in the introduction to human rights, hand out the leaflet containing a simplified version of the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),<sup>2</sup> and tell each participant to read out and explain to the others, very briefly and in chronological order, one each of the thirty articles listed in the UDHR leaflet. Encourage the participants to compare the UDHR articles with the participants' list of rights. Ask the participants to look for significant UDHR articles missing in their list, and vice versa

*Is UDHR adequate?*

Next, ask the participants for their feedback on the UDHR. Ask them whether they are satisfied with the UDHR.

[At this point, we expected the majority if not all, to voice their satisfaction with the UDHR.]

Point out that UDHR is a pioneering human rights document; that it was drafted as far back as 1948 (immediately after the Second World War).

[Assumption: that the audience would be already aware of these facts. But the purpose in emphasizing this is to make the UDHR more context-specific, so that the participants would view it in a more political light.]

*How context-specific are human rights documents?*

After pointing out that the UDHR was a document that was drafted to meet the needs of the post-World War II conditions, encourage the participants to think of present-day needs. Ask the participants what human rights they feel should be protected in the present-day Sri Lankan context. Make a list of the rights that they come up with.

[Assumption: that the participants would mostly come up with rights relating to the political crisis in the island in the recent past, as well as the present-day ethnic war situation. Thus, we assumed that the participants would come up with

---

2 See Appendix 11.

rights of topical interest, such as freedom from torture, freedom from arbitrary arrest, freedom of expression, right to life, etc.]

Pay particular attention to see whether any issue concerning women's rights as a specific human right has been mentioned in the list. If it hasn't, encourage the participants to think of relevant rights missing in their list.

#### *Women's human rights*

Gradually steer the discussion to the arena of women's human rights. Ask the participants to come up with rights that they feel women should enjoy. Ask them whether they are aware of any human rights document specifically addressing the issue of women's rights.

[Assumption: that most participants would exhibit at least a vague knowledge of CEDAW, but that the majority would be unaware of the Women's Charter of Sri Lanka.]

#### *CEDAW*

Next, hand over a greatly simplified version of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).<sup>3</sup> Ask each participant to read out and very briefly explain each of the 17 articles stated in the leaflet.

Encourage the participants to compare and contrast CEDAW with the two-to-three lists already up on the wall (participants' list and the UDHR list). Ask the participants to "discover" articles that are similar in UDHR and CEDAW, and encourage them to draw parallels between CEDAW and UDHR. If time permits, ask the participants to make a list of such similar articles.

Also, explain to the group that the basic concept of nondiscrimination as a fundamental legal right to gender equality

---

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 111.

and equality before the law, is indicated in our very own 1978 Constitution of Sri Lanka.

[If possible, read out the relevant article from the 1978 Constitution.]

*CEDAW articles based on "sameness" or "difference"?*

Discuss the issue of sameness and difference vis-a-vis CEDAW. Ask them which articles treat wo/men on the "sameness" principle, and which articles treat wo/men on the "difference" principle.

Also point out the significance of the emphasis placed on "states parties" in CEDAW.

*What is missing in CEDAW?*

Ask the participants whether they can spot a very significant issue relevant to women that is missing in CEDAW.

*Violence against women*

[The right to protection from violence against women or gender-based violence is not separately addressed in CEDAW].

Point out this fact and then focus on the Women's Charter of Sri Lanka that addresses violence against women as a separate issue altogether.

Also, remind the audience that the "theme" of the day's workshop is actually **women's human rights with emphasis on violence against women**.

Thus, the focus of the workshop has been gradually narrowed down from human rights to women's human rights, and then onto women's right to protection from gender-based violence.

*Women's Charter (Sri Lanka)*

Briefly introduce the Women's Charter. Hand out the leaflet containing the 7 broad topics of the Women's Charter.<sup>4</sup> Tell

the participants to pay special attention to the final topic, i.e., "right to protection from gender-based violence." Read out the article in detail from the Charter.<sup>5</sup>

[Assumption: that the participants would express greater interest in the Women's Charter as a local human rights document, than in the two earlier international documents; that they would question the legality of the Charter.]

**e. *Link between women's rights and human rights***

Now, briefly recapitulate the aforementioned and make the link between women's rights and human rights. Emphasize that there are certain violations that women are especially vulnerable to, that are essentially gender based, and thus there should be consensus to "protect" the rights of women.

**f. *Exercise (case studies)***

After a small break, distribute a training kit containing six case studies of violence against women<sup>6</sup> with a series of questions. Divide the participants into three groups (depending on the number of participants), and tell them to read the case studies carefully, discuss them, and answer the accompanying questions. Also tell them to note down alternative problems that cropped up during the course of the discussion, to be brought up during the presentation. Give the participants about one to one-and-a-half hours for the discussion, at the end of which, one person from each group would be asked to come forward and present the answers to two of the six incidents.

---

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix V for a detailed version of the last topic of the Women's Charter.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix VI.

### *The focus of the Exercise*

[The case studies visibilizes incidents of structural and sexual violence. The case studies also focus on the state, the community and the family as violators of women's human rights. They also portray instances of violence to which women are especially vulnerable because "they happen to be women."]

### *Presentation*

As instructed before starting the exercise, one participant from each group is asked to come forward and deliver the group's presentation. Each group will provide the answers to the following questions:

- i Does a violation of human rights take place in this scene?
- ii If so, what type of a human rights violation is it? (Try to name which right(s) is/are violated with reference to UDHR, CEDAW and the Women's Charter.)
- iii Who is/are the violator(s) in this incident?
- iv Can you define or categorize the violence perpetrated in this scene?
- v Is it possible for a man to face a similar incident of violence?
- vi is this type of violence especially perpetrated against women?
- vii If so, do we need to re-examine women's rights as human rights?

### *Trainers' expectations of the exercise*

#### *Structural violence:*

To draw the attention of the participants to structural violence as well as sexual violence.

[Assumption: that the participants would already be thoroughly familiar with sexual violence, that they might even wrongly identify all violence against women as solely sexual. Thus in this context, it is important to make the distinction between structural and sexual violence, and point out that sexual, physical and all other forms of violence comprise a component

of structural violence.]

Define the social structure as being essentially powered. Draw attention to the question of power. Show how certain persons, depending on class, caste, race, ethnicity and gender, enjoy a greater amount of power than others.

*Violence against women:*

To show how women and not men become victims of certain forms of violence. To offer the participants an awareness of gender-based violence.

*Community and family as violators:*

To show through examples that the state is not the sole violator of women's rights; that in most cases, the community and the family are the perpetrators of violence against women.

*Contradiction of rights:*

In this context, draw attention to Article 12 of UDHR (freedom from interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence), and show how the state unconsciously grants a license to the family unit to perpetrate violence within its structure without outside intervention. Thus, encourage the participants to problematize human rights and look for areas where one right is contradicted by another right. Another case in point here are Articles 18 and 27 of UDHR (freedom of belief and religion, and the right to participate in the cultural life of a community) where religious and cultural practices are given a license and thus are liable to violate women's human rights. Encourage participants to think of incidents where women's human rights have been violated using the cloak of religion and culture, in the world.

#### *f. Discussion*

*What underlying social assumptions and beliefs lead to the violation of women's human rights?*

Encourage the participants to take off from the insights



gathered up to now, and think of alternative incidents of violence against women. Ask them whether they have any problems with the opinions viewed during the exercise. Allow space for clash of opinions and arguments that would stimulate enlightening discussions. Encourage them to think of types of violence against women that have not been mentioned in the exercise. Gradually bring in the concepts of patriarchy, culture, religion and ideology into the discussion. Encourage the participants to problematize the issues raised during the discussion. Let the discussion flow, do not try to cut it short due to lack of time, etc.

*Are certain forms of violence against women more blatant than others?*

In that sense are certain types of women's human rights violations "undervalued" vis-a-vis more "blatant" forms of violation? What role does the private/public distinction play in the violation of women's human rights? Think of how certain forms of violations within the private sphere become "invisible" and thus go undetected.

**g. Video--"Violated"**

Depending on the availability of time, it was decided to screen Sharmini Boyle's 30-minute documentary film on violence against women. While we felt that the screening of the video was not strictly necessary vis-a-vis the methodology we had adopted for the workshop, we also felt that the video might help reinforce our points about violence against women.

[Violated focusses on incidents such as domestic violence--wife battery, violence against housemaids; and prostitution; and deals with both structural and sexual violence: violence which is blatantly physical. But we felt that it does not help the viewers develop a coherent thesis of the issue of violence against women. Hence our decision to use it depending on the availability of time.]

## **h. Skit**

After a long and exhausting discussion, it is best to move on to a relaxing participatory exercise that would nevertheless be a valuable learning experience.

[Assumption: that the rape scene from Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* selected for the workshop would be ideal as training material for a number of reasons:

- i. It deals with an incident similar to those mentioned in the case studies exercise.
- ii. We read the scene as projecting a blatantly patriarchal viewpoint in farcical form.
- iii. The scene is extracted from Henry Jayasena's adaptation of the play which is extremely popular in Sri Lanka. In addition, the adaptation is a prescribed text for the G.C.E. Advanced Level Examination. Thus, we assumed that 99 percent of the participants would have either watched or seen the play at some point, and hence would be familiar with it. We further assumed that while they would have watched the scene many a time in the past, they would never have "read" the scene the way they were going to read it at the workshop.
- iv. We were confident that the participants would immediately be able to problematize the scene along the lines of the insights gathered during the course of the workshop.
- v. In this context, we felt that the skit would reinforce most effectively and concisely, the points we had been trying to make during the course of the workshop.]

### *The skit*

Hand out the script of the skit.<sup>7</sup> Draw lots and select 5 participants to play the various parts in the skit. Give them 5 to 10 minutes to rehearse. Tell those who are not taking part to utilize that time to go through the skit. After 5 to

---

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix VII for the English version of this scene.

10 minutes, tell the group to come and act out the skit in front of the group.

#### *Critique of skit*

Encourage the participants to point out issues they find to be problematic in the skit. Without saying so, encourage the participants to "deconstruct the play from a feminist optic." Raise questions such as the following:

- \* How is Ludovica portrayed in this scene?
- \* Would you call the portrayal fair or justified?
- \* Comment on the verdict of the judge. Would you call it a fair or a biased verdict?
- \* Comment on the behavior of the judge? What do you find to be problematic about his behavior?
- \* What do you think of the alleged rapist being portrayed as the victim of rape?
  
- \* At whose expense is comedy generated in this scene?
- \* What is your opinion on "incite to rape" or a victim "asking for it"?
- \* Think of how, in a rape case, the verdict of the court can be biased against the victim when using the argument of "incite to rape".
- \* Draw parallels between this scene and the incidents cited in the exercise.
- \* How would you redo the skit from a point of view you think would be fair by all concerned.

#### *i. Where do we go from here?*

***Discuss options/strategies for change***

[Assumption: that the participants have by now been conscientized to a certain degree to the issues of violence against women and women's human rights. That at this stage, the participants themselves would express an interest and even be impatient to discuss solutions to their problems/strategies for change. In that sense, we consider this session to be the most important part of the workshop, since the trainers have

to be able inject a positive outlook to the trainees at this stage.]

The trainer(s) could encourage the participants to question along the following lines:

- \* How can the law protect women from specific cases of human rights violations?
- \* Are solutions outside the law available for the violation of women's human rights?
- \* Try to think of solutions available outside the law to the violation of women's human rights.
- \* What solutions can you come up with when you identify the state as the violator in specific cases of women's human rights violations?
- \* What solutions can you come up with when you identify the community at large to be the violator of women's human rights in specific cases?
- \* What solutions can you come up with when you identify the family to be the violator of women's human rights in specific cases?
- \* Will the strategies you adopt differ according to the violator (i.e., state, community, family, etc.)?
- \* What role can culture and religion play in curbing the violation of women's human rights?
- \* Can you think of any alternative articles to be included in human rights documents in order to protect women's human rights?
- \* What articles would you think of rephrasing or deleting from human rights documents in order to ensure the protection of women's human rights?
- \* Can you come up with a concrete plan for the promotion of women's human rights as a community concern?

Take a special interest to incorporate male participants in discussing strategies for change:

- \* Ask the male colleagues how they could contribute to the protection and promotion of women's human rights.
- \* Think of how their (male participants') strategies would differ from the strategies that the women participants hope to adopt.

- \* Think of ways in which the male participants can have a greater impact than women in the project of sensitizing men to the issue of women's rights.
- \* Think of whether a fe/male joint effort at the promotion of women's human rights could be more effective than a women-only campaign.

#### **j. Recapitulation**

Indicate to the participants that they have now come to the end of the workshop. Tell them to briefly recapitulate what they have learnt from the day's proceedings. It is imperative that the recapitulation be done entirely by the participants and that it be done "in capsule form", as lucidly as possible. Discourage long discussions and statements at this stage, because this could further confuse some participants. The trainer(s) can get a fair idea of the effectiveness of the day's proceedings from the recapitulation. Thus, it is important that the trainer(s) pay careful attention to this.

#### **k. Evaluation of Workshop**

Hand out pieces of paper to the participants, and tell them to fold the paper into two equal halves and write three good things and three bad things about the workshop, on either side of the paper. Explain to them that the three points should relate to the following:

- \* Methodology (adopted at the workshop)
- \* Content
- \* Logistics

[Assumption: that the feedback would be invaluable in further developing training methodology for future use.]

## 1. *Wind-up*

Thank the participants for attending the workshop, and for their contribution to the workshop. Especially acknowledge the participation of the men in the workshop. Indicate to them that their participation was invaluable to the workshop, and that [we] hope that they would be able to encourage their male colleagues to participate in similar training sessions/workshops, etc., in future. Also indicate to them that this workshop is only the beginning of what [we] hope would be a series of workshops on women's human rights education. End on the note that the workshop was a learning experience for everybody, including the trainer(s).

## Workshop No. 2

<i>Topic of Workshop:</i>	Women's Rights as Human Rights (with emphasis on Violence against Women)
<i>Date:</i>	5 July 1995
<i>Venue:</i>	Women's Development Centre, Kandy
<i>Type of Workshop:</i>	Training of Trainers
<i>Target Group:</i>	Activists from various women's groups and rural development centers (women--mostly based in villages in and around Kandy)
<i>Trainer(s):</i>	Hemamali Wijesinghe Manisha Gunasekera

On 5 July 1995, The Women and Media Collective (Education and Media Programme for Women's Human Rights) conducted a One-Day Training of Trainers Workshop on Women's Rights as Human Rights in Kandy, with special emphasis on Violence against Women.

The second workshop in the series on women's human rights education was conducted a few weeks after the first workshop. Although thematically and in the methodology adopted, the two workshops were more or less identical, there were significant differences between the target groups of the two workshops.

### Target Group

Approximately twenty-five participants from villages in and around Kandy attended the workshop. The main difference between this target group and the participants of Workshop No. 1 was one of locale. The present group was essentially a rural group, while the

participants of Workshop No. 1 were mostly Colombo based. The secondary difference takes off from the first, in that these participants were mostly village women who were involved in community development activities in their respective villages, whereas the former group consisted of professionals from a variety of fields.

Hence, we had to take special consideration of the difference in awareness and educational levels of the two groups in developing and applying the training methodology.

### **Methodology**

The same methodology as in Workshop No. 1 was adopted, with only minor variations. Hence the format of Workshop No. 2 is the same as that of No. 1, but there were differences in the application of the methodology.

#### **Chronological Order of Methodology Adopted<sup>8</sup>**

##### **a. *Introductions/Use an ice breaker***

As in Workshop No. 1

##### **b. *Expectations test***

As in Workshop No. 1

---

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix Vlll for the program of Workshop No. 2.



c. *Synchronize trainer objectives/expectations with trainee objectives/expectations*

As in Workshop No. 1

d. *Brief introduction to human rights*

The present introduction on human rights differs considerably from the former due to the following assumptions:

- [Assumptions: 1. That the participants would have a very limited knowledge of human rights, if at all; and that they would not possess a coherent understanding of violence against women, although they would certainly be very familiar with sexual violence.
2. That the majority of the participants would be under the notion that human rights is essentially linked to the law.
3. That due to the above reasons, the participants should first and foremost be given a very basic knowledge of the history of human rights and accepted human rights documents.]

First, ask the participants to define rights. Next, as in Workshop No. 1, ask each participant to name a human right and make a list of the rights the participants come up with.

[Assumption: That as in Workshop No. 1, they would come up with mostly first-generation human rights.]

Next hand over the leaflet containing a brief summary (in chronological order) of important human rights documents

pertaining to women since 1948.<sup>9</sup> Use this as a guide in delivering a brief lecture on the history of human rights. Using the leaflet as a guide, ask the participants to trace human rights documents important to women--i.e., CEDAW, Women's Charter, Vienna Declaration and the Universal Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Also refer to the legal validity or otherwise, of these documents.

### *Important differences between the Workshops No. 1 and 2*

#### *Introduction to human rights:*

Workshop No. 1 was more participatory in its introduction, and less streamlined. In contrast, Workshop No. 2 made use of a more coherent methodology, adopting a lecture mode and gradually progressing from the general discourse on rights to the particular. In this context, the former introduction did not refer to the two international Covenants (assuming the participants already had a knowledge of them) and to the Universal Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. The latter, we felt, was a significant omission in Workshop No. 1, which we later felt should have been included since the focus of both workshops was on violence against women.

[Assumption: That the present human rights introduction might be more effective though it adopts a less flexible lecture mode, since it gives the participants a general idea in capsule form of the historical progress of the rights discourse, and where we stand vis-a-vis the rights discourse today.]

From this point onwards, continue with the same methodology as adopted in Workshop No. 1, as follows:

#### *UDHR*

*Is UDHR adequate?*

---

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix IX.

*How context-specific are human rights documents?*

*Women's human rights*

*CEDAW*

*CEDAW articles based on "sameness" or "difference"?*

*What is missing in CEDAW?*

*Violence against women*

Here, refer to the Universal Declaration on Violence against Women.

*Women's Charter (Sri Lanka)*

**e. *Link between women's rights and human rights***

As in Workshop No. 1.

**f. *Exercise (case studies)***

In this participatory exercise, we make use of three case studies used in Workshop No. 1, as well as three different case studies.<sup>10</sup> The main difference between the case studies used here and those used in Workshop No. 1, lies in the narrative style. While the earlier case studies were especially prepared for the workshop as human rights training material, the latter case studies are direct extracts of incidents of violence against women from mainstream and tabloid newspapers, and have not undergone any form of preparation as training material. They are also more problematic in terms of content.

---

10 See Appendix X.

The same questions are used without modification as applicable to all 6 incidents.

#### *Trainers' expectations of the exercise*

##### *Participants' reaction to issues "straight from life":*

In addition to the expectations recorded in Workshop No. 1, we felt that it would be interesting to note how the participants react to the difference in narrative styles, and to issues that appear to be more complex. We also felt that it would also be interesting to examine whether they would have any difficulty in addressing the issue of violence against women and human rights when they encounter material "straight from life".

##### *Domestic Violence:*

We felt that domestic violence (i.e., wife battery) is a significant omission in the case studies of Workshop No. 1. Hence its inclusion in the present workshop case studies exercise.

##### *Complex issues:*

We felt that especially Incident 6, is complex.

[Assumption: That the participants would most probably not problematize the significant fact that the plaster was stuck on the mouth of the wrong woman--the woman who was not caught "chatting"--in that sense, the innocent woman. It seemed significant to us that the newspaper chose to highlight this aspect of the incident, rather than the humiliating nature of the punishment irrespective of who did or did not commit the crime. But we doubted that the participants would similarly problematize this issue.]

#### *g. Discussion*

Linked to "f" above, and same as in Workshop No. 1.

**h. Video--"Violated"**

[*Violated*, a thirty-minute documentary by Sharmini Boyle, focusses on incidents such as domestic violence--wife battery, violence against housemaids--and prostitution, and deals with both structural and sexual violence: violence which is blatantly physical in character.]

[Assumption: That the incidents in this video might help in further illustrating the issue of violence against women vis-a-vis structural/sexual violence. Although we felt that the video might not have been satisfactory training material for the participants of Workshop No. 1, we felt that it might be effective training material for the present workshop participants.]

Show the video to the participants, and encourage them to elaborate on the issues of domestic violence, prostitution, sexual violence, etc.

*Why do I feel moved?*

Encourage the participants to articulate their feelings about the video, since the video can very likely evoke strong emotions (especially the scenes of the ill-treated servant girl, and the lot of the two prostitutes--the girl and young woman). if the participants are moved by the video, encourage them to analyze their feelings aloud.

**i. Skit--"The Caucasian Chalk Circle"**

*How effective is the skit as a regular training tool?*

Use the same skit, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, as in Workshop

No. 1, and compare and contrast participant reaction to the skit at the two workshops. If there is a marked difference in participant reaction to the skit between the two workshop groups, examine reasons for this difference.

**j.    *Where do we go from here?***  
***Discuss options/strategies for change***

Same as in Workshop No. 1. [But no male contribution which could be viewed as a significant lack.]

[Assumption: Since the women of the present workshop group are much more active as community development workers, etc., we felt that they would be eager to seek direct, easily accessible, tangible solutions to the problems raised at the workshop. Similarly, we felt that these participants would be less enthusiastic in formulating long-term strategies for the protection of women's human rights. In this context, we felt that it would be much more challenging to discuss options/strategies for change with the present group rather than with the participants of Workshop No. 1.]

**k.    *Recapitulation***

Same as in Workshop No. 1.

**l.    *Evaluation of workshop***

Same as in Workshop No. 1.

**m.    *Wind-up***

Same as in Workshop No. 1. [But no male participants to be especially acknowledged.]

### Workshop No. 3

<i>Topic of Workshop:</i>	Two-Day Residential Workshop on Women's Rights as Human Rights
<i>Date(s):</i>	14-15 July 1995
<i>Venue:</i>	Lasaliyan Centre, Colombo 15
<i>Type of Workshop:</i>	Training of Trainers
<i>Target Group:</i>	Activists from various women's groups in the Batticaloa District Kurunegala, and in and around Colombo
<i>Trainer(s):</i>	Kamalini Wijetilake Sunila Abeysekera Kumuduni Samuel Jayanthi Thalesingham Manisha Gunasekera

On 14-15 July 1995, The Women and Media Collective (Education and Media Programme for Women's Human Rights) conducted a Two-Day Residential Training of Trainers Workshop on Women's Rights as Human Rights, in Colombo.

This workshop is important for two reasons:

1. The multi-lingual, multi-ethnic nature of workshop--The workshop incorporated both Sinhala and Tamil participants in one session. It was further significant because the Tamil participants had taken the trouble to come to the workshop all the way from the war-torn East of the island (Batticaloa).
2. The screening of the human rights training video, especially developed as a training tool, to be utilized in similar training of trainers workshops.

Dealing with all aspects of this particular workshop is beyond the scope of this training manual.<sup>11</sup> (The multi-ethnic dimension of the workshop in an extremely ethnic conscious political context alone demands a separate manual.) Hence, in this training manual, I wish to focus only on one session of this workshop, i.e., the screening of and participant response to the human rights training video.

## Video Program on Human Rights Education

## Format of Video

The training video can be seen as comprising of four main parts:

1. Introduction to -- a. structural violence;  
b. women's human rights.
2. "The housemaid scene" + training exercise (a questionnaire comprising of four questions).
3. "The interview scene" + training exercise (a questionnaire comprising of four questions).
4. "The bus scene" + training exercise (a questionnaire comprising of four questions).<sup>12</sup>

It is interesting to note that the training video incorporates the outcome of a spontaneous workshop group exercise. The three scenes or skits--for easy reference, we have named them as "the housemaid scene", "the interview scene", and "the bus scene", respectively--acted out at a national women's day workshop group exercise, were utilized in the formulation of this human rights training video.

11 See Appendix X1 for the complete program of Workshop No. 3.

12 See Appendix X11 for the summarized script of this training video.



## **Violence against Women, Structural Violence and Women's Human Rights**

The main objective of this program is to make the link between violence against women and women's human rights (see "Introduction" in Appendix Xll). It further highlights the issue of violence against women with emphasis on structural violence as opposed to sexual violence. It debunks the myth of violence against women being confined to merely physical acts of violence such as rape, and goes on to point out that very often, the violence experienced by women today, tend to be aphysical; are at times more psychological than physical; and occur as a result of inequalities in the social structure.

### **Training Methodology**

From this point onwards, the program focusses on three examples of structural violence against women. The scenes show subtle acts of violence which are at times "invisible" (i.e, the interview scene).

#### **a. To problematize issues through questionnaire**

Since the skits came out of a spontaneous workshop group exercise and were not prepared with the idea of being utilized as a human rights training exercise, the challenge in developing the training methodology lay in molding the three questionnaires to fit the skits, and vice versa. We felt that the effectiveness of the methodology lay in raising as many issues on women's human rights as possible through the questionnaires.

Hence, we attempted as much as possible to visibalize the following issues through the questionnaire:

- \* Identify and affirm commonalities and differences between

women, and through that, an awareness of women's positions of power and privilege as well as women's positions of disadvantage and lack.

- \* Identify that women too are prime agents of oppression within the patriarchal social structure.
- \* Awareness of the private/public distinction, and through that, violations that can take place and continue to remain "invisible" within the private sphere.
- \* Awareness of the violation of labor rights within the private sphere.
- \* Focus on the family unit as the primary unit in the social structure, and simultaneously politicize the family unit as a prime site of oppression.
- \* Awareness of both "official/unofficial" or "visible/invisible" reasons for discrimination against women.
- \* Identify how concepts such as wifehood, motherhood, and the nurturing role that is "naturally thrust" on women come to be culturally constructed; and identify how such concepts with which women are "naturally" identified tend to work to the disadvantage of women.
- \* Identify patriarchal workings within the socialization process: to show how a woman is not "born" a woman but is "made" a woman by society.
- \* Think critically of what questions are "naturally" asked of a woman at an interview, and what questions are "naturally" not asked of a man at an interview.
- \* Identify differences in the social behavior of wo/men. Who is "aggressive" and who is "passive" in public? identify reasons for this behavioral difference between men and women. Is it natural or socially constructed?

- \* Encourage the trainees to develop strategies for change, encourage them to develop alternative images of women: women who act with agency; women who succeed in overcoming their various oppressions thorough the development of various strategies for change.

**b. Role play**

In the preparation of each questionnaire, care was taken to devote one question to tap the creative potential of the participants--to encourage the trainees to develop alternative images, to encourage them to role play these alternative images, to encourage them to draw examples of the violation of women's human rights from their personal experience, and to encourage them to express their views in as creative a form as possible.

**Using the Video as a Training Tool**

Get the participants to sit in a group; briefly tell them what the video is about before showing it.

Pause after the Introduction and briefly introduce the issues of violence against women, women's human rights, the link between women's human rights and violence against women, and structural violence. Tell the participants to pay careful attention to the violation of human rights that take place in the three episodes that are about to be shown. Tell the participants to analyze the violence as well as the violations that take place in the episodes. Emphasize that certain types of violence that are inflicted on women are so subtle that they might not be immediately visible.

Distribute leaflets containing the three sets of questionnaires pertaining to the three incidents, and resume the watching of the video. After each scene, the trainees have the option of either watching/listening to the questionnaire on screen, or consulting

their individual papers containing the questionnaire.

After watching all three scenes and listening to the questionnaires, ask the trainees to form three groups and attempt the questionnaires as a group training exercise. (There should be at least 18 participants in order to make three groups of six each to carry out the training exercises.) Give the trainees half an hour to forty minutes to complete the exercise; and ask each group to come forward and present their responses.

Try to raise as many of the above-mentioned issues as possible during the ensuing discussion.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Program of Workshop No. 1**

9:00-9:20 a.m.	Introduction
9:20-9:40 a.m.	Expectations test--A process of synchronizing objectives and expectations
9:40-10:30 a.m.	Introduction on human rights--Using UDHR
10:30-10:45 a.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
10:45-11:45 a.m.	Link UDHR with CEDAW And the W-Charter
11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.	Exercise (case studies)
12:45-1:30 p.m.	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
1:30-2:30 p.m.	Presentation/discussion (of case studies)*
2:30-2:45 p.m.	Skit (Chalk Circle)
2:45-3:15 p.m.	Analysis of skit
3:15-3:30 p.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
3:30-4:00 p.m.	Discuss options/strategies for change
4:00-4:15 p.m.	Recapitulation
4:15-4:30 p.m.	Evaluation of workshop
4:45 p.m.	Close of workshop

\* The video Violated, in Sinhala, to be kept as a standby to be shown after the presentation of case studies, depending on the availability of time.

## **Appendix 11**

### **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Abbreviated) (1948)**

Article 1	Right to equality
Article 2	Freedom from discrimination
Article 3	Right to life, liberty, personal security
Article 4	Freedom from slavery
Article 5	Freedom from torture, degrading treatment
Article 6	Right to recognition as a person before the law
Article 7	Right to equality before the law
Article 8	Right to remedy by competent tribunal
Article 9	Freedom from arbitrary arrest, exile
Article 10	Right to fair public hearing
Article 11	Right to be considered innocent until proven guilty
Article 12	Freedom from interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence
Article 13	Right to free movement in and out of the country
Article 14	Right to asylum in other countries from persecution
Article 15	Right to a nationality and freedom to change it
Article 16	Right to marriage and family
Article 17	Right to own property
Article 18	Freedom of belief and religion
Article 19	Freedom of opinion and information
Article 20	Right of peaceful assembly and association
Article 21	Right to participate in government and free elections
Article 22	Right to social security
Article 23	Right to desirable work and to join trade unions
Article 24	Right to rest and leisure
Article 25	Right to adequate living standard
Article 26	Right to education
Article 27	Right to participate in the cultural life of community
Article 28	Right to social order assuring human rights

Article 29      Community duties essential to free and full development  
Article 30      Freedom from state or personal interference in the above rights

[Extracted from Human Rights for all: Education towards a rights culture. 1991. Lawyers for human rights (South Africa) and the National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law (USA), Juta and Co. Ltd., South Africa.]

## ***Appendix 111***

### **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Abbreviated) (1979)**

- Article 1        The term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction made on the basis of sex which will affect the freedom of women in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.
- Article 2        States parties shall take all legislative and legal measures necessary to eliminate discrimination against women.
- Article 3        States parties shall take legislative and all appropriate measures in the political, social, economic and cultural fields to grant women the exercise of human rights on a basis of equality with men.
- Article 4        States parties shall adopt temporary special measures to ensure equality between men and women.
- Article 5        States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate social and cultural prejudices based on the ideas of the inferiority-superiority of the sexes.
- Article 6        States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of traffic in women, and their exploitation and prostitution.
- Article 7        States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in polit-



ical and public life to ensure equality of men and women.

Article 8        States parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the opportunity to work and represent their governments at the international level.

Article 9        States parties shall grant women and their children equal rights with men in the issue of nationality.

Article 10       States parties shall take all appropriate measures to grant women equal rights with men in the field of education.

Article 11       States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment, and to grant them equal rights with men.

Article 12       States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in health care on the basis of equality with men, and to grant women special provisions with regard to pregnancy.

Article 13       States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in economic and social life, on the basis of equality of men and women.

Article 14       States parties shall look into the particular problems faced by rural women, and take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against rural women on the basis of equality of men and women, and ensure that they participate in and benefit from rural development.

Article 15       States parties shall accord women equality with men before the law.

Article 16 States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations.

Article 17 To ensure the smooth implementation of CEDAW, there shall be established a Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Articles 18-30 The workings of the above Committee.

## ***Appendix 1V***

### **Women's Charter (Sri Lanka) (The Broad Topics) (1992)**

1. Political and civil rights
2. Rights within the family
3. Right to education and training
4. Right to economic activity and benefits
5. Right to health care and nutrition
6. Right to protection from social discrimination
7. Right to protection from gender-based violence

## **Appendix V**

### **Women's Charter (Sri Lanka)**

#### **Right to Protection from Gender-Based Violence**

16. The State shall take all measures to prevent the phenomenon of violence against women, children and young persons in society, in the work place, in the family as well as in custody. In particular such manifestation of it as rape, incest, sexual harassment and physical and mental abuse, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Such measures shall also include:

- (i) the promotion of legislative reforms not only in terms of the substantive law but also with regard to preventive and punitive measures which would clearly recognize the rights of the women victims of violence;
- (ii) the promotion of structural reforms within the law enforcement machinery and sensitization of enforcement authorities so as to strengthen their capacity to deal with crimes if violence is directed against women;
- (iii) provision of support to Non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and programs which provide support and counselling services to women victims of violence, including those affected by armed conflict and civil strife.

## **Appendix VI**

### **Human Rights Exercise (Case Studies)**

#### **Incident No 1**

A young women who was raped by an unknown person related the incident in the form of a complaint to a certain police officer. This police officer told the girl that since there were no marks of a struggle in her body, her complaint would be rejected by the court. After convincing her that it is necessary to have bruise marks in her body in order to prove that an act of rape did occur, he raped her once more "to help create evidence." He further insisted that he raped her only in order to help her with her case. But during the subsequent medical examination, she revealed the truth to the attending doctor.

#### **Incident No. 2**

A few years ago, as a result of the mass massacre at the Sri Maha Bo Tree in Anuradhapura by the LTTE, a young Buddhist nun came to Colombo seeking security. In Colombo, while she was inside a government department attending to some official work, she was raped by three security guards in the department. Although she complained about the rape to a police officer, he chose to disbelieve her version of the story and instead believe the story of the alleged rapists. The three of them complained to the police that the nun was found loitering within the premises of a government institution. As a result of this, the police officer filed a complaint against this nun under the Vagrancy Ordinance and brought her before the courts.

### **Incident 3**

Fifteen-year old Deepani who was found to be suffering from the dangerous heart condition "hole-in-the-heart", was admitted to the Colombo General Hospital. One night, while she was sleeping in the corridor of Ward 25, she was raped by a man who threatened her to silence by saying she will be killed if she makes any noise. When she looked about her, Deepani could see and hear some of her other young mates in the ward screaming as well as shadows of some three or four people.

She did not tell her parents about the rape incident out of fear. It was revealed only when she became pregnant and was hospitalized for a "stomach pain". She died shortly afterwards during labor in the Panadura Hospital. The verdict of the autopsy was that death had occurred due to a cardiac arrest during labor.

Due to the social stigma associated with the incident, Deepani's parents have not attempted to seek any form of redress from the authorities.

[Adapted from Mirror - 22 October 1989]

### **Incident 4**

*The following is an extract from an interview with Nita from Warakapola:*

"I worked for one year in Singapore. My boss gave me papers to sign. I did not understand them. He never paid me and at the end of the year he bought me a ticket and promised to send my wages to me. When I didn't get any money I asked the agency to help me; they said I had signed a receipt of wages and therefore there was nothing they could do to help me..."

[Options - May 1995]

## Incident 5

Anushi, is a twenty three-year-old student from the science stream, who has just missed securing sufficient marks at the A/LS to enter university. Although she is more than qualified to apply for a clerical post in a bank, all her attempts up to now to join a bank have been in vein.

*In all the bank interviews I went to I was turned down for no apparent reason, while my younger brother with the same qualifications as myself has managed by now to secure employment in two banks. I've also seen boys who are not as qualified as myself or my brother get selected to banks. A lot of people have now told me that most banks prefer to employ boys rather than girls because of overtime and night travel, etc. But I know that most banks provide transport to their employees who need to work in the night.*

According to a young male executive working for a private bank, the policy followed by his bank in recruiting clerical staff, is to have a higher cut-off mark for girls and a lower one for boys at the entrance exams. This way, the bank ensures that it recruits a higher percentage of boys and a lower percentage of girls.

[Adapted from Options - November 1994]

## Incident 6

*Two incidents:*

1. A mother working in the Middle East as a housemaid, left her ten-year old daughter under the guardianship of her parents. It was later revealed that while living with her grandparents, this girl was repeatedly raped by her grand father.
2. A divorced mother of three discovered after some time had elapsed, that her elder son had established a sexual relation-

ship with his twelve-year old younger sister.

Both the girls involved in the two above incidents were unaware that acts of violence had been committed against them.

## Questions

*The following questions refer to each of the six incidents recorded above:*

- i Does a violation of human rights take place in this scene?
- ii If so, what type of a human rights violation is it? (Try to name which right(s) is/are violated with reference to UDHR, CEDAW and the Women's Charter.)
- iii Who is/are the violator(s) in this incident?
- iv Can you define or categorize the violence perpetrated in this scene?
- v Is it possible for a man to face a similar incident of violence?
- vi is this type of violence especially perpetrated against women?
- vii If so, do we need to re-examine women's rights as human rights?



## Appendix Vll

### Skit (Extract from Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*: Sinhala adaptation by Henry Jayasena)\*

[Since much would be lost in translating the Sinhala version, we publish here the English version of the above scene, extracted from "*The Caucasian Chalk Circle*." In Bertold Brecht: *Parables for the theatre*. 1966. Revised English versions by Eric Bentley. Penguin Books, Hazell Watson & Viney Ltd. U.K., 185-187pp., which uses more sexist and explicit language, but is more or less similar to Jayasena's version.]

#### 4. The Story of the Judge

##### *Characters*

AZDAK  
INNKEEPER  
LUDOVICA  
STABLEMAN  
SHAUWA

##### THE SINGER AND THE CHORUS

Men won't do much for a shilling,  
For a pound they may be willing,  
For twenty pounds the verdict's in the sack.  
As for the many, all too many,  
those who've only got a penny -  
They've one single sole recourse: Azdak.

[Enter AZDAK from the caravansary on the high road, followed by an old bearded INNKEEPER. The judge's chair is carried by a STABLEMAN

and SHAUWA. An IRONSHIRT, with a banner, takes up his position.]

AZDAK Put me down. Then we'll get some air, may be even a good stiff breeze from the lemon grove there. It does justice good to be in the open: the wind blows her skirts up and you can see what she's got. Shauwa, we've been eating too much. These official journeys are exhausting.  
[To the INNKEEPER]  
It's a question of your daughter-in-law?

THE INN-KEEPER Your Worship, It's a question of the family honour. I wish to bring an action on behalf of my son, who is away on business on the other side of the mountain. This is the offending stableman, and here's my daughter-in-law.  
[Enter the DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, a voluptuous wench. She is veiled.]

AZDAK [Sitting down]:  
I accept.  
[Sighing the INNKEEPER hands him some money.]  
Good. Now the formalities are disposed of. This is a case of rape?

THE INN-KEEPER Your Honour, I caught the fellow in the act, Ludovica was in the straw on the stable floor.

AZDAK Quite right, the stable. Lovely horses! I especially like the little roan.

THE INN-KEEPER The first thing I did, of course, was to' question Ludovica. On my son's behalf.

AZDAK [Seriously]:  
I said I specially liked the little roan.

THE INN-KEEPER [Coldly]:

Really? Ludovica confessed the stableman took her against her will.

AZDAK       Take your veil off, Ludovica.  
              *[She does so.]*  
Ludovica, you please the Court. Tell us how it happened.

LUDOVICA   *[Well schooled]:*  
When I entered the stable to see the new foal the stableman said to me on his own accord: 'It's hot today!' and laid his hand on my left breast. I said to him: 'Don't do that!' But he continued to handle me indecently, which provoked my anger. Before I realized his sinful intentions, he got much closer. It was all over when my father-in-law entered and accidentally trod on me.

THE INN-  
KEEPER       *[Explaining]:*  
On my son's behalf.

AZDAK       *[to the STABLEMAN]:*  
You admit you started it?

THE STABLE-  
MAN           Yes.

AZDAK       Ludovica, you like eating sweet things?

LUDOVICA    Yes, sunflower seeds!

AZDAK       You like to lie a long time in the bathtub?

LUDOVICA    Half an hour or so.

AZDAK       Public Prosecutor, drop your knife - there - on the ground.  
              *[SHAUWA does so.]*  
Ludovica, pick up that knife.

LUDOVICA    *[Swaying her hips, does so.]*

See that?

[He points at her.]

The way it moves? The rape is now proven. By eating too much - sweet things, especially - by lying too long in the warm water, by laziness and too soft a skin, you have raped that unfortunate man. Think you can run around with a behind like that and get away with it in court? This is a case of intentional assault with a dangerous weapon! You are sentenced to hand over to the Court the little roan which your father liked to ride 'on his son's behalf'. And now, come with me to the stables, so the Court can inspect the scene of the crime, Ludovica.

## **Appendix Vl11**

### **Program of Workshop No. 2**

9:00-9:10 a.m.	Introduction
9:10-9:30 a.m.	Expectations test--A process of synchronizing objectives and expectations
9:30-10:00 a.m.	Introduction on human rights--Using UDHR
10:00-10:15 a.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
10:15-11:15 a.m.	Link UDHR with CEDAW And the W-Charter
11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	Exercise (case studies)
12:15-1:15 p.m.	Presentation/discussion (of case studies)
1:15-2:00 p.m.	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
2:00-2:30 p.m.	Screening of documentary, <i>Violated</i>
2:30-3:00 p.m.	Analysis/discussion of documentary
3:00-3:30 p.m.	Skit ( <i>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i> )
3:30-3:45 p.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
3:45-4:15 p.m.	Discuss options/strategies for change
4:15-4:30 p.m.	Recapitulation
4:30-4:45 p.m.	Evaluation of workshop
5:00 p.m.	Close of workshop

## **Appendix 1X**

### **Human Rights Documents**

Universal Declaration of Human Rights--UDHR (Dec. 1948 UN)

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UN)

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN)

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women--CEDAW (1979 UN)

Women's Charter (Sri Lanka 1992)

Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (June 1993)

Universal Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women  
(Dec. 1993 UN)

## **Appendix X**

### **Exercise (Case Studies)**

#### **Incident No 1**

A young women who was raped by an unknown person related the incident in the form of a complaint to a certain police officer. This police officer told the girl that since there were no marks of a struggle in her body, her complaint would be rejected by the court. After convincing her that it is necessary to have bruise marks in her body in order to prove that an act of rape did occur, he raped her once more "to help create evidence." He further insisted that he raped her only in order to help her with her case. But during the subsequent medical examination, she revealed the truth to the attending doctor.

#### **Incident 2**

Lalitha has handed over her child to the Suvaseetha Program [a creche service] and now leads a happy life. Earlier she used to come to work and weep endlessly saying that her two children are all alone in her boarding place. The neighbors too, used to often say that they have heard these two children crying every evening.

Lalitha weeps at her work place everyday because her two small children are left all alone to fend for themselves in her boarding place from 9 in the morning till 9 in the night. In order to understand the problems faced by women like Lalitha, it is necessary to associate closely with them. Otherwise how can we understand their problems?

[Extracted from Kalape]

### **Incident 3**

Fifteen-year old Deepani who was found to be suffering from the dangerous heart condition "hole in the heart", was admitted to the Colombo General Hospital. One night, while she was sleeping in the corridor of Ward 25, she was raped by a man who threatened her to silence by saying she will be killed if she makes any noise. When she looked about her, Deepani could see and hear some of her other young mates in the ward screaming as well as shadows of some three or four people.

She did not tell her parents about the rape incident out of fear. It was revealed only when she became pregnant and was hospitalized for a "stomach pain". She died shortly afterwards during labor in the Panadura Hospital. The verdict of the autopsy was that death had occurred due to a cardiac arrest during labor.

Due to the social stigma associated with the incident, Deepani's parents have not attempted to seek any form of redress from the authorities.

[Adapted from Mirror - 22 October 1989]

### **Incident 4**

The woman is forty years old. Her daughter, who studies in the sixth standard, is twelve years old.

On the 19th of last month, the father who came home dead drunk battered the mother and chased her out of the house, probably with an ulterior motive.

Although it was late in the evening, the mother was reluctant to return home because she knew her husband's drunken bouts only too well.

It was midnight on that fateful day!



The father in his drunken stupor went up to his daughter who was sleeping peacefully, threatened her into silence, and molested her. Earlier, he had also attempted to molest his elder daughter.

This abject incident, which had taken place in Hiswella in Kirindiwela, was related to me by our Kirindiwela Correspondent, Bandara Pilawela.

When the police got to know about the incident, they arrested the man involved and produced him before the courts. The daughter who became the victim of her own father was also subjected to a medical examination.

The Kirindiwela Police Inspector, Nihal Anthony, Sub-Inspector Ranasinghe, and Sergeant Kumaradasa, are at the moment conducting further investigations on this inhuman incident.

[Extracted from Divaina - 29 January 1993]

## **Incident 5**

Anushi, is a twenty three-year-old student from the science stream, who has just missed securing sufficient marks at the A/Ls to enter university. Although she is more than qualified to apply for a clerical post in a bank, all her attempts up to now to join a bank have been in vein.

*In all the bank interviews I went to I was turned down for no apparent reason, while my younger brother with the same qualifications as myself has managed by now to secure employment in two banks. I've also seen boys who are not as qualified as myself or my brother get selected to banks. A lot of people have now told me that most banks prefer to employ boys rather than girls because of overtime and night travel, etc. But I know that most banks provide transport to their employees who need to work in the night.*

According to a young male executive working for a private bank, the

policy followed by his bank in recruiting clerical staff, is to have a higher cut-off mark for girls and a lower one for boys at the entrance exams. This way, the bank ensures that it recruits a higher percentage of boys and a lower percentage of girls.

[Adapted from Options - November 1994]

## **Incident 6**

An incident is reported from the Kandy District, of a certain woman factory worker who had a sticking plaster stuck on her mouth.

It is reported that a manager of the factory who saw this woman chatting with another woman worker in the factory commanded a woman supervisor to stick a sticking plaster on the mouth of the woman who was caught chatting. Although the supervisor was reluctant to carry out this command, she had little choice but to obey her superior. It is further reported that since the supervisor went and stuck a plaster on the mouth of the woman who was not caught chatting, and since this act led to serious consequences, the supervisor had to later apologize to the wronged woman. The manager who gave the command too had later offered his apologies to the wronged woman.

Although the management of the factory asked the wronged woman not to reveal this incident to anybody, it very soon became an "open secret" in the entire area.

[Extracted from Lankadipa - 23 March 1993]

## **Questions**

*The following questions refer to each of the six incidents recorded above:*

- i Does a violation of human rights take place in this scene?
- ii If so, what type of a human rights violation is it? (Try to name which right(s) is/are violated with reference to UDHR, CEDAW and the Women's Charter.)
- iii Who is/are the violator(s) in this incident?
- iv Can you define or categorize the violence perpetrated in this scene?
- v Is it possible for a man to face a similar incident of violence?
- vi is this type of violence especially perpetrated against women?
- vii If so, do we need to re-examine women's rights as human rights?

## **Appendix Xl**

### **Program of Workshop No. 3**

#### **[Day 1]**

9:00-9:30 a.m.	Introduction
9:30-10:00 a.m.	Lecture on workshop theme
10:00-10:15 a.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
10:15-11:00 a.m.	Link human rights and women's rights
11:00-11:30 a.m.	Group exercise (case studies)
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Presentation and general discussion
12:30-1:30 p.m.	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
1:30-2:30 p.m.	Screening of documentary, <i>The Vienna Tribunal</i>
2:30-3:00 p.m.	Analysis/discussion of problems arising from documentary
3:00-3:15 p.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
3:15-4:15 p.m.	Further discussion
4:15-4:30 p.m.	Recapitulation
4:30-4:45 p.m.	Evaluation of day's session

**[Day 2]**

9:00-10:00 a.m.	Presentation on Tamil Women living in the war-torn East of Sri Lanka.
10:00-10:30 a.m.	Discussion on presentation
10:30-10:45 a.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
10:45-11:00 a.m.	Introduction to human rights training video
11:00-11:30 a.m.	Screening of HR training video
11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	Group Exercise on HR training video
12:15-1:00 p.m.	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
1:00-2:00 p.m.	Presentation of group exercise
2:00-2:30 p.m.	Analysis/discussion of problems arising from the day's session
2:30-3:00 p.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
3:00-3:15 p.m.	Recapitulation
3:15-3:30 p.m.	Evaluation of day's session
3:50 p.m.	Close of workshop

## Appendix X11

### Human Rights Video (Script)

*The video is in four parts:*

- a. *Introduction*
- b. *The housemaid scene*
- c. *The interview scene*
- d. *The bus scene*

*At the end of scenes b, c and d are three questionnaires, respectively.*

#### INTRODUCTION

The focus of this program is twofold:

- a> It is about **violence against women**.
- b> It is about **women's human rights**.

We, as women and men, have been traditionally conditioned to consider sexual and physical acts of violence such as rape, as violence against women.

But here, we would like to draw your attention to alternative forms of violence against women that are not solely or blatantly physical. The three incidents illustrated in this program take place at home, in office and in public transport. They portray a more subtle form of violence that is not immediately visible. It is sometimes more psychological than physical. Let us call this **structural violence** or violence that is inflicted on women because of inequalities in the social structure.

These inequalities and the resulting violence lead to the violation of certain fundamental human rights which all women should rightfully enjoy. We believe that these violations are essentially gender-based, or take place because "they happen to be women". It is up to you to substantiate or refute our thesis. Let us now focus on the incidents.

\*\*\*\*\*

THE HOUSEMAID SCENE  
AT HOME

"Lady": Mala, I'm going to the boutique to get some stuff. Lock all the doors and windows and stay inside! Don't open the door no matter who comes.  
Now listen, you have to clean the room, clean the bathroom, make lunch, mop the floor and finish all the work properly. Don't think I didn't see you talking to that next door girl yesterday when you were sweeping the garden. I'm warning you... you **have** to stop this nonsense! I told you no when you came to work here, not to go and gossip with every Tom Dick and Harry in the neighborhood. Gosh, it's ten thirty now. Another thing, you're **not** to watch TV! I allow you to watch TV at eight thirty no. In other houses servants are not allowed to watch TV at all. And don't even **lay a finger** on the telephone!  
Hm, I'm off.

-----

[Telephone rings; Mala answers]

Mala: Ah, it's you! Yeah, went just now. Don't know men. Working working working from dawn to dusk. No freedom at all. Won't allow me to do anything no. Not that, she has seen me talking to you yesterday and I got blasted

properly. I was reading that book you gave me and she threw it away. I was not brought all the way here to read books it seems. See will you *akke*, in other jobs there are things called rights, and they are given money no.. called EPF, ETF. Then sick leave, protective regulations blah, blah, blah. So housemaids don't have any of these benefits no. At least they get a day off in the weekend, we don't even get that. No, didn't get any letters from home. Even if I get she won't give me no. Ah, I watched *Doo Daruvo*. Did you also watch? Of course I watched while running here and there. But now Deepthi... No... Deepthi came home no after fighting with those people...

-----

"Lady": Mala! Started playing the merry devil now ah? Shut up! Don't you dare do nonsense over the phone now! You can loaf with those good-for-nothing rascals as much as you want. But if I lose any stuff in the house, both of you will end up in the police station. Shut up! Didn't I warn you at the very beginning that you can't play the fool here? Didn't I warn you? Didn't I warn you?

#### **Questions: The Housemaid Scene**

1. Identify commonalities and differences between Mala and the "lady of the house".  
How significant are these commonalities and differences between women to the issue of violation of human rights?
2. What role does the private/public distinction play in curbing Mala's human rights?
3. Which of Mala's rights do you feel should be protected by legislation?
4. Can you think of an incident where a woman's rights were



violated within your family unit?  
If so, role play the incident.

\*\*\*\*\*

INTERVIEW SCENE  
IN OFFICE

[Extract only]

...  
Pujitha [But sir, we can't assume she will take leave all the time.]  
And the other thing Sir, it's not fair to discriminate over a personal matter...

Manager [But - but - but Pujitha, you know... It's a team work you see..]  
Now, as Mr. Perera said, when we have to work together as a team - [listen listen] - when we have to work together, if one person gets late or wants to take leave all the time, we can't perform efficiently. And, as Mr. Perera said, if she gets married she'll have children. Then she'll want to take leave all the time. Then.. who are we going to employ in her place? [Do you have a replacement? No! And another thing.. she is coming from Meegoda.] Meegoda is very far from here. How is she going to get back home after work all alone?

Pujitha [But Sir, we could provide transport for her.]

Perera [Provide transport? Is it practical?  
If we are to provide transport only to her, we will have to provide transport to everybody.. Remember that!]

Pujitha [That's the thing..]

Manager     That means we have to provide transport to everybody in this company!

Pujitha     *[Yes, proper!]*

Perera      *[Sir, excuse me now Sir..]* Can you take a look at this Rohitha Karunaratne's application... *[He lives close by - and from a respectable family - and a school scout.]*

Manager     That's it, he's from a good family, and a good school... *[he has played cricket also!]*

Perera      *[That's why.., we should be able to train him very well.]*

Pujitha     *[But Sir..]* We are not employing Ranmali de Silva who is well experienced and has every qualification, and hence would be an asset to our company, because she is a woman. I call that injustice!

*[Tring!]*

#### Questions: The Interview Scene

- 1     On what grounds does the interview panel discriminate against Ranmali?  
Identify both "official" and "unofficial" reasons.
2.     How valid do you think is Pujitha's final statement?
3.     How do the socialization process, and tradition and culture contribute to the violation of Ranmali's human rights?
4.     Rohitha Karunaratne is interviewed for the same post by the same interview panel the next day. Role play this interview.

\*\*\*\*\*

**BUS SCENE**  
**IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

[Extract only]

Old Woman: This man won't even consider my age no!

Girl 1: Why? Why? Vasanthi Why?

Vasanthi: Gosh, look at this man men, he's coming on to me!

Girl 1: Ah?

Vasanthi: Yeah! I'll die of shame.. See.. people are also watching.

Girl 1: Shoot! What a man.

Vasanthi: Yeah!

Girl 1: What the hell are we to do?

Girl 2: Don't know men, Vasanthi, what **shall** we do?

-----

Man 1: Now, look at this! Today, a woman can't travel freely in a bus even. Akke, Why won't you speak up? Speak up will you!

-----

Vasanthi: How to speak up *malli*? People are also watching no? I feel ashamed.

-----

Man 1: Ashamed!? You keep quiet just because you're **ashamed**, and every day you'll have to travel like

that!

-----

Vasanthi: Then *malli*, shall I speak up? let's see what happens..  
Here... Can you please move back a bit?

"Bad man": How can I move when there's no room?

Vasanthi: See.. there's enough room.

Women: Don't come to lean on us.

"Bad man": Where the hell is the room to move? Get a car and go if you can't go by bus!  
*Malli*, Do something without just gaping will you..

Conductor: What? What? Move forward there!

*[Women screaming in the background]*

"Bad man": I'm leaning on her it seems. Tell her to get a car.

Conductor: *Nangi*, what's wrong? Are you going to melt away if somebody leans a bit on you? This is a bus.. not a damn taxi.

*[Big commotion in the background]*

Conductor: Ha! ha! get in Uncle. Move, move, move. I'll take care of it.. Move forward.. r-i-ght.

Girl 1: Now, look at what happened, just because we tried to speak up! It was no damn good!

Old Woman: I also have two young girls. Everyday they complain about this and that... Can't travel in buses it seems!

Girls 1&2

[At the  
same time]

That's the thing Auntie! Just see will you!

-----

Man 1:           Here Aiya! [banging on the bus thud! thud! thud!]  
Stop the bus!

Conductor:       Why? Want to go to Borella?

Man 1:           No

Conductor:       Then?

Man 1:           Problems inside the bus.

Conductor:       Problems?  
Hey! Stop the bus!

[Incoherent noise]

Conductor:       What's the problem?

Man 1:           Those girls can't travel decently in the bus be-  
cause of that man.

[Incoherent noise in the background - Female voices]

Look will you! Trying to be funny!

"Bad man":       So? What does it matter if somebody leans a bit?

[Incoherent noise in the background - Fe/male voices]

Conductor:       And you call yourself a man? How can women travel  
by bus with buggers like you hanging around? Get  
the hell out of here! Just bugger off!

### Questions: The Bus Scene

1. Who are the violators in this scene?  
Can you categorize them as belonging to one or more social group(s)?
2. Do men and women behave differently in this scene? If so, how?  
Identify the possible causes for this difference.
3. Role play a similar incident where Vasanthi says "no" to harassment and "yes" to her own rights, but this time, without male intervention.
4. Develop one or two strategies for promoting women's human rights as a community concern.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **PART II**

### **PARTICIPANT RESPONSE**

## Participant Response

### Workshops 1 and 2

We hope to present here, as far as possible, only the gist of the workshop proceedings. And in recording participant response to the various training methodologies adopted, we wish to present only the "highlights" of the two workshops. Further, we also wish to draw, wherever possible, comparative analyses between the participant response of Workshops 1 and 2.

### Participant Response (Overall)

#### a. Workshop No. 1

##### *Group response*

The participants of this workshop turned out to be a very dynamic group of wo/men who were, to a certain degree, already sensitized to the issues of violence against women and women's human rights. The primary reason for this could have been, as established earlier, the fact that most of these participants were active professionals based in and around Colombo, mostly from areas related to the rights discourse.

##### *Objective: Human rights and the law*

Right from the start they participated very enthusiastically in all workshop activities. In the synchronization of objectives and expectations exercise, most of the participants expressed an interest to learn about human rights and the law. Most seemed to be think that human rights had no validity or base outside the law. Some others expressed their desire to learn about the link between women's rights and human rights. A few participants expressed their desire to learn more about the issue of violence against women.



### *Awareness of human rights documents*

When examining human rights documents, almost all the participants showed an awareness of UDHR and the Covenants, but we were surprised to find that not one participant was even vaguely familiar with CEDAW, when it came to establishing the link between women's rights and human rights. But when progressing beyond CEDAW to the local context, most of the participants showed themselves to be familiar with the Women's Charter of Sri Lanka.

[This in this context, debunked our earlier assumption that most participants would exhibit at least a vague knowledge of CEDAW, but would be more or less ignorant of the Women's Charter. Ironically, it turned out to be the very opposite of our assumption.]

Almost all the participants expressed a keen desire to discover all they could about the legal in/validity of the Women's Charter. Unlike CEDAW which is a document which is removed and very distant from them, the Charter is more culture-specific; more tangible; more immediate; and hence, as it turned out at the workshop, immensely more appealing. Their keen response to the Women's Charter made us regret the fact that we had not made arrangements to distribute copies of the complete Charter. [We only distributed copies of the main topics of the Charter.]

### *Case studies and "real life"*

The case studies exercise (see Appendix VI) was a great success, with all the participants enthusiastically voicing their opinions and points of view. While we did not ask the participants to carefully pick out all the human rights articles that were violated in the six case studies, all three groups took the trouble to do so. This also led to them having to go through the UDHR with a "fine tooth comb".

During the case studies exercise, some participants also made a link between the incidents related in the case studies, and violations of women's rights taking place in the current Sri Lankan context. For example, one woman participant who

happened to be a tele-producer drew a very apt comparison between Incident 6 in Appendix VI and a much publicized message telecast over the national television very frequently:

*The protection of the child [visually implying solely a girl child] is the mother's responsibility.*

After attempting the case studies, all the participants were quick to see the patriarchal content and negative impact of such a message.

#### *Stimulating debates*

Further, stimulating discussions sparked off as a result of the blatantly male chauvinistic comments of one male participant (hereafter referred to as the "dissenting male participant") during the case studies session. During the presentation of the case studies, this male participant commented that if a woman is raped, be it in a hospital, at the police station or elsewhere, in his own words, "in 99 percent of the cases she is raped because she asks for it." This comment led to a heated debate on power and patriarchy, with the female participants and the only other male participant present (hereafter referred to as the "enlightened male participant") disagreeing vehemently with the male participant. While the "dissenting male participant" argued that the woman can always be "talked into having sex because she ultimately wants to have it," some female participants pointed out that persuading an individual to commit an act which s/he is reluctant or does not want to commit, is a blatant violation of human rights.

#### *Contradiction of rights*

Another significant aspect towards which we wanted to draw the attention of the participants during the presentation of case studies, was to the issue of the inherent contradictions that lay within the rights discourse itself.

Gradually progressing from the thesis of the state and community as violators of women's rights, to the primary social unit of the family, we asked the participants to pay very close attention to Incident 6 (see Appendix 6). Here,

blatant violations of women's rights take place within the family, and we encouraged the participants to problematize the concept of the family in this light. But none of the participants could perceive the inherent contradiction that lay in the state extending a license for the protection of the family unit from outside interference, while simultaneously condemning the violation of women's rights within the familial unit. But when this contradiction was pointed out to them with examples from international rights documents (i.e., Article 12 of UDHR) the point was immediately established.

#### *Highlight of workshop*

This debate further fitted in well with the skit--the rape case in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*,--which in so many words can be read as dealing with the issue of "consent to rape", or in other words, the woman "asking for it" (see Appendix Vll). The skit, which we felt was the highlight of the workshop was very vivaciously performed by the participants, and helped to very eloquently articulate the issues of gender, power and patriarchy: the very issues that we had been attempting to voice through the nine hours of the workshop.

#### *Problematizing the skit*

Asked on the participants' response to the skit, one woman's prompt reply was that the judge, Azdak in the skit--[Azdak not only gives his judgement against the victim of rape, but also abuses his position of power and privilege himself to molest her]--does exactly what the policeman does in one of the case studies" (see Incident 1 in Appendix Vll). This drew our attention to the remarkable similarity between the two cases--a point which had hitherto escaped our notice.

The "enlightened male participant" further pointed out that Azdak should also be read as being just, at least to a certain extent, in so far as he offers a verdict which is fair by the stableman who obviously has been "framed" by the innkeeper. This led to the raising of the issue of "honour"--a word reiterated by the innkeeper. We drew the participants' attention to the fact that while the judgement for or against the stableman being fair or not is immaterial to the immediate

issue at hand, it is significant that Ludovica--the woman--is used as the "vehicle" through which the honor of the entire family is protected and conveyed. We further questioned how a verdict which violates the human rights of one party while protecting the rights of another can be viewed as being "fair".

#### *Sharing of experiences*

During the lengthy and stimulating discussion that took place after the presentation of case studies and the skit, many of the participants shared their work experiences with the rest. One woman participant who was affiliated to a leading advertizing firm pointed out that she is never given any agency in conceptualizing gender-sensitive advertisements though she has tried to do so many a time. Whenever she makes an attempt to show a domestic scene where both the father and the mother are involved in regular domestic chores like washing clothes or washing dishes, in her own words, she is asked whether "she is mad".

On the issue of female factory workers, night work and the lifting of the ILO ban on night work in the Free Trade Zone area, the "dissenting male participant" asserted that employers are reluctant to employ women because the women themselves are reluctant to take up night work (this is also related to Incident 5 in Appendix VI). During the discussion that followed, the female participants demanded of the "dissenting male participant" the reasons why women are reluctant to travel in the night or take up night work. Thus the female participants made this male participant understand, at least to a certain extent, that women are reluctant to take up night work because of men themselves. This led to a further discussion on developing strategies for change in order that women overcome male violence in "difficult" situations such as night work, night travel, etc.

In a further attempt to link universally accepted human rights documents to the present sociocultural context, the participants raised the issue of the validity of the reintroduction of the death sentence in Sri Lanka. Most participants,

especially the male participants, raised the hypocritical content of a human rights article such as "the right to life" in this context. Some of the female participants were vociferous in their opinion that capital punishment should be enforced in the case of very grave criminal offenses such as rape. This remained a disputed issue until the end of the workshop, and the argument could not be developed further due to time and topic constraints.

#### *Enlisting the support of men*

We were especially thrilled by the enthusiastic participation of the "enlightened male participant" (who is involved in work in the field of human rights and the law). He came up with a few very innovative ideas, especially when discussing strategies for change (see "Strategies for Change" section in Part III). Towards the end of the workshop, both male participants asserted that it had been an enlightening experience, and promised to enlist the support of their male colleagues in similar workshops we may conduct in the future.

### **b. Workshop No. 2**

#### *Less stimulating overall response*

Workshop No. 2, though very satisfactory, compared with the first workshop can only be described as "less stimulating". The participants comprised an all-female group involved in various community development activities at the grass roots level. Herewith, we present the gist of their response to the workshop.

#### *Human rights linked to the law?*

In the synchronization of objectives and expectations, the majority of the respondents expressed their desire to understand the link between human rights and the law. Only one respondent expressed a desire to learn about the empowerment of women through a knowledge of human rights. When asked whether they felt that human rights were "intrinsically" linked to the law, almost all of them said "yes".

### *Rights are linked to our daily life*

Hence, we had to begin our lecture on human rights by first debunking the myth that the rights discourse is exclusively and intrinsically linked to the law. We first pointed out to the group that rights are linked to every task we perform in our daily lives, and that even without coming into contact with any legal court or a similar establishment, we have the capacity to "protect" our basic rights as women if we have an adequate knowledge of women's human rights.

### *Satisfactory response to case studies exercise*

They responded well to the introduction to human rights documents, and answered all the questions given in the case studies exercise satisfactorily, even the incidents extracted "straight from life" (see section "f" under "Workshop No. 2" in Part 1).

One significant problem the group encountered in the case studies exercise was with regard to Incident No. 2 (see Appendix X). Here, the participants read the case of Lalitha leading a "happy life" as an implication that she is happy despite her children being left alone to fend for themselves. This they felt was not how a "good mother" should behave. But we pointed out that Lalitha begins to lead a "happy Life" only when her children are well taken care of by the creche service. We further pointed out that child rearing is a joint responsibility of both parents and not solely of the mother, though people in general, like the present group, are always keen to pass judgement on the mother alone. The group was quick to agree with us.

### *Problems vis-a-vis internalized patriarchal norms*

But, during the presentation of the case studies and during the discussion that ensued the viewing of *Violated*, we encountered major problems as trainers.

For example, during the discussion that followed *Violated*, most of the respondents felt that the women shown in the documentary had "fallen" in life [referring to one abused teenage housemaid and two prostitutes, of whom one was a

teenage girl] because of their "foolishness". Asked whether they felt that the men could be held responsible to a certain extent at least for the plight of these women, the group's response was that if these women were foolish enough to believe these men, the men could not really be blamed. We were very surprised to find that the group was not moved after viewing the extreme harassment that these women had to undergo. When further questioned on what they meant by words such as "fallen", most of the group were adamant that many prostitutes chose their profession of their own free will and actually liked it, and thus led a "fallen" life of their own free will.

In this context, one woman participant shared with the group her experience in working with one prostitute in her village. She said that though she and some other women involved in community development had many a time advised this woman to leave her "bad ways" at least for the sake of her child who was being harassed in school by his class mates as an "illegitimate", this woman was not keen on giving up her life as a prostitute. She further stated that their women's group had even helped this woman financially in order that she give up her "ways", but to no avail. When asked whether they (the women's group) did not take any firm action to advise the villagers including school children not to treat this woman and her child as outcasts, her response was that that kind of action would not help, nor would it yield any results. When asked whether they could help this woman while she remained in her profession as a "prostitute", her response was that they could not do so because then she led a "secret" kind of life and was not easily accessible to them. Besides, they all felt that it was "wrong" for this woman to remain a prostitute.

Further, during the discussion that followed the presentation of case studies, one or two participants wanted to know what legal action could be taken if a man has sex with a woman prior to marriage on the promise that he would marry her and finally deserts her. When we pointed out that the best way to avoid such situations is to have a proper knowledge of contraceptive use, since two adults through mutual consent had

every right to have sex, the majority in the group felt that people could be "corrupted" if they had easy access to contraceptives. This led to a discussion on the effectiveness of the introduction of sex education into the school curricula, where the majority agreed that school children should have a coherent sex education, but one or two in the group once again felt that it could be a "bad influence on impressionable young minds."

*Moving beyond the parameters of the rights discourse*

Here, we as trainers felt that we were encountering major problems with regard to issues such as morality, and concepts such as "the good/bad woman", etc. We found this challenging and simultaneously felt that we did not have the capacity to "answer" their questions (especially on issues such as morality) by merely confining our workshop to a rights framework. We felt that we had to move beyond the parameters of the rights discourse and raise their sensitivity to issues such as power and patriarchy first, if we were to politicize concepts such as morality, "the fallen woman", etc., and show these concepts to be culturally constructed.

We further felt that at a very simple level, there could be answers such as "yes" and "no" to the question of violation of women's human rights. But to the question of morality there are no such straight affirmative-negative answers; simply because the very concept of morality becomes redundant vis-a-vis the larger discourse of power and patriarchy.

This led us back to square one, where the rights discourse per se seemed painfully inadequate for us politicize all the above-mentioned issues and concerns. We strongly felt that we did not encounter this problem with the first workshop group because they already had a basic awareness of power politics: an awareness that everything is "constructed" and is not "naturally" so. [A way out of this problem (by way of a solution) is indicated in the "Strategies for Change" section in Part III.]



### *Breaking stereotypes*

We encountered an interesting and humorous episode during a discussion on the re-introduction of capital punishment (in Sri Lanka) vis-a-vis the rights discourse. Here, the only elderly woman participant in the group (all the others were young women in the age group of 18 to 35 years) was very vociferous in her opinion that rapists should be sentenced to death. Many of the young women felt that we as women, should treat rapists more "humanely". At the end of this episode the elderly woman remarked that the group no doubt would have been shocked at her harsh comments especially when considering the fact that she is an old "mother", but that she could not help it because that is how she "felt". We remarked that we as women had total empathy with her. We felt that this was a very enlightening episode where stereotypes were very unconsciously being broken during the heat of the debate. This, we as trainers viewed in a very positive light.

### *More tangible, immediate solutions*

When discussing strategies for change too, we noticed a marked difference between the present workshop group and the first workshop group (strategies for change developed by the first workshop group are given in the "Strategies for Change" section in Part III). While the first workshop group concentrated on more long-term and coherent strategies for change, the present group only concentrated on immediately tangible "solutions" to the problems they encountered as community development workers, etc. For example the elderly woman participant wanted to know how a colleague of hers whose husband had "abandoned" her, could claim maintenance from the husband and what legal action should be taken in this regard. Hence, some of the problems they raised in this regard required professional legal help. On the issue of human rights they felt that this workshop had been extremely useful in that they could now advise harassed women on how to protect their rights.

**c. Workshop No. 3 (The Training Video)**

Participant response to the screening of the human rights training video could not be satisfactorily gauged for the following reasons:

1. Communication problem--the lengthy translations from Sinhala into Tamil and vice versa, took up a considerable amount of time and tended to rob the interest of the participants in general.
2. Time constraints and the lack of an adequate number of participants (for the training program exercise, each group had only 3-to-4 participants) led to an inability to apply the training exercise effectively.

Hence, suffice to say that we decided to gauge participant response to the human rights training video at a more dynamic workshop held in future, and record the response accordingly.

It could perhaps be recorded here that a Tamil participant present at the workshop, who is permanently residing in Germany, expressed a keen interest to take a copy of the training video to Germany despite only English and Sinhala versions of the video being available.

## **PART III**

### **STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE**

## **Strategies for Change**

### **Introduction**

The strategies for change developed in this section can be categorized into two parts:

1. The strategies developed by the first workshop group, who came up with a few dynamic and innovative strategies.
2. The strategies developed by us (as trainers) after analyzing participant response to the first two workshops.

### **Strategies Developed by the First Workshop Group**

#### **a. *To make the questionnaire more vigorous***

One of the most important factors pointed out by the first workshop group was that the questionnaire used for the case studies exercise (see Appendixes VI and X) was not vigorous enough. They further pointed out that most of the answers to this questionnaire could be given in one-word format--"yes" or "no". This point was well taken by us and we agreed with them that the questionnaire should be drafted in such a way that it "teases" or "stimulates" the mind to think/create.

This point was kept in mind when drafting the training methodology for the human rights training video (see Appendix XI1). Thus, we took special care to make the questions as vigorous and as thought-provoking as possible. We also consciously ensured that at least one question referring to each of the three scenes of the training video should explore the creative potential of the participants.

**b. *To enlist the support of men***

When discussing strategies for change in the first workshop, we made it a point to ask the two male participants present what they felt in general about the feminist movement in Sri Lanka. The "dissenting male participant" felt that the feminists in Sri Lanka made absolutely no attempt to enlist the support of men in their endeavors. He further stated that even the National Women's Day celebrations "lacked vivacity" because few or no men took any interest in or were aware of the women's movement. While it was pointed out that male support is not necessary to add "vivacity" to the women's movement, his finer point was well taken: that the feminists in Sri Lanka needed to rethink their strategies in order to enlist the support of men; that confining gender sensitization and women's human rights programs to women alone can only have a limited impact in the long run.

Both the male participants were very keen to offer their support in this regard which we found to be encouraging, and promised to enlist the support of their male colleagues in training programs we may have in future.

**c. *To conduct a series of women's human rights workshops, with each workshop devoted to one specific aspect of the rights discourse***

The "enlightened male participant" encouraged the group to view this workshop as the beginning of a series of such similar workshops. That way--by working consistently over a period with the same target group--he felt that we would be able to achieve something constructive. The rest of the group agreed wholeheartedly with him and voiced the opinion that the next workshop should be devoted to women's human rights and the law.

This point too was well taken by the trainers, and we decided

to plan out a series of such workshop in the near future, and we also felt that this was the only way we could gradually branch off into more complex issues within the rights discourse.

**d. To make an impact through the media**

The "enlightened male participant" and one female participant came forward with the innovative idea that the recently established Singaporean companies-funded private radio channels (in Sinhala) are an as yet untapped resource pool which could be very effectively harnessed for the promotion of human rights. Since the popular media constantly "makes history", they felt that we could use the media--private radio stations--as a point of entry in making an impact on society at large. They felt that a women's human rights education project launched in collaboration with the most popular of these newly established radio stations--Sirasa FM and TNL radio--had every possibility of succeeding in making an impact (as opposed to women's rights programs aired over the educational service of the state-owned radio) for the following reasons:

1. These new stations are the most popular radio channels among the masses today.
2. These are run and patronized by the youth who are constantly "open" to new ideas.
3. These channels project a different, almost radical image, and are always willing to "experiment" with new techniques.
4. The talk shows in these channels prefer to tackle controversial issues such as fashion, superstition, the status of women in today's society, etc., and the talk show hosts constantly prefer to make a case for the less popular, more radical points of view.

In this context, the group felt that we could conduct a special workshop to sensitize these media personnel to the

issue of women's human rights; and gradually use one or more of these private radio stations as a point of entry in making an impact on the larger context of society.

### **Strategies Developed by the Trainers**

#### **a. *Gender sensitization through the "aesthetic mode"***

Taking off from the problems encountered in Workshop No. 2, we felt that we, as trainers, should teach workshop groups about power politics, through problematic visual images, extracts from basic literary texts--especially plays--that they would be familiar with, and extracts from popular religious texts, etc.

This was based on the premise that the modern human rights discourse should take account of the all-pervasive, omnipresent nature of power as opposed to the traditional, empirical nature of power as emanating from one source. [To make use of theories such as Foucault's "disbursed loci of power".]

We felt that gender sensitization methodology should never take the form of the lecture mode; instead, it should be as "aesthetic" as possible. Hence the decision to adopt the above strategy.

#### **b. *Re-interpretation of folklore/myths/legends/jatakas***

We felt that women, at all times, should be encouraged to re-interpret their traditional folklore and religious texts, etc., in a positive light. In this context, we felt that women should be encouraged to develop a positive ideology as well as a constructive feminism. We also felt that most of the indigenous folklore/jatakas, etc., could be easily rendered and transformed into appealing workshop material.

We felt that in the Sri Lankan context, the story of Kuveni, and a range of blatantly patriarchal jatakas--Vessantara, Andhabuta--and historical characters (women) of epic proportions--Sanghamitta, Vihara Maha Devi, Soma, etc., could be recast from a constructive feminist optic. Thus, women in workshop groups could be trained to call forth a radical re-interpretation of tradition.