HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC

VOLUME EIGHT

HURIGHTS OSAKA

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Human Rights Education in Asia-Pacific—Volume Eight
Published by the Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center
8F, CE Nishihonmachi Bldg., 1-7-7 Nishihonmachi, Nishi-ku, Osaka 550-0005 Japan

Printed and bound by Kinki Insatsu Pro
Osaka, Japan

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Acknowledgment

As in all the previous volumes of this publication we owe much to the article contributors in completing this eighth volume. The varied experiences and research findings of the article contributors constitute another valuable set of materials on human rights education in Asia-Pacific. We therefore acknowledge their support for the promotion of human rights in the region through this publication.

We acknowledge the people who are behind some of the articles in this volume including Bo Kyi, Ko Ko Aung and Georgia Field of Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma), Somi Kwon and Yujin Kim of Human Asia, Yoshitaka Terada of the National Museum of Ethnology (Osaka, Japan), Rose Trajano of the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA) and Commissioner Jerald Joseph of the Human Rights Commission Malaysia (SUHAKAM).

We also acknowledge Fidel Rillo of Mind Guerilla for the lay-out and cover design of this volume.

Foreword

Human rights education in Asia and the Pacific is very much alive in its varied forms. It is the task of Hurights Osaka to bring to the wide audience in the region these experiences and highlight them as worthy examples of human rights education.

The articles in this eighth volume of our publication provide such variety of experiences that deserved to be recognized by anyone interested in human rights promotion.

We thank all the article contributors in this volume while also wishing them the best in continuing their initiatives for many years to come.

Kazuo Yamawaki
Vice-Chairperson

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Introduction

This volume presents articles that discuss the use of films, theater and other forms of communication in order to convey human rights messages. There are also articles that present the state of human rights education in the formal education system – in terms of curriculum and teaching/learning methodology.

These articles constitute an important set of varied experiences that point to the reality that human rights education initiatives exist in different countries though they may not be explicitly named as such.

Telling the Truth

Oprah Winfrey's speech in accepting the Cecil B DeMille Award in the 2018 Golden Globe Awards ceremonies in January 2018 drew much praise for directly speaking about the burning issues of the day in the United States of America: discrimination, sexual abuse and violence against women. Her speech dealt with the impact of telling stories; real, truthful stories. She said[1]

> What I know for sure is that speaking your truth is the most powerful tool we all have. And I'm especially proud and inspired by all the women who have felt strong enough and empowered enough to speak up and share their personal stories.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA), a non-profit organization that established the annual Golden Globe Awards in 1944, has donated more than "29 million [US dollars] in the past twenty years to entertainment-related charities, as well as funding scholarships and other programs for future film and television professionals."[2] HFPA provides financial, fellowship and institutional grants to promote "cultural exchange and understanding through support for major programs and exhibitions that utilize film to ignite critical dialogue and promote global understanding," among several goals.[3]

The Golden Globe Awards, similar to many other film awards around the world, are meant for commercial films. Very few film awards cater to non-commercial or "independent" (also "indie") movies that deal with truths that may at times be difficult to retell (such as tragedies and human rights

violations). Such "indie" movies may present the truth in its brutal form and may inspire rage or thinking or inspiration, or relive feelings of loss of loved ones and also feeling of powerlessness.

Commercial movies that are based on true stories likewise have the power to evoke inspiration, thinking and resolve to take action.

Oprah also spoke of the power of hope despite tragic experience in the television and film productions[4] she appeared in:[5]

> I've interviewed and portrayed people who have withstood some of the ugliest things life can throw at you, but the one quality all of them seem to share is an ability to maintain hope for a brighter morning, even during our darkest nights. So I want all the girls watching here now to know that a new day is on the horizon.

Documentaries

Documentaries show realities that constitute challenges to human rights education. In using such documentaries as human rights education materials, there can be questions to ponder on regarding specific situations: How do you discuss human rights with people who do not see the need to address situations that violate laws and the international human rights norms? How do you tell workers that their labor rights are not respected? How do you relate to workers who refused to stage strike for the past twenty years?

These questions arise from the 2015 documentary entitled *Dollar City*. According to Amudhan R.P., the filmmaker, the documentary is about Tirupur[6]

> a small town in south India [that] is well known for its thousands of export oriented garment hosiery units and millions of migrant workers from both within and outside the state of Tamilnadu. Once a small village now a city, Tirupur provides a development model where the state machinery, exporters, small and big entrepreneurs, commission agents, trade unionists and workers converge at a point where export, and welfare of the industry are the priority by sidelining, marginalizing and eventually breaking the laws that protect environment and workers' rights.

The documentary raises another significant question: Should the point of convergence mentioned by Amudhan between industry and workforce be challenged or be seen as an opportunity for dialogue on issues that disadvantage the workers?

The documentary apparently invites the audience to think of the answer to this question.

Another documentary provides insights of the members of a discriminated group in Japan on the use of performing arts to address discrimination.

This is the documentary entitled *Angry Drummers: A Taiko Group from Naniwa, Osaka, Japan* made by Yoshitaka Terada of the National Museum of Ethnology in Japan. The documentary presents the role of the "performing arts in the identity reconstruction of a minority group" [7] in presenting the story of Ikari, a traditional drum (*taiko*) ensemble in a place in Osaka that is known as *Burakumin (*discriminated Japanese) area. Ikari, a Japanese word, means anger, and thus Ikari as the name of the *taiko* ensemble means angry drummers. The anger springs from the long history of discrimination against the Buraku people, which continues till the present. Ikari aims to "eradicate the persistent discrimination against Buraku communities and to educate people on human rights issues through drumming."[8]

A review of the documentary cites its significance in highlighting the history of *taiko* and the discrimination related to it:[9]

> In taiko history, there is a conscious disassociation of the production of the taiko, where handling of leather is considered 'spiritually impure', from the performance, which is often associated with 'purifying' religious rituals. Ikari's performances exposed this broken history. Ikari's use of music and performance is not supposed to be an 'authentic' cultural practice. Rather, Ikari mimic the Japanese taiko in order to politicise it. When playing, they draw the audience's attention to antiBurakumin discrimination, which was previously ignored. In this way, a nonBurakumin, Japanese instrument is reappropriated, transformed and shared with the public. Concepts such as identity, nation and culture can be locally rewritten to empower both the Burakumin community and the nonBurakumin Japanese.

Terada explains that "performing arts (such as *taiko*) can play a significant role in areas where other means (laws, economic advancement, anti-discrimination slogans) tend to fail in the struggle against discrimina-

tion, as demonstrated by Ikari's performances, which have resulted in tangible changes in the lives of both Buraku and non-Buraku people."[10] *Angry Drummers: A Taiko Group from Naniwa, Osaka, Japan* is a must-see documentary for people who use art in human rights education.

Film Festivals

Considering the power of movies to affect people, a number of film festivals in Asia are designed to make specific impact on the viewing public.

In India, a "one-minute film contest titled 'National Freedom Film Festival' to commemorate India's 70 years of Independence" was held in Chennai in 2017 "to explore the challenges overcome by women or challenges that remain in front of them." Twenty short films were submitted in the competition mostly by the youth especially college students from six Indian states (Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Telangana).[11] This film festival is unique for showing one-minute films on a very specific theme. The film festival organizer (Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation [HRF]) plans to hold this kind of film festival every year on different themes.

HRF sees the need to reach out to the millennials who have the[12]

> passion, energy, opportunity and tools for social change as never before. They use social media with audacity, brevity and creativity.

The film festival is meant therefore to provide a venue for the millennials to express their views on what they see as the situation in India seventy years after independence.

The International Children's Film Festival Bangladesh, an annual film festival that started in 2008, showcases full-length features, shorts, experimental films made for and by children, including fiction animations and documentaries, from around the world. It is the biggest and also the only international film festival for children and young adults in Bangladesh.

This film festival aims to open[13]

> a new world of movies to the children of Bangladesh and expos[e] them to a diversity of cultures and traditions from various nations through cinema. One of the primary missions of the festival is to provide the youth with a platform to showcase their

> talent in media and to understand its role in bringing attention to various social issues and in learning through entertainment.

The Children's Film Society Bangladesh (CFS), a youth-led organization working for children on the issue of film, organizes the annual film festival in different venues in the country. It considered film the "most powerful media of art of the present time [that] was not being [properly] used … as a strong tool of learning and entertainment [for children]." It thus aims to make an "impact on the entire film industry of Bangladesh by inspiring the upcoming generation of filmmakers, and offering them bigger platform to exercise and exhibit their talent."[14]

CFS organizes the Teen Film Workshop 2.0 during the film festival, which is an "intensive and advanced training program for the aspiring filmmakers aged between 15 and 19" and designed to "equip the teen filmmakers with relevant filmmaking skills and techniques." The workshop was started in August 2017 and produced five short films, one of them (*Amenar Golpo*) focused on gender discrimination.[15]

Contents of the Current Volume

Volume eight presents three articles on film festival as means to raise awareness and action on human rights. Each of the film festivals has unique character, but there is a common ground in terms of objectives and involvement of the audience in discussing the social significance of movies and filmmaking. The articles from India, Malaysia and the Philippines provide examples of "socially-engaged film festival."

There are articles that highlight participatory methodologies in engaging the participants in the educational activities. They can be in the form of theater, field trip, community field work and competition, among others. The articles on peace and human rights education from Japan, on training for journalists and journalism students from Mongolia and India and the model Universal Periodic Review of the United Nations competition from South Korea provide examples of such participatory methodologies.

Finally, there are research reports on human rights education programs in the school system and on education against cyberspace bullying that provide important suggestions on content as well as method of teaching and learning human rights.

Indeed, these articles point to the variety of initiatives and experiences on human rights education in the Asia-Pacific region.

Jefferson R. Plantilla

Editor

Endnotes

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5 Oprah Winfrey acted and also produced movies that deal with racism in the U.S.A. such as the Color Purple (1985), The Butler (2013), Selma (2014) and Wrinklein Time (2018).

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Madurai International Documentary and Short Film Festival - A Reflection

Amudhan R.P.

Ours is a small, local, independent, inclusive and democratic film festival. It is small because it happens in a small town like Madurai with a small team and little budget. It is local because it uses locally available resources and people to conduct the festival. It is independent because it does not take money from big private or government institutions. It is independent in deciding the shape, content and style of the festival. It is inclusive because it does not reject films which are different in genre. It is democratic because it involves many people to select films and run the film festival.

Madurai City

Madurai is a small but historical town (more than two thousand years old) located in South India. It has a long history of intellectual excellence especially during the Sangam period (between 3rd century BC to 2nd century AD), where poets, thinkers and leaders debated and performed in public and were appreciated by both the Kings and the common people. It is also known as temple town as there are many Hindu temples in and around the city. There are churches and mosques as well. In a way, Madurai city is an example for communal harmony as people from different religions live together peacefully unlike other Indian cities. Agriculture is the main occupation here apart from textile and other small scale industries. Tourism is another attraction here as people from within and outside India visit to enjoy the rural as well as cultural ambiance of the town. Madurai also has many educational institutions both in humanities and technical sectors which attract many youth from nearby districts and states.

Madurai is known as a cultural capital of Tamil Nadu (a south Indian state in India) as it has very unique cultural heritage where people follow very particular traditions regarding marriage, architecture, agriculture, clothing, material culture, music, dance and of course food.

Madurai region is also very feudal in nature where (intra-Hindu) caste-based discrimination and violence against the people from lower caste Hindus is very common.

Cinema and Theater

Madurai has a long history of mythological as well as social plays, where ordinary people train themselves to sing, dance and act in regular and seasonal theaters. Madurai has a Town Hall which witnessed European dance, music, theater and cinema exclusively hosted for British officers in the early 19th century. When popular Tamil cinema started flourishing in 1950s Madurai became a center for cinema halls as any other towns in Tamil Nadu, where audiences thronged to watch their favorite stars on the silver screen.

Madurai also embraced modern art through the small circles of self-taught as well as trained painters, parallel cinema through film society movement, and modern literature through study circles in the 1980s.

Film Society Movement

Renowned filmmakers like Satyajit Ray, Shyam Benagal, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Ritwick Gatak and John Abraham played a key role in creating a platform called Film Society Movement across India in the 1970s to screen and watch serious or parallel films which were otherwise not shown in regular cinema halls that screen commercial Hindi, Tamil and Telugu films. The government of India, state governments and the embassies of foreign countries also supported this movement by sharing films with them in a non-profit basis.

Such film societies could bring together interested individuals who believed in meaningful, sensible and artistic cinema across India to screen as well as watch films. They also introduced film appreciation practices to their members and general public, which in turn facilitated creative filmmaking and film viewing.

Madurai also was affected by this wave of film society movement positively. I had the opportunity of watching a collection of Luis Bunuel films during one of their screenings in Madurai. I also got to watch many Indian as well as foreign films through these screenings organized by film societies in Madurai. The culture of small screenings without commercial motives

that was nurtured by these societies helped persons like me to look at cinema differently.

The Propaganda Films

British India and later the independent India believed in propaganda films to establish their kingdom in the minds of the common people. The Films Division of India, a government-run film production and distribution department, has been producing documentaries in India since 1950s. Those films were reflecting the agenda of the State such as inculcating ideas of patriotism, development, industrialization, pluralism, communal harmony, modern education and health facilities.

The films produced by the Films Division of India in those days always had a voice over, top-down approach and strong pro-State point of view. They were forcefully shown in all cinema halls prior to the "main picture" during every show. Documentaries introduced to the people like an inevitable medicine from the State always faced repulsive reaction from the audiences. Although the Films Division also made many artistic films with independent views as exceptions (films by Sukdev, SNS Sastry and others), they were hardly shown outside a few film festivals.

Activist /Political Films

Independent filmmakers such as Anand Patwardhan, Deepa Dhanraj, KP Sasi, Vasudha Joshi, Chalam Bennurkar and others introduced different kinds of documentaries in late 1970s and early 1980s outside the "compulsory" State machinery, reflecting ordinary lives and struggles of the people. Those films made in 16 mm format were shown through the film society movement across India creating a new political space around cinema, completely different from the mainstream fiction films. These political and activist documentaries talked about people's rights, their resistance, and State repression and violations.

Compared to full-length fiction films, these activist documentaries are very honest, brave, simple and unambiguous.

Video Projector - The New Tool

1990s in Madurai and India saw the fall of film society culture due to many reasons and the emergence of video culture which in a way brought in more people to watch and screen films locally. People like me who had started watching movies in 35 millimeter (mm) format through film societies, felt liberated as the technology became easier and cheaper. Arrival of VHS cassettes and video projectors opened up the field to others like me who were not from the film society movement. Sarat Chandran, a filmmaker and activist in Kerala (the neighboring state) started organizing small film screenings with his VHS cassettes and video projector. I happened to witness one of his screenings. I assisted him. We became friends right away. He agreed to travel to Madurai to screen films with us.

That was the beginning of our film festivals and screenings in Madurai.

Anti-nuclear Film Festival

When the Indian government tested nuclear bombs in Pokran in 1998 and when Pakistan followed up with its own testing of nuclear bombs, war hysteria filled with hatred and machismo engulfed the Indian subcontinent. Some of us who felt very disturbed by this hate wave and wanted to respond to it creatively. We organized a two-day anti-nuclear film festival with the help of Sarat Chandran. He supported us with his collection of films as well as video projector.

The response we got from the audience encouraged us to organize more film festivals. Sarat was always there to help us. It also motivated us to organize an annual film festival.

Madurai Film Festival

After the success of small film festivals in 1998 in video format, we decided to conduct an exclusive annual film festival for documentaries and short films. As Sarat Chandran, KP Sasi (another contemporary filmmaker and activist to Sarat) and I were interested in making documentaries, organizing a film festival for documentaries exclusively became a reasonable and viable option.

As the film society movement was showing interest in parallel fiction films, because they were truly parallel to commercial Hindi, Tamil and Telugu films, we the documentary filmmakers felt the need to have our own film festival for the even more marginalized form called documentary.

Non-competitive and No Theme

The Madurai Film Festival has been a non-competitive film festival since its inception. As we wanted to create a space for dialogue and discussion through films, we never felt the requirement for a competition. Winning a prize or an award should not affect the quality of the discussion, we thought. The festival should focus on quality films, sensible viewing and participatory audience.

The idea is to bring a set of films to Madurai. Bring some filmmakers too. Create a platform for both the audience and filmmakers/films to meet. Initiate a discussion around the films. Create a community and encourage people to plan some positive actions such as learning, travelling, reading, screening films, making films and joining some social or political or cultural group for direct action.

We also never wanted a particular theme for our film festival as we wanted a platform for contemporary films or recent films. We always have the retrospective of senior technicians and filmmakers to recall the old films. We also have special packages that would bring not so recent films. Besides we may have many film festivals now in India for documentaries; but when we started in 1998, there were hardly film festivals for documentaries or even film festivals for that matter.

Organizing a detailed, serious and curious film festival has been the aim. Thus we do not have a theme.

Film Festival Structure

Although we do not have a theme or focus for the films, we have been very particular about the films that we select/do not select, thanks to our Selection Committee members. Also, we have created an image about our film festival among the filmmakers and audience that we are more interested in activist films, the films that talk about human rights, social justice and people's resistance. The filmmakers themselves decide to send or not send their films to our film festival.

We generally approach like-minded people and request them to be part of the Selection Committee. Filmmakers, critics, journalists, teachers, scholars, writers and film society activists would be part of the Selection Committee depending upon their availability. We encourage the members to be more adventurous regarding the selection of films based on style. Films can have different styles: having a voice over, observational, personal, musical, direct and forceful, subtle and deliberately ambiguous, interview-based, very close to fiction, so on and so forth. We include all styles of films. As we are in a small town far away from big cities, we do not want to deny the opportunities to the audience by not selecting experimental or style films. It is our responsibility to introduce different styles to the audience of Madurai.

Regarding the content, we always request the Selection Committee members to reject films that spread hatred. We also urge them to keep in mind the local, national and international debates that are going on regarding civil rights, human rights, labor rights, women's rights and environmental protection. We want to be an international, modern, liberal and responsible film festival. We always keep the Selection Committee on the loop to make sure that we select the right films.

Our Partners

The credit for selecting right films should also go to the organizations or institutions or groups with whom we collaborate to organize the film festivals. The structure of the film festival also influences the kinds of films to be shown. We, as a film festival, do not want to centralize the activity by organizing the film festival at one venue or single location. We always have parallel screenings across the city or district or region to enable many organizations, institutions and groups to participate. Because we plan/organize parallel or multiple screenings, we always take our partners, who conduct/host those screenings into consideration.

We usually approach educational institutions, voluntary organizations, film societies, cultural groups and trade unions to associate with us and to host parallel screenings. The allotment of films to the venues is decided along with the host organizations. It is a collective decision. The idea is to strengthen them by catering to their intellectual, political and artistic needs.

Some venues have students as audiences, who might want short duration films, animation films and music videos. Some venues have activists

who would prefer straight-jacket activist films, talking about contemporary issues that affect the country or the world. Some venues have film fans, who would prefer to watch films that are more artistic and stylish. We keep everything in mind in programming and scheduling.

At the same time, we also push them to watch films that challenge their film watching practice. We do it by including films that are not their "type." We convince the host organizations to take that "risk."

A film festival cannot afford to screen only the films that do not challenge the audience. We too feel that we should introduce films to the audiences of Madurai that challenge them creatively, politically and aesthetically.

Post-screening Discussions

Right from day one, we have always looked at film screenings and film festivals as a tool for dialogue between filmmakers, between filmmakers and audience, and of course between audience members. We always allotted proper duration for discussions. We also invite either filmmakers or others (intellectuals, writers, journalists, teachers and others) to initiate discussions once a film gets over.

Such discussions always spill over the films, sessions and breaks. People become friends after these discussions and start continuing to work or interact later. Our festivals have brought many kinds of people together.

The character of the discussions varies between the venues and films. Some venues provoke debates on the style of the films. Some venues initiate thoughts on the content.

But we always use the opportunity to talk politics sensibly, calmly, in detail and in depth.

Experts who are invited to initiate the discussions also play a key role in moderating the flow of the discussions. The idea is to create an ambiance for the people to express themselves freely.

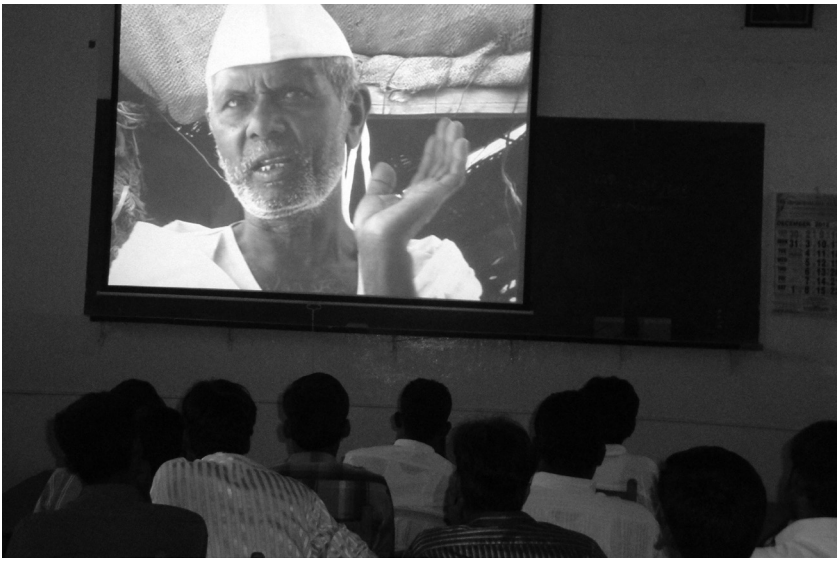
Parallel Activities

We have also experimented with the form of the film festival (in certain editions) by including parallel activities such as painting and photo exhibitions, poetry readings, interaction with writers and intellectuals, theater performances and other art initiatives. Such efforts have always brought in

more people as audience as well as performers. It also helped people to approach cinema or documentary films more as an art form. Filmmakers who participated in those editions could also appreciate the dialogue between different art forms. However, we could not continue those programs due to logistical reasons.

Films on Human Rights and Civil Rights

Filmmakers such as Anand Patwardhan, Amar Kanwar, Sanjay Kak, Deepa Dhanraj, KP Sasi, Rakesh Sharma, C Sarat Chandran, P Baburaj, Meghnath, Biju Toppo, Gopal Menon, Dipu, Sreemith, RR Srinivasan, Leena



Manimekalai, Kombai Anwar, Divya Bharathi have made films on various issues dealing with human rights and civil rights from across India.

Their films deal with state repression, sexual violence, religious and caste violence, displacement and destruction due to development, police

atrocities, violations by security forces, industrial pollution, contamination of natural resources, ultra-nationalism, domestic violence, rights of sexual minorities, communal harmony, inter-caste and inter-religious marriages, welfare state, right to life and livelihood and social justice.

When the government and private-run media are controlled and biased, our film festivals become a space for dissemination of information, people to people interaction, region to region communication, inter-religious and inter-caste dialogue.

Our Funding

We do not take corporate or state funding as a policy. We deliberately spend less only to protect ourselves from dependency. We collect minimum donations from individuals and groups to avoid anyone's influence or control. We invite filmmakers to attend the film festivals on their own. We provide them basic hospitality. We invite our partner organizations or institutions or groups to look after the logistics as mutual contributions. We bring films and filmmakers. They provide hall, equipment and basic facilities. We jointly run the festivals. We share the coordination responsibilities. That's it. We have crossed two decades.

The Threat to Freedom of Expression

Not having a clear law on control/overseeing/regulation of film screenings and film festivals has caused problems in India. Till 2004, there was no interference in film festivals from the State. But the Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) in 2004 saw new rules and restrictions. Suddenly the festival brought in new guidelines indirectly to restrict films that differ or criticize the governments in India. Some films were denied permission because of the new rules and restrictions.

Filmmakers opposed it. Some withdrew their films from the festival. They even organized a parallel film festival as symbol of protest right in front of MIFF venue. That created a movement called VIKALP (Alternative) across India which organized regular screenings and film festivals.

Such an initiative triggered alarm bells in the government circles that in turn brought in even more new restrictions.

Now festivals have to send the selected list of films (that do not have Censor Certificates) with synopsis and other details to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Union Government of India to get the temporary clearance certificate. Film festivals may have their own selection committee. They can recommend a list of films to be screened at the festivals. But we need to get permission from the big brother called Government of India.

Threat from Non-state Players

Apart from the government agencies, we have non-state players who can also stop screenings. Despite getting censor certificates or clearance certificates, political parties, cultural groups, social watch agencies can also barge in and attack the festival organizers, break the projectors and furniture, beat up members of the audience, and escape happily without being touched by the law. State authorities will only file a case against the festival organizers for creating social unrest. The attackers will be left free.

Patriotism, national security, Indian culture, caste pride, regional right and linguistic representation, etc., can be the reason for anyone to get angry about any film. They always inform the media before attacking. The attacks are only used to create publicity for them. They openly attack. They justify the attack. The political parties also soft pedal on them. It is slowly getting dangerous to make films, to show films and to organize film festivals in India.

Our Strategy

Some film festivals like ours do not get permission for any screening. They also operate quietly. They also create a public support system to create a security network to protect the film festivals. Going to court or police station would not help. Consistently working with the local organizations, communities, grassroots groups and audiences is the only way out. Not giving up our right to freedom of expression has been our focus.

We do not organize our film festivals secretly. We publicize the event. We do press meets. We invite well-known people to the event and create a festival mood around it. We avoid sensational statements. We have crossed nineteen editions. We have not had any major problem from either State

or non-state players so far. Probably we have not made major noise. But we have worked with the filmmakers, teachers, scholars, students, intellectuals, activists, writers, journalists and others for over two decades consistently to create an ambiance for documentary filmmaking and free thought.

That has encouraged many small film screenings, film festivals and film-related activities in and around Madurai. We also have many new filmmakers such as Divya Bharathi in recent times from Madurai region.

That is our contribution. And we are very happy about it.

Our Future

We want to continue to organize film screenings and film festivals. We want to organize film-making workshops. We also want to create a cooperative of filmmakers. That is the answer to counter both corporate and state power.

FreedomFilmFest – A Malaysian Human Rights Documentary Film Festival

Anna Har

The FreedomFilmFest (FFF) is Malaysia's first and only annual human rights documentary film festival. It began in 2003 with the aim to create a much-needed platform for filmmakers and activists to showcase their films and advocate their causes to the Malaysian public.

The FFF was the brainchild of Pusat KOMAS,[1] a Malaysian popular communications human rights non-governmental organization (NGO), as a means to promote human rights through social films.

FFF's tag line - "Dare To Document" represents the spirit of the festival – to encourage filmmakers to document and share their stories without fear or hesitation.

It has grown from a small community screening event to the present nine-day festival featuring over forty international and local films in Petaling Jaya city and then travelling across the country to six different states and also Singapore.

In January 2017, a non-profit entity called Freedom Film Network (FFN)[2] was formed with the main objective of promoting and supporting the development of social films in Malaysia and is now responsible for organizing of the film festival.

The film festival has several components:

a. Film screenings and post-screening discussions with the audience.

Each film is carefully selected to cater to the different social issues that the festival wants to highlight. The film screening will then be followed by facilitated discussion session with the invited filmmaker or resource person;

b. "Freedom Talks" are one-hour interactive forums which go deeper into a topic of film that is screened during the festival. The talk has two identified experts and a facilitator who would guide the flow of the discussion;

c. Thematic Workshops

These workshops are skills and perspective-building workshops, usually in line with the theme of the festival or films and cater to particular target audience and feature a guest resource person/trainer;

d. Master classes with guest filmmakers

These are workshops that provide opportunities for local filmmakers and potential filmmakers to gain some knowledge and information from the professionals/experienced filmmakers.

e. Malaysian Film Grant program

Each year FFF gives out small film grants and offer production support to Malaysians with the best story proposals. The shortlisted proposals are invited to pitch to a panel of judges who then select two to three winners. The winners will then be given the grant and have to produce their short twenty-minute film that will be premiered at the festival.

f. Film Competition and Award ceremony.

There is an open call for submission of film entries to the festival for three categories: Best International Film, Best Southeast Asia Film and Best Short Film. There is a panel of judges for each category.

The winners receive the *Justin Louis Award* named after a beloved colleague who drowned in the Baram River while on a fact-finding mission to investigate alleged human rights abuses inflicted on Indigenous Penan women in the interiors of Sarawak.

FreedomFilmFest 2015

The theme of FreedomFilmFest 2015 (FFF2015) was "UNSEEN, UNHEARD, UNTOLD."

The festival began with a week-long festival in Petaling Jaya then went on a nationwide tour to Johor Bahru, Muar, Penang, Ipoh, Kota Kinabalu, Kuching and Singapore.

FFF2015 showcased twenty-six carefully selected documentaries and human rights films from Malaysia and other Southeast Asian countries (Indonesia, Singapore, Cambodia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand). There were also films from other regions such as Africa, Latin America and Europe. The films were organized under different human rights thematic concerns rarely covered by mainstream media such as Livable Cities; Ageing and Dignity; Interfaith and Multiculturalism; and Sports and Squander.

Film screenings were followed by facilitated twenty-minute discussion sessions where the audience had dialogue and exchange with invited filmmakers and relevant resource persons. Post-screening discussions are essential and powerful practice of the FFF and is crucial in drawing out some

of the core issues and questions from members of the audience who found the film very meaningful and informative.

Almost all the Malaysian and Southeast Asian filmmakers were in attendance to interact directly with the audience after the screening of their films, whereas directors of the international films were on skype to speak to the audience from as far as Holland, Australia and Chile.

Some festival highlights included the film screening of *Portraits of a Mosquito Press* by JL Burgos on media freedom in the Philippines during the Marcos regime which was followed by a special forum on media freedom participated by the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA), Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ) Malaysia, Gerakan Media Marah (Geramm) and filmmaker JL Burgos. The session ended with the launching of the Malaysian Media Monitoring Report 2015 prepared by CIJ Malaysia.

Other events included masterclasses to help facilitate exchange and dialogue among filmmakers and to develop capacity among first-time filmmakers learning from their more experienced counterparts. Among the speakers were renowned Indonesian filmmaker Hanung Bramantyo who directed *Question of Faith,* and Senior Producer of Al Jazeera's 101 East, TC Chan.

A Video Activist Forum was carried out on the last day of the festival to bring filmmakers from Southeast Asia together for an exchange of ideas, sharing of resources and building linkages among video activists in this region.

The winners of the Malaysian Film Grants were:

- David Buri for *Viral, Sial!* about the phenomenon of "viralling" on the internet and its implication on security and safety especially for women;
- Nizam Andan for *Sindike*t which offers a critical perspective at the result of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the illegal issuance of Malaysian identity cards to foreigners in Sabah state;
- Chan Seong Foong and Victor Chin for *Memory as Resistance: Grandma Kong defending Her Village* about the memories of an octogenarian who has lived in a hundred-year old Chinese Hakka village that is now at risk of being torn down to make way for new development;
- J Arrivu Jacob for *Di Sebalik Runcit* about the way the local small grocery shop owners are coping with new business models such as

hypermarkets and also new requirements such as the newly imposed goods and services tax;
- Jason Soo for *1987: Untracing the Conspiracy*, a documentation of stories of detainees of Operation Spectrum in Singapore in 1987.

The winners of the film competition were:
- Best Short Film: *Living In The Drains* by Marcel Simok (Sabah, Malaysia);
- Best International Feature: *I Will Not Be Silenced* by Judy Rymer (Australia);
- Best Southeast Asia Feature: *1987: Untracing The Conspiracy* by Jason Soo (Singapore);
- Most Outstanding Human Rights Film: Malaysian Film Grant Winner: *Viral, Sial* by David Buri (Malaysia).

The festival was organized with the cooperation of the Delegation of the European Union to Malaysia, Petaling Jaya City Council, Penang State Government and Selangor State Government. Other sponsors for the festival were the Penang Institute, Goethe Institute, Movies that Matter (Netherlands), MyDocs (Malaysian Documentary Association), PJ Live Arts, and the Royal Netherlands Embassy.

FreedomFilmFest 2016

The FreedomFilmFest 2016 theme "What Lies Beneath" spotlighted the underrepresented human rights and public interest issues through the powerful medium of film. It was a call for everyone to dig deeper into the many urgent issues that individuals, groups, society and humanity are facing today.

Documentaries included fresh views into the war in Syria, Germany's open-arms refugee policy, Indonesia's six-religion administration, Sarawak's forest destruction and corruption, worldwide food security, the cost of fashion, and women sustaining their role in the religious clergy in the United States; and also rare views into Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Kenya and even Estonia.

The ensemble was peppered with award-winning films, including *Radical Grace* produced by Susan Sarandon, *Among the Believers* directed by Hemal Trivedi and Mohammed Ali Naqvi, *A Syrian Love Story* directed

by Sean McAllister, and *A Very German Welcome* directed by Carsten Rau and Hauke Wendler.

FFF2016 was also attended by filmmakers Marcus Vetter (Germany) and Sean McAllister (United Kingdom) as well as all filmmakers who were based in Southeast Asia. The festival also featured masterclasses and the inaugural Freedom Talks Series.

The festival screened a total of thirty documentaries and short films. The festival program included four masterclasses, a Southeast Asia (SEA) Video for Change network meeting and the introduction of FreedomTalks, a series of panel discussion and events related to some of the themes carried in some of the films.

The festival finale gave away three awards:

Freedom Talk, 2016.

Freedom Talk: The Good Food Revolution.

Masterclass with Marcus Vetter on "The Thin Line Between Documentary & Fiction.

- Best International Feature: *A Syrian Love Story* by Sean McAllister (United Kingdom);
- Special mention – *Among the Believers* by Hemal Trivedi and Mohammed Ali Naqvi (India/Pakistan);
- Best SEA Feature: *Emak Dari Jambi* by Anggun Pradesha and Ricky M. Fajar (Indonesia);
- Best Short Film: *Unsilent Potato* by Sein Lyan Tun (Myanmar).

These awards were presented based on how the films portrayed personal stories affected by national issues in ways that were compelling and emotive.

The festival also saw the premiere of a first of its kind animation film series – *Moving Voices*, in collaboration with Dasein Academy of Art and BFM: The Business Radio Station. The animation film series featured six personal stories of urban poor community of Jinjang Utara, with members of the community in attendance at the premiere screening.

The Malaysian film grants were awarded to:

- Nova Goh – *Unlocking Bengoh,* about an Indigenous Bidayuh community in Sarawak which had to relocate to make way for because of a water catchment dam;

- Ashleigh Lim – *Stories of my Father*, the filmmaker chronicles her father's past as a political detainee.

FFF2016 ended its weeklong run in Petaling Jaya and then continued on a nationwide tour to cities around Malaysia. Compact versions of the festival were also screened in Johor Bahru, Penang, Muar, Kuching, Kota Kinabalu, Ipoh and Singapore.

FreedomFilmFest 2017

FreedomFilmFest 2017 (FFF2017) offered a compelling line-up of forty must-see films, showcasing the very best of local and international talent, boldly uncovering some of the most prominent issues of our time.

FFF2017 also offered festival-goers the opportunity to get up close and personal with cutting-edge filmmakers from across the globe, and brand new interactive workshops, talks, food-tasting events and musical performances – all expertly curated to complement the festival's film screenings.

This year's weeklong festival focused its attention on the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular the recognition that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."[3] With thought-provoking films and talks, focusing on globally relevant issues such as environmental degradation, ageing, food activism and countering extremism,FFF2017 catered to everyone.

FFF2017 also offered a thrilling addition to the usual program, debuting talent from Malaysia's newly formed Freedom Film Network (FFN). Home grown FFN filmmakers, including two winners of the FreedomFilmFest Grant, took an in-depth look at local issues including rapid development and its impact on flora and fauna in Penang, (*The Hills and The Sea*), the plight of Rohingya refugees in Malaysia (*Selfie With The Prime Minister*), the consequences of unilateral conversion (*Diary for Prasana*) and policies surrounding the much anticipated 14th General Elections (*Saving Malaysia*).

The following awards were given out:

- Best International Film: *An Insignificant Man* by Khushboo Ranka and Vinay Shukla (India);
- Best SEA Film: *Nokas* by Manuel Alberto Maia (Indonesia);
- Best Short Film: *Sittwe* by Jeanne Marie Hallacy (Myanmar/Thailand/UK);

- Best Malaysian Film Grant Award *The Hills and The Sea* by Andrew Ng; and
- IDFA Pitch/Grant Recipient: *Eye on The Ball* by Chen Yih Wen.

FFF2017 continued its festival tour to five major cities in Malaysia, namely Sabah, Sarawak, Perak, Johor, and Penang from 14 October till 26 November and in Singapore on 11 and 12 November 2017.

Young Malaysians who attended FFF2017 called the experience "eye-opening" with the festival bringing them "untold stories" not usually highlighted by the mainstream media. But aside from youngsters gaining new experiences at this year's festival, one of the benchmark events was an empowering filmmaking workshop aimed at promoting life-long learning for seniors, who gained new skills in documenting their own stories.

FFF2017 also engaged members of the Orang Asli (indigenous) community, as well as indigenous filmmakers from across the region who showcased and discussed their social films with the public. Seasoned indigenous activist and filmmaker, Shafie Dris, told the media that his filmmaking was a crucial tool to counter misinformation about the Orang Asli community. Another event highlighted the digital stories of eleven Temuan Orang Asli youth members from two villages in Negeri Sembilan who shared their experiences, aspirations and challenges in accessing adequate education in Malaysia.

The success of FFF2017 was in large part due to the support and active involvement of its partners/collaborators who engaged and connected different communities in important human rights workshops and discussions. Tenaganita for example helped FFF mobilize Overseas Filipino Workers residing in Malaysia to join the screening of multi-award-winning documentary *Sunday Beauty Queen*. Following the screening of *Theater of Life*, Pit Stop Community Cafe and Dapur Jalalan introduced the public to a lively movement helping to redistribute waste food to the homeless in Kuala Lumpur. Civil society organizations, Amnesty International Malaysia and Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM), also collaborated with FFF to discuss Malaysia's use of the death penalty following the screening of Filipino documentary *Give Up Tomorrow*.

Thematic Workshop: Shoot and Edit using an HP with the indigenous people.

Achievements and Impact

As a result of the yearly Malaysian Film Grant program, FFF has created a growing collection and continuous production of alternative, human rights films about Malaysia, made by Malaysians, from the perspective of the marginalized and different from the content of mainstream media.[3]

This collection of films can be accessed online and forms part of the alternative resource materials on important Malaysian issues. The films are used in class by teachers, lecturers and researchers. They also play an important part in advocacy of issues and have been used as a tool to bring awareness, educate and as part of campaigns.

The sustained yearly film festival and the creative, strategic curation and programming have also earned the festival a positive reputation among human rights activists as well as film enthusiasts.

In its fifteen years of existence, FFF created and enlarged the audience and popularity of non-fiction films. More importantly, it introduced and demonstrated the power of films not just to entertain but to inform and move people to action on human rights violations.

FFF also plays a vital role in creating and maintaining a safe space where Malaysians can come together to discuss issues in a safe and open man-

ner via the facilitated post-screening discussions and Freedom Talks. This is important especially in a society where there are laws that go against the principles of freedom of expression.

It has also become a much awaited, key civil society event that brings activists, NGO workers and members of communities together under one roof.

Challenges

FFF is constantly under the radar and monitored by authorities for content in films that may be deemed unsuitable (such as LGBT themes, those critical of the government and its friendly neighbors), with "sensitive" content (such as those that are sympathetic to or glorify the communists or touch on race and religion in Malaysia).

The law regulating film and screening is also very strict. The Film Censorship Act 2002 states that ALL films with very few exceptions (such as government-produced films and those meant for export only) must go through and obtain a censorship certificate before they can be screened.

A closed-door private screening of award-winning documentary *No Fire Zone; The Killing Fields of Sri Lanka* resulted in the raid and subsequent arrest of three staffmembers of Pusat KOMAS and subsequently one of the three (Ms. Lena Hendry)[4] was criminally charged and found guilty of failing to obtain prior consent and license/approval from the censor board. FFF does not send to the censor board the films to be shown.

The human rights branding and semi-illegal status have also been a deterrent to the organization from obtaining support and sponsorship from commercial/corporate companies that do not want to be seen as supporting an event that could potentially get in trouble with the authorities.

In the past year, FFF shifted to putting the films online and conducting the screenings via projected online screening to avoid potential legal persecution. This is still a challenge because of bandwith and other technicalities related to streaming a film online. Nevertheless, the audience is informed and understands the predicament.

Other constant challenges being faced by all film festivals are how to reach new audiences, secure enough funding for the next edition and also have a skilled and capable team to run the festival.

Future

The creation of the Freedom Film Network led to the forming of a network of social filmmakers - most of them are alumni of the festival - who are interested in working together to produce alternative films. FFF hopes that this structure becomes a model that ensures the sustainability of social films in Malaysia.

FFF continues to try to enlarge its audiences and find new ones by the choice of topics and themes undertaken every year. The themes of the films have now widened to include films that touch on contemporary social and cultural rights and issues such as ageing, mental health, food security, livable cities and sustainability.

Endnotes

1 See Pusat KOMAS website for more information http://komas.org/.

2 Freedom Film Network, https://freedomfilm.my/.

3 Freedomfilm.my/festival/films

4 "Film Censorship Act provision constitutional, Federal Court rules Diterbitkan pada," Berita Malaysia, 14 September 2015, http://english.astroawani.com/malaysia-news/film-censorship-act-provision-constitutional-federal-court-rules-73266.

Active Vista International Human Rights Film Festival

Leni Velasco, Kristine Kintana and Alex Poblete

Active Vista was established in 2005 by DAKILA – Philippine Collective for Modern Heroism (DAKILA), an organization building a movement of heroism towards social transformation.

DAKILA is a pioneering non-governmental organization (NGO) in the Philippines that has been actively working in the forefront of using creative and innovative forms in human rights education and advocacy work. It is a collective of artists, students, professionals and individuals committed to advocating social consciousness formation both among their industry peers and their immediate audiences.

DAKILA cultivates one's innate heroism, organizes communities of "heroes" and creatively fosters social involvement by building one's capacity to make change, influencing individuals and groups to be part of the movement for change, and taking on advocacies and social concerns to bring about strategic actions that make real change.

It was founded by Lourd de Veyra – a multi-awarded writer, journalist, spoken word artist, and pop culture icon; Noel Cabangon - a musician–activist; Ronnie Lazaro – a veteran actor, Buhawi Meneses – a rock star bassist of popular band Parokya ni Edgar; and Tado Jimenez - the late comedian-activist. Its artist-members come from various fields of arts as filmmakers, visual artists, musicians, actors, etc. from all over the country.

It is involved in the advocacies for climate justice, human rights, good governance and the campaigns to end human trafficking and gender discrimination; ensure just and lasting peace; promote road safety; and institute political, cultural and electoral reforms.

Active Vista

Active Vista is a word play on ACTIVE (dynamic) and VISTA (viewing), the dynamic way of viewing films. It sounds similar to the Filipino word for activist (*aktibista*). Active Vista (AV) brings attention to stories of human rights struggles to enable the public to help dismantle barricades that hinder

the pursuit of human rights. It adopted a vision of a society that respects, upholds and values the dignity, rights and freedom of its people.

It aims to:

- Raise awareness on social issues and concerns by providing platforms to effectively inform the public on prevalent social conditions;
- Provoke discourses on human conditions to enable the public to understand the political, economic, social and cultural causes and impact of human rights violations and to arrive at shared visions and solutions to address it;
- Foster a culture of human rights by influencing a new generation of advocates through the use of arts, media and popular culture as weapons to inform, enlighten and empower them;
- Empower the public to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights by inspiring them to recognize and fulfill their human responsibility to contribute to transformative social change;
- Gather individuals and groups to collaborate on human rights education and drive support towards the cause;
- Reach out to the broadest audience possible to develop a critical citizenry and open new platforms of expression and democratic participation; and
- Popularize the concern for human rights through narratives of human struggles so that the public may be able to empathize with the struggles and embrace them as their own.

The Active Vista Journey

Active Vista started as the advocacy film festival of DAKILA. The first edition of the festival was organized in December 2008 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. With the theme, "Cinema with a Conscience," it brought together filmmakers, members of the civil society, government officials, business people, members of the academe and youth to spark the conversation on the power of cinema not only to entertain but to educate.

Active Vista bannered the theme, "True revolution begins in the imagination," in its second edition in 2010 and expanded its program by having film screenings, three batches of advocacy filmmaking workshops held na-

tionwide and a film competition that encouraged young and aspiring filmmakers to tackle human rights issues and concerns.

Active Vista in 2012 bravely went to the extreme as it traveled to twenty cities across the country bringing about more than sixty human rights films to 22,000 audiences nationwide. Its advocacy filmmaking program trained fifty-five aspiring filmmakers and gave production grants to ten short films exploring the human rights issues of the festival theme, "Projecting Truth".

Active Vista expanded its program in 2015 through the "Bayani Ba 'To?" (Is This A Hero?) roadshow on history and heroism that presented the phenomenal film, *Heneral Luna* and engaged the partnerships of forty schools nationwide, making its mark in the field of audience development and human rights education in the Philippines.

Active Vista transitioned as an institutional program of DAKILA and transformed as a center for human rights education in 2016. It presented the 2nd edition of its "Bayani Ba 'To?" forum presenting the film, *Ang Hapis at Himagsik ni Hermano Puli* (The Agony and the Fury of Hermano Puli) complemented with the discussion on *Heroism X Pag-ibig*. It included in the program a series of Youth Leaders and Educators Forums nationwide.

The 4th edition of Active Vista was launched in February 2016, in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the historic EDSA People Power Revolution, the culmination of the series of civil resistance against human rights abuses during the Martial Rule that led to the restoration of democracy in the Philippines. The festival with the theme, "Truth X Imagination" opened simultaneously in key regional cities nationwide – Manila, Iloilo, Cebu, Dumaguete and Davao.

Since 2008, Active Vista has screened one hundred eighty-two films (eighty-five Filipino feature full-length films; sixteen international feature full-length films; thirty-three Filipino short films; eight international short films; forty Audio-Visual Competition Short Films) that were watched by 111,979 people (2008 - 3,500; 2010 - 28,737; 2012 - 22,500; 2015 - 20,480; 2016 - 36,762) in forty-two key cities and provinces nationwide. It has given workshops to 149 aspiring filmmakers across the country. It has engaged the partnership of 446 organizations – twenty embassies and international non-governmental organizations, twenty government agencies, thirty-two local governments, eighty-two local NGOs, eighty-two schools and universities, one hundred four academic institutions and student groups, sixty-two

media associations, and forty-four private businesses and companies – into human rights advocacy promotion.

Human Rights Education

In 2016, Active Vista evolved into a learning institution to address the pressing need for human rights education and to encourage social advocacy involvement in the Philippines. Active Vista facilitates the process of empowering citizens to become agents of social change. Its mission is to empower the public into contributing to relevant social transformation through education.

Active Vista believes in the importance of the recognition, understanding and respect for human rights as the integral foundation of a truly progressive society. It utilizes the power of transformative learning both in content and in pedagogy as a tool to empower citizens and the nation to develop and progress. It incites the value of shaping critical thought, encourages dynamism in views, and fosters spaces for discourse as fundamental requirements in addressing methods and directions of social transformation and as steps towards the education of its audiences as citizens. Active Vista recognizes the strength of creative expression whether in the arts, media or popular culture as modes of education in shaping public consciousness and action.

Active Vista implements the following programs:

1. Ibang Klase! Alternative Education Program;
2. Film and Human Rights Program;
3. Art and Advocacy Lab;
4. Human Rights Festival.

Ibang Klase! Alternative Education Program

Active Vista pursues relevant lifelong learning through the pursuit of knowledge, skills, values, and practices that form critical thinking, progressive ideas and creative innovations. "Ibang Klase!" (Different Class) is the alternative education program of Active Vista that aims to instill public awareness on their rights and responsibilities as citizens, raise their consciousness on social issues, and foster involvement in social transformation.

The program drives the collaborative effort of educators, artists, media practitioners, development specialists, cultural workers and human rights

advocates to contribute to the shaping of an empowered citizenry by conducting trainings, seminars, workshops or forums and providing learning materials, creative toolkits, and study guides in educating the public on social issues and concerns in both classroom or alternative classroom setting, in multi-disciplinary subjects and through multiple approaches.

The program consists of the following core components:

- *Pagpapakatao 101* (How To Be Human) - a course on the basic concepts of human rights and advocacy undertaken within the framework of social change. Participants through the course explore how human rights are essential to one's everyday life, livelihood and lifestyle. It takes the participants into the journey of one's humanity—using history, the universal principles of human rights, the Filipino psychology and culture—as lens;
- *Bayani Ba 'To?* (Is This a Hero?) - a roadshow forum that sparks discussions on valuable insights that impart the value of heroism to students from the lessons of history towards the realization that the deeds of heroes are not hackneyed fables but real, breathing examples of how to live their lives;
- *May K!* (Have the Right!) - offers a variety of educational courses anchored on the universal principles of rights, freedom, truth, reason, justice, independence and social progress. The courses provide basic knowledge on social issues, incite discourse and critical analysis, empower individuals to take stands, and develop strategies for action. Courses include KASAYSAYAN, a crash course on history designed to elicit critical discourse in examining the nation's past and identity as a nation in order to understand present societal issues and explore path to nation-building; KULTURA NG KABAYANIHAN, a course on reclaiming the concept of the *bayani* (hero); the Filipino culture of *bayanihan* (community spirit) and the formation of the *bayan* (nation); KABATAAN AT KINABUKASAN, a course on child rights; KABABAIHAN, a course on women's rights; KASARIAN, a course on gender rights; KLIMA AT KALIKASAN, a course on the impacts of climate change and the environmental degradation to humanity; and KAPAYAPAAN, a course on peacebuilding.

Film and Human Rights Program

Active Vista provides access to a Film Catalogue of a wide array of socially relevant films and an opportunity for schools, organizations and

communities to screen them. The films are complemented with discussion guides, which are intended to spark meaningful discourse and provide a human rights lens on the social issues touched by the film. It brings these films to places where they are not readily available to spread awareness on human rights concerns, encourage conversations on the issues, and foster participation in nation-building.

Since providing access to socially relevant films is the heart of Active Vista, it carries out imperative and continuing educational work through its Film Screenings in schools, communities, public theaters and alternative spaces to promote audience development in both film and social advocacies. Screenings are complemented with forums aimed to elicit meaningful discourse, facilitate critical reflection and encourage concrete action.

The Film Education Program of Active Vista cultivates the marriage of film and advocacy in educating its audiences. It organizes activities geared toward the development of film's innate value as an educational medium that can be utilized to shape critical thought, influence culture, and foster social consciousness and action. It supports initiatives to help develop the film industry and its members as relevant allies in social advocacies. Through its Film Workshops, Active Vista focuses its lenses on real stories that impact social change in a series of filmmaking workshops and master classes that feature story development, film production, mentorship guidance, pitching and social impact planning. Active Vista initiates efforts to strengthen filmmaking as its ally in projecting truths on human struggles. It supports filmmakers in endeavors to provide knowledge and skills to effectively churn out their visions and wield them toward inspiring real world change. Through its Film Lab, Active Vista endeavors to support film ideas with clear social impact goals. It helps find ways to mobilize resources to support the development, production, promotion and distribution of these films. It actively seeks to screen relevant and compelling socially relevant films to broader audiences.

Art and Advocacy Lab Program

Active Vista is fueled by creative expression. Creativity allows audiences to understand concepts and conditions on human struggles and enables them to convey their insights and convictions on the social cause. Active Vista provides avenues for creative endeavors that shed light, spark discourses, and magnify actions. It conducts trainings, mentorship programs

and workshops for students, artists, educators, activists and development practitioners on the use of art, music, design, photography, storytelling, videos, digital media and other emerging platforms for social advocacies. It breeds a new generation of advocates whose fresh views and innovative approaches to human stories will inspire revolutions of the mind and create movements. It encourages new paradigms and forms of aesthetic expressions in telling stories in the context of advocacy.

The Active Vista Lab consists of three pioneering programs:

Heroes Hub

The Heroes Hub is a Fellowship Program of Youth Advocates for Human Rights. It takes root on the concept of the KATIPUNAN (Assembly) and aims to impart how the concept of heroism has translated to today's youth. The Fellowship Program aims to empower the Filipino Youth to be agents of social change. It offers a transformative learning process through the pursuit of knowledge, skills, values, and practices to form the youth's critical thinking, progressive ideas, and creative innovations which are fuel to their development as citizens and their participation in nation-building. It is a continuing learning process wherein the youth are given opportunities to connect, collaborate and create with their fellow youth. It provides spaces for immersion, discourse, expression and innovation to happen. It is an avenue for developing and nurturing ideas into action.

The Heroes Hub is a series of learning sessions designed to build the capacity of selected fellows in human rights advocacy work through especially designed courses, skills training and creative workshops to be held for a year. A variety of experts from the field of human rights, arts, and media guides, trains and mentors youth participants of the program.

Digibak: Digital Activism

Digibak is a portmanteau of "digital" and "tibak" (Filipino slang for activist). Digibak empowers advocates in using digital platforms and technologies for social advocacies. It banners the assertion that human rights are the same offline and online. The program develops support to digital media initiatives through a rights-based approach to further social advocacies. It addresses concerns on the prevailing culture of hate, violence, harassment and abuse online and the pressing digital human rights issues such as the online sexual abuse of children, fake news and trolls, online harassment

and bullying of women, LGBTQ+, children, use of cyber libel in the Cyber Crime Law to silence political dissent and activism, and Cyber Tokhang. The course provides

- an overview of the power of digital media;
- a presentation on basic tools on digital media and platforms;
- workshops on effective digital media communication;
- discussions on digital safety, security and protection; and
- training on pro-active digital engagement to counter discrimination, violence and abuse online as well as in promoting advocacy causes.

MartialLaw.ph

The MartialLaw.PH, a Digital Museum of Martial Law in the Philippines, is a virtual space serving as a living memorial to a pivotal period in Philippine history and serves as a platform to provoke critical reflection, inclusive learning, and vigilant remembrance through the multi-faceted lens of artistic expression. Education on the Marcos Era Martial Law, and the concepts and implications of martial rule are made available to the public through engaging platforms and in forms designed to spark their interest. The online hub is complemented by on-ground forums, exhibits and performances aimed at educating the youth on the country's dark past in the hope that in remembrance and understanding they take active vigilance in upholding the nation's democracy and freedom.

The Digital Museum of Martial Law in the Philippines was founded on 21 September 2016 by Dakila. MartialLaw.ph's digital exhibitions are being propagated, curated, and maintained by Active Vista while actively seeking individuals and groups who would like to contribute or collaborate in the endeavor.

Human Rights Festival

Active Vista reaches out to the broadest audience possible by continuing to explore various avenues for citizen engagement in its work. It seeks audiences beyond traditional public spaces and in remote areas through artistic endeavors and innovative initiatives to develop a critical citizenry and to open new platforms of expression and democratic participation. The Active Vista Festival seeks to bring attention to stories of human struggles through the arts as it presents a plethora of events to celebrate human rights.

The 4th and 5th edition of the Active Vista marked its transition from a film festival to a human rights festival, from a program of DAKILA to a learning center for human rights education. The transition of Active Vista came at a time when the human rights situation in the Philippines worsened with the rise in the death toll brought about by the war against drugs under the new administration. The 4th edition of Active Vista was launched before the 2016 Presidential Elections and culminated on Human Rights Day 2016. The 5th edition was held at the height of the attacks on human rights by the President's proclamations against human rights defenders. The 5th edition launched Active Vista as a Human Rights Festival departing from a mere film festival. The 5th edition of the film festival happened from 22 November – 10 December 2017 and became a celebration of human rights amid attacks on human rights and dignity.

The 2016 Active Vista International Human Rights Film Festival was held during the 22-27 February 2016 period and coincided with the 30th anniversary of the historic EDSA People Power Revolution. It had the theme: "Truth X Imagination" which calls for using imagination as a weapon against forgetting truth.

The 2016 Human Rights Film Festival had the following objectives:

- To educate a broad range of audiences on the importance of human rights in nation-building and social progress;
- To spark public conversations on global and local human rights issues;
- To mainstream human rights education in formal and alternative classroom setting; and
- To develop a new generation of human rights filmmakers.

According to Dakila Executive Director, Leni Velasco,[1]

> The greatest enemy of history is time. Thirty years ago, the Filipinos through collective action succeeded in getting rid of a fascist dictator, marking the end of a dark era known for its grave abuses and human rights violations. Thirty years ago, that was the narrative. Is it still the same one told today?

Active Vista sought to remind the public especially the younger generation who may not fully understand yet the importance of the EDSA

Revolution that truth was both in the obvious and the obscure. The problem was that "people had become afraid of the truth because it was a reflection of who we were and the society we built," Velasco explained. She further explained

> But truth, no matter how ugly, no matter how difficult, needs to be seen. Because it is only in acknowledging truth that we are liberated and are empowered to transform it. Active Vista hopes to be that undertaking – a platform to exorcise historical amnesia and usher this new generation into an understanding of the true essence of EDSA. The power of art is its ability to change perception, to change how people view the world. Active Vista inspires to do so through cinema, one viewer, at a time.

The Festival also welcomed the solidarity of its international guests, Anna Har, Festival Director of the Freedom Film Festival in Malaysia, and celebrated New York-based literary writer, feminist and human rights activist, Ninotchka Rosca. In ending, Velasco said, "Active Vista call on all Filipinos – young and old, the passionate and the disheartened, the dreamers and the realists, – to make imagination your weapon against forgetting truth."

The films of the festival were selected based on the following criteria:

1. Relevant human rights messages;
2. Artistic excellence;
3. Ability to engage audiences; and
4. Accessibility of films.

For the Festival Opening, the Festival Committee selected a controversial and risky choice for an opening film - *EDSA XXX*. This premiered in 2012 at the Cinema One Originals Film Festival (an annual film festival organized by a major television station and film production network in the Philippines) and was shown at international film festivals like the Rotterdam International Film Festival. Its filmmaker Khavn dela Cruz is known as an avant-garde filmmaker.

EDSA XXX was chosen primarily because the opening of the 4th edition of the Festival coincided with the 30th anniversary of the EDSA People Power Revolution in the Philippines and the film's messages dwelled primarily on the theme. *EDSA XXX* as opening film has the ability to engage

its audience, though some might find it alienating for the general audience because of its highly non-stereotype and artistic treatment. A musical about aliens does not fit rightly into the ordinary Filipino audience especially in a film that discusses the EDSA revolution.

However, the Festival Committee aimed to make a statement through the opening film. It aimed to shake the Filipino audience regarding 1) the key message of the film: "Nothing Ever Changes in the Ever-changing Republic," and 2) the existence of different types of human rights films. The Festival Committee believed that while the film challenged the audience to think beyond the experimental treatment of the film, it also challenged the human rights community to expand beyond stereotypes of what a human rights film should be.

EDSA XXX took the audience forward to 2030, the year of the 44th anniversary of EDSA revolution to pose the question, "Have you ever wondered why nothing changes despite countless presidents?" The answer was given in the form of an absurdist cross between low-budget science-fiction musical and crazy political satire.

EDSA XXX Director, Khavn, explained[2]

> Cinema is not there to be pleasant. It is there to stir, disturb, provoke, to punch the status quo instead of one's time card, to stop the hiding behind sterilized, anesthetized, spineless art and calling it a fearless struggle for change. Cinema is a rupture and a revolt — a daily, hourly, minutely questioning of what's right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly, until the profane becomes the sacred. The profane is the sacred.

In 2016, Khavn made headlines by performing a thirteen-hour live piano film scoring. He set the record for the longest film concert as he unveiled his thirteen-hour autobiographical film *Simulacrum Tremendum* at the 45th International Film Festival Rotterdam.

EDSA XXX was screened on 24 February 2016 at Cinema 4 of Shang Cineplex, Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong City. The screening was attended by prominent human rights defenders like Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chairperson Chito Gascon, then Secretary Ging Deles of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), members of the different United Nations agencies led by the United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Philippines (Mr. Ola Almgren), members of the diplo-

matic community led by the Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (Mr. Jaco Beerends), artists, filmmakers and celebrities like Jun "Bayaw" Sabayton, Ronnie Lazaro, Lourd de Veyra, and Aljur Abrenica, star of the historical epic, *Hermano Puli*.

For the second screening, Active Vista presented Jun Lana's *Barber's Tales* in partnership with the National Youth Commission, represented in the screening by then Commissioner Dingdong Dantes. In a statement, Commissioner Dingdong Dantes said[3]

> This generation – our generation should learn from the patriotic sacrifice of each and every Filipino during that era, and embed the lessons of the People Power Revolution with our everyday lives. Because by doing so, we will be able to value, protect and be responsible [for] the democratic rights that we cherish today.
>
> Today, the responsibility of keeping the faith and fire alive is upon us, the responsibility of building our nation from the winds of change the EDSA Revolution lent us. We are often charged [as] entitled, convenience-seekers and unconcerned. If only to prove them wrong, today presents to us an occasion to hold on to the promises of the bright future because of EDSA.

Festival Director Leni Velasco further added

> Active Vista deems that films like *Barber's Tales* are essential viewing especially for the youth of today who only get an idea of Martial Law through dusty history books and documentaries—and now, more than ever, through social media. Amidst those who blur, twist, and rewrite history in favor of the oppressors, it is high time the youth are engaged into an enlightening discussion on the essence of human rights and the dangers of having them taken away. The freedoms and rights enjoyed today can only be truly appreciated if there is a full understanding of how they were fought for. It is through this that history will not be forgotten in time.

Active Vista screened Pepe Diokno's *Kapatiran,* which provided the fraternity system's violent initiation process and hazing as the metaphor of violence of Martial Law, in partnership with the United Nations initiative "Re:PubliKo."[4] on 26 February 2016.

The three international films in the program tackled some of the most pressing human rights issues in the Philippines - historical revisionism and extra-judicial killings (EJKs) through *The Missing Picture* by Rithy Panh, cyber Martial Law and internet rights through *CitizenFour* by Laura Poitras, and lesbian-gay-bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) and persons with disabilities (PWDs) rights issues through *Margarita with a Straw* by Shonali Bose and Nilesh Maniyar. They were screened on the last day of the festival opening run, 27 February 2016, at the UP Film Center.

The 2016 Film Festival opened in five key regional cities nationwide including Manila, Iloilo, Davao, Dumaguete and Cebu and then travelled to different universities and communities until 10 December 2016, International Human Rights Day.

Ara Chawdhury's *Miss Bulalacao* in Cebu, Pepe Diokno's *Engkwentro* in Iloilo, and Chuck Gutierrez's *Iisa* in Davao were all simultaneously shown on 27 February 2016.

Active Vista: Bridging the Narrative of Truth from Imagination to Awakening

Crucial to the transition phase of Active Vista were the consistent screenings and discussions beyond the festival opening. In 2016, after the Festival Opening in February 2016, Active Vista established partnership with the University of the Philippines Film Institute through regular screenings of human rights-themed films at its Cine Adarna.

In March 2016, in celebration of women's month, Active Vista screened *Margarita with A Straw* by Shonali Bose and Nilesh Maniyar again at the Cine Adarna. The film strongly relayed the message of women empowerment with its main character overcoming her physical disabilities and insecurities in achieving what she wants. The audience was particularly struck about the outstanding performance of the lead actress and the effective portrayal of the film on issues of LGBT PWD.

In July 2016, Active Vista screened *Stranger by the Lake* by Alain Gourdaine, an award-winning and critically acclaimed film, in line with the LGBT pride month. A short open forum was conducted after the screening with panelists, Ron De Vera and Cha Roque from the LGBT community and Kristine Kintana from the film community. The audience was shocked with the film's boldness and disturbed by the story. The discussion afterwards truly helped in processing the issues raised in the film.

In September 2016, Active Vista screened *Engkwentro* by Pepe Diokno and *The Sheik and I* by Caveh Zahedi. In commemoration of the declaration of Martial Law, Active Vista screened *Engkwentro* in three major cities – Iloilo, Cebu and Metro Manila as a very timely film as it dealt with the reality of vigilante and EJKs in the country while *The Sheik and I* strongly tested the extent of freedom of expression especially when faced with religious and cultural perspectives. The audience received the *Sheik and I* very well as it discussed taboo topics on artistic expression.

Engkwentro drew so much reaction from the audience. Some members of audience who watched the film in Iloilo inquired if the organizers were critics of President Rodrigo Duterte as the film clearly portrays the issue on the Davao Death Squads. A few even went to the extreme and criticized the screening as propaganda against the government. In Cebu, the post-screening discussion was guided by panelists from the Children's Legal Bureau of Cebu who were experts on the issue of EJKs and children in conflict with the law in Cebu. In the UP Film Institute screening, audiences were very silent after the screening. However, they stayed for the discussion with panelists from representatives of human rights organizations. Many questions were raised on the issue of EJKs brought about by the government's war against drugs.

During the UP Film Institute discussion, I-Defend, a civil society coalition organized to defend human rights and dignity, represented by Budit Carlos, gave a comprehensive framework on human rights vis-à-vis the state-sanctioned EJKs. Ms. Pilgrim Gayo, Country Director of Terres de Hommes expressed how personal the film was for her because she worked with child victims of the Davao Death Squad during her stint as Executive Director of Tambayan Center for Children's Rights in Davao. Mr. Jim Libiran, filmmaker and actor of the film, shared his thoughts on the issue of EJK. One important thing to note was raised by film critic Noy Lauzon who pointed out that the audio of the Mayor's speech in the film were based on actual audio of a speech delivered or an interview by then Mayor of Davao and now Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. The audio was used in a scene where a fictional politician was delivering a message regarding his vision of a new society. The scene is a parallelism of the late dictator President Ferdinand Marcos vision of Bagong Lipunan (New Society) during Martial Law in the Philippines. The iconic scene is chilling given the present context

of President Duterte's positioning on a possible Martial Law rule under his term.

A special screening of *Tigbao* was also held at the Holy Angel University and coincided with their commemoration of Peace Month. Renee Karunungan of DAKILA and Jay de Jesus and I-Defend discussed issues on human rights especially EJKs and Martial Law. The audience were enlightened on the real situation during Martial Law which most Millennials perceived as genuinely a good time in the history of the country. Some educators raised questions on the need to teach Martial Law to today's generation of youth to counter perceptions that Martial Law is good for the country.

Bunso by Ditsi Carolino and *Boys* by Mischa Kamp were screened for the Active Vista run in November 2016. *Bunso* played a huge role in the enactment of the Juvenile Justice Act in 2006, which was meant to protect children in conflict with the law through programs for their rehabilitation and reintegration to the society. The recent discussions on lowering the age of criminal liability for children (from fifteen years old to nine years old) made the *Bunso* screening relevant as it showed the lives of three children in prison for committing petty crimes. Unfortunately, the screening of *Bunso* came a day after the burial of former President Ferdinand Marcos that caught the nation in surprise and sparked overnight protest actions and likely affected the number of people in the audience.

Truth X Imagination towards Truth Awakening: Ushering the Active Vista Human Rights Festival

After a successful 2016 film festival run, Active Vista celebrated International Human Rights Day 2016 through the *Alab ng Puso* (Rage of the Heart) concert in partnership with the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines. The concert-festival mobilized musicians, artists, and human rights advocates to celebrate human rights amid the onslaught of attacks against human rights and dignity. The concert-festival fueled the conviction of transforming the film festival into an annual festival for human rights utilizing various art forms. The social-political context of the country has given birth to a resurgence of socially-relevant art and Active Vista saw this as an opportunity to complete its transformation.

The new Active Vista was launched on 8 August 2017 through a gathering of partners, networks, and allies that support the human rights cause.

Representatives of various communities – government, media, film, civil society, academe and youth – were present to celebrate the occasion. Chairperson Chito Gascon gave a moving speech that expressed the CHR's support to the Active Vista endeavors. He paraphrased the famous line from Star Wars *Rogue One* film to express his point:

> It is the time to build an alliance, built on solidarity and values to push back all the wrong things happening today. Planting the seeds of change and revolution, imparting the values of human rights are important. All Rebellions are built on hope.

DAKILA President Lourd de Veyra gave a witty speech which mocked government pronouncements on the "importance" of human rights and the controversial allocation of zero budget to CHR by the House of Representatives (lower house of the legislature). Actor and DAKILA founder Ronnie Lazaro opened the launch. Representatives of long time partners of Active Vista also gave solidarity messages. Among them were Sam Chittick, the Country Representative of The Asia Foundation, Atty. Arpee Santiago, the Executive Director of the Ateneo Human Rights Center and filmmakers Ria Limjap, Babyruth Gutierrez and Moira Lang. The launch was sponsored by Active Vista partner in film distribution, T-Rex Entertainment, producer of the historical film *Hermano Puli*.

The transition of Active Vista into a human rights center of DAKILA was a product of a summing up of Active Vista's work and DAKILA's experience in human rights work in the Philippines since 2008. Active Vista as a biennial film festival from 2008 to 2012 was successful in broadening audiences but much thought was spent on its sustainability as a program. The hiatus in 2013-2015 provided Active Vista a much needed reflection on its strategies and tactics to develop the program.

History, Human Rights and Heroism Forums through Cinema

In 2015, as a result of its previous work in screening socially-themed films, the producers of *Heneral Luna* approached Active Vista to tap into its large network of schools and explore the potential of schools into helping the marketing of a historical film to youth audiences. In the recent history of Philippine cinema, no historical film has really become a blockbuster. The result was an eye-opener not only to Active Vista but the film industry as a

whole. The work done by Active Vista was a game changer. It shaped new ways in film marketing and distribution in the Philippines.

Active Vista started to work on historical films as early as February 2015 as it sealed partnerships with schools all over the country in securing a forum on heroism complemented with a fifteen minute preview of the film. It tested the waters with a youth forum organized in May 2015 in Metro Manila which tapped youth leaders as the first batch of audience. Active Vista started its school tour in June 2015 and the tour lasted till September 2015, a day before *Heneral Luna* was screened commercially in theaters.

Overall, Active Vista reached around thirty-six schools from as far as the North (Ilocos Norte) to the South (Davao). It organized around four special screenings of the film. The audience responded positively to the film and both educators and students were won over by the discussions that followed the fifteen minute preview of the film. Historians were brought in to provide the much needed context of the discussions. As a result, the "Bayani Ba 'To?" roadshow transformed audiences into advocates of the film and fans of history.

This impetus provided the much needed support when the film was finally screened in commercial theaters in September 2015. Its first day of showing did not fare well, and thus limited screening was made on its second day, a practice that was usual for films that were not doing well in attracting audience to the theaters. What saved the film and helped make it a blockbuster phenomenon was an army of advocates – educators, school administrators, students – who saw the preview of the film and demanded that it be shown in their local theaters. Those who followed the innovators were not disappointed with the film product. Thus, word of mouth on the excellence of the film exploded. Social media amplified the buzz on the ground. What happened was a phenomenon, a historical film that reaped box office success and changed the game of how independent films could be a commercial success.

More important than commercial viability, *Heneral Luna* created a hunger among audiences for quality, relevant films in the local industry. It raised the level of how independent films should be marketed to reach broader audiences. It made producers realize that the taste of audiences are evolving and forced them to make quality and relevant films. It impacted on how films were distributed and made the industry aware of how a cartel, traditional and conservative industry practitioners, have been preventing

independent films to flourish. It challenged audiences to seek films that did not conform to traditional films they had been fed in the past. And Active Vista was in the right place at the right time.

In 2016, coinciding with the resolve of Active Vista to organize the 4th edition of the festival despite challenges in resources, the producer of another historical film approached the organization to help market the film, *Ang Hapis at Himagsik ni Hermano Puli*, hoping to ride on the success of *Heneral Luna*. Active Vista partnered with T-Rex Entertainment to present the 2nd edition of the "Bayani Ba 'To Forums" which featured a short preview of the film *Ang Hapis at Himagsik ni Hermano Puli* (The Agony and Fury of Hermano Puli) and sparked a conversation among the youth on the importance of history, human rights and heroism in today's time.

Much like the strategy explored for *Heneral Luna,* the Forums held after the movie screening featured a panel of resource persons – a historian, an educator, a representative from civil society/media/government, an artist and a representative of Dakila. Forums in forty-five schools, four Educators Forums and two Youth Leaders' Forums were organized. The Forums reached 21,829 audiences, 1,080 educators and 500 youth leaders.

In the post-screening discussions, audiences mostly reacted on the need for more historical films. Audiences were ecstatic on the lectures of historians delivered in pop culture format as it allowed them to understand the film in the context of history and the present human rights situation. The forums were complemented by distribution of study guide to educators. Educators appreciated the format as it provided them with inputs on how to use film in their classes. Most students appreciated the pop culture format of the discussions and the interesting information that historians shared. Most people in the audience were very much engaged in the discussions – questions covered film production, history and human rights issues. Most of those who participated in the Youth Leaders' Forum and some who attended the school forums joined DAKILA and signified their intent to be more involved in socially- relevant endeavors. Most educators expressed their interest in continuing to organize the forum. Most partner school administrations and departments asked to formalize and schedule regular forums with Active Vista in their schools.

The roadshow forums of Active Vista were deemed as a pioneering effort in audience development especially among the youth. Many audiences reached by the forums expressed interest in continuing relevant programs

similar to Active Vista in their specific schools and communities. Many schools became aware of utilizing films in their social consciousness programs and academic subjects. The initiative also paved way for local efforts to hold forums and screenings on human rights issues.

The endeavors with Artikulo Uno (now TBA productions) for *Heneral Luna* and T-Rex Entertainment for *Hermano Puli* paved the way for a large network of educators, another layer of audiences in the Active Vista fold. The forums held among educators reinforced the previous assessment of Active Vista on the need for materials and more innovative platforms for human rights education in the country.

Supporters

Active Vista has garnered the support of like-minded organizations, institutions and individuals through the years. In its past editions, it has been supported by the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines, the National Commission of Culture and the Arts, the National Youth Commission, the Film Development Council of the Philippines, University of the Philippines Film Institute, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Australian Agency for International Development, the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the Canadian Embassy, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Asia Foundation, and Movies that Matter. Active Vista boasts of partnerships with human rights and civil society organizations, schools and universities nationwide and media institutions. In 2015-2016, it started partnerships with production outfits like TBA Productions and T-Rex Entertainment. Active Vista maintains close partnership with the filmmaking community.

Active Vista Human Rights Festival 2017

Active Vista opened its 5th edition on 22 November 2017 with the theme "Truth Awakening," as it shed light on versions and visions of truth towards a tempestuous awakening of a generation that responded to the call of the times. The Active Vista Human Rights Festival celebrated the triumph of humanity amid the surge of a social storm drowning freedom, tearing human rights and dignity. The Festival reclaimed heroism as it commemorated heroes who shaped the nation's history on Bonifacio Day and invoked the

spirit of *Bayanihan* (community spirit) as it united in solidarity with the world in celebrating the International Human Rights Day towards building a true nation of heroes.

The 5th edition of Active Vista had the following objectives:

1. To raise awareness on human rights issues and concerns by providing knowledge on human rights in accessible, credible and relevant manner;
2. To counter the prevailing culture of hate, violence, false narratives, fake news and alternative truths by providing platforms for critical discourse on human rights and democracy;
3. To build the capacity of the public to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights through creative avenues for involvement; and
4. To organize a broad-based public support by engaging the youth, educators and artists through the use of arts, media and popular culture for the human rights cause.

The 2017 Active Vista Human Rights Festival featured human rights film screenings, art exhibits ("Moving Pictures: Artists for Human Dignity" and "Desaparecidos"), theater play ("Tao Po"), talks and workshops on human rights, a Youth Empowerment Summit, human rights short film competition, bike ride (*Padyak para sa Karapatan*), and a concert (*Alab ng Puso*).

Festival Program 2017

Active Vista featured the best human rights-themed films that brought to the Filipino audience a world-view on the human rights situation through moving images of truths on important global and local issues. The festival presented films that dealt with the following issues: Environment and Climate Justice; Gender Rights, Equality and Empowerment; Social Progress with Social Justice; Empowering Vulnerable Sectors; Reclaiming Spaces of Freedom; Waging Peace; Truth, Justice and Historic Memory; and Democracy and Good Governance. The festival screened international full-length films in a commercial theater in Shang Cineplex in Mandaluyong City and local full-length films in the new alternative film space, Cinema Centenario in Quezon City, all in Metro Manila. It also brought to key regional cities – Davao, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Iloilo and Bacolod, a special screening of *Smaller and Smaller Circles* in partnership with TBA Productions.

The Festival opened with the Philippine premiere of the multi-awarded documentary film, *Motherland* by Ramona Diaz. *Motherland* explored the Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital in Manila, named as the busiest maternity ward in the world. The screening was a by-invitation event and attended by representatives of festival partners from the diplomatic community (officials of the Dutch, French and Argentinian embassies), representatives of the Commission on Human Rights, representatives of other partner organizations (the Asia Foundation, LIKHAAN and many others), artists, filmmakers, educators and staff members of the hospital.

After the screening, an open forum with Director Ramona Diaz, a representative from the hospital and Dr. Junice Melgar from LIKHAAN ensued. The audience expressed gratitude to Director Diaz for showing the real situation in the hospital especially regarding indigent women.

On 23 November 2017, another screening of *Motherland* was held in partnership with Grrrl Gang Manila. The screening was opened to the public with Dumagat women in the audience supported by LILAK, an organization for indigenous women's rights. After the screening, Director Diaz, with Red Tani from Filipino Freethinkers and Rash Caritativo from DAKILA answered questions from the audience. One of the key issues brought up during the open forum was on how the Reproductive Health Bill (RH bill) could help improve reproductive health and family planning education in the Philippines. Red Tani emphasized that RH bill was about having informed choices. The Dumagat women talked about their experience of being discriminated in hospitals, making them opt to rely on their own methods.

The screening of films continued on 27 November till 10 December 2017. See Table 1 for the list of films shown.

Table 1. Films shown during the 2017 Festival[5]

Film	Story	Screening Date
Blanka, Kohki Hasei (2015) – Philippines/ Japan	A film about a homeless girl looking for a mother figure.[6]	27 November 2017, co-presented by the Asia Foundation, which launched its own campaign for children's safety online, the AlamBaU.ph, during the event
Small Talk, Hui Chen Huang (2016) - Taiwan	A documentary film of a personal journey of the filmmaker regarding her mother as she came into terms with her sexuality and motherhood.	28 November 2017

Die Beautiful, Jun Robles Lana (2016)	A film about a Filipino transgender woman who suddenly died and was "presented as a different celebrity on each night of her wake"[7] according to her wishes.	29 November 2017, part of the "Gayborhood Night: Bongga Ka Die (Beautiful)" event
Batch '81, Mike De Leon (1982)	A film of an "unflinching study of the joys of submission." It portrays the "sadomasochistic initiation rituals of a college fraternity [that] become a metaphor for the Philippines of Ferdinand Marcos."[8]	Cine Adarna, UP Diliman, Quezon City, 1 December 2017, co-presented by the Film Producers Society
Respeto, Treb Monteras (2017)	A film that tackles the "complex issue of human rights violation across two generations, musically connected by the vibrant and socially-conscious use of language."[9]	Cinema Centenario, 2, 9 - 10 December 2017
On the Job, Erik Matti (2013)	A film about "prison inmates who are regularly let out of jail to perform dirty jobs [kill people]. [The film tells] of a corrupt system in the government."[10]	Cinema Centenario, 3 December 2017
Last Supper No. 3, Veronica B. Velasco (2009)	A film that presents a humorous look at the circuitous path the Philippine legal system takes to obtain justice.[11]	Cinema Centenario, 4 December 2017
Jay, director Francis Xavier Pasion (2008)	A film about a gay TV producer documenting the family of a gay hate crime victim, who intruded into the private grief of the victim's family and found the secret life and love of his subject.[12]	Cinema Centenario, 5 December 2017
Bunso, Ditsi Carolino (2003)	A documentary film on three young prisoners with "horrendous living conditions [inside the prison] and [who] speak openly about their lives behind bars and back at home, including stories of poverty, domestic abuse, drug use, petty crime, and abandonment."[13]	Cinema Centenario, 6 December 2017
Himpapawid, Raymond Red (2009)	Inspired by a true news account, this is the astounding story of a lone deranged hijacker who has struggled to survive in the chaos of modern Philippine society.[14]	Cinema Centenario, 7 December 2017
Engkwentro, Pepe Diokno (2009)	A film about a young gangster who is plotting to flee town to avoid being killed by the city's crime-fighting death squad, but before he runs away he must dodge the attack of a rival gang.[15]	Cinema Centenario, 8 December 2017

The post-screening open forums raised comments on different issues:

- The vulnerability of children to trafficking especially those who were neglected, abandoned, and those living in the street (*Blanka*);
- The irony of promoting brotherhood through a cycle of violence in hazing rites of fraternities, and the reality that who you know mattered more than what you do (*Batch '81*);
- A film's (*Respeto*) ability to bring to young audience the topic of Martial Law especially in relation to the current situation;
- The state of the judiciary in the country (*Last Supper No. 3);*
- Media sensationalism (*Jay*) and questions on where to draw the line in media ethics;
- Important role of films in the passage of laws (the Juvenile Justice Act in 2006 in the case of *Bunso*) and their continuing relevance to the current times; and
- The general comment on the need to use films to encourage people to take part in social change.

Short Film Competition

Active Vista feature short films that tell compelling stories of people whose freedoms and rights are trampled upon and give voice to those who suffer in silence. It presents aspiring filmmakers whose fresh takes and innovative approaches to human rights films inspire the revolution of the mind and create movements. The Active Vista Award is presented to filmmakers and human rights defenders whose creative works pay homage to the protection

and promotion of human rights. It is a tribute to their excellence in marrying their art and advocacy.

Filmmakers are encouraged to submit films that discuss human rights issues including violence, justice, tyranny, historical revisionism, right to life, right to information, LGBT, social acceptance, poverty, right to equal opportunity, freedom of expression, human dignity, migration, anti-colonialism, education, labor rights, human trafficking and slavery, and the war on drugs and extra-judicial killings. The call has successfully gathered sixty-four entries from filmmakers coming from different regions, sectors, and genders, with genres covering comedy, drama, action, animation, satire and experimental.

All submitted films become part of the Active Vista International Human Rights Film Festival's archive for internal research, or academic purposes and film catalogue. The films can be shown publicly as long as the filmmakers are informed of the screenings. The short films in the Active Vista catalogue have study or discussion guides.

Ten finalists were recognized at the Alab ng Puso concert on 9 December 2017 at Times Square, Araneta Center and the trailers of the films were also shown to the concert audience. The formal awarding was held at Cinema Centenario on 10 December 2017, with the screening of the ten films. Lourd de Veyra, President of DAKILA, and filmmaker Sherad Sanchez gave the awards to the winners and shared some inspiring messages.

Active Vista awarded the Best Film to *Si Astri Maka Si Tambulah* by Xeph Suarez for giving a peek on the fate of transwomen in the Muslim community, the second Best Film to *Aliens Ata* by Glenn Barit for sharing a poignant tale on different kinds of loss; and the third Best Film to *Retrospektib* by Daryll Jameson Apaga for taking the audience into a brave harrowing, yet comical journey through the nightmares of dictatorship.

Art Exhibit: Moving Pictures: Artists for Human Dignity

Recognizing the universal power of the photographic image as it relates to truth and accessibility, the series of art exhibitions dubbed as *Moving Pictures* has been mounted by Active Vista since 2008 for public awareness, discussion, and education. The photographic images' capacity to *move* a person to critical thinking and action, as well as their easy translation to print and digital format (and the ease of transporting them from one location to the other), create *Moving Pictures* a viable platform for social issues which affect the society.

The 2017 edition *Moving Pictures* was in partnership with *HUDYAT Artists for Human Dignity*. *HUDYAT* which translates to either "signs of the times" or "alarm," cast the note on the 2017 *Moving Pictures* event. This edition focused on human dignity as the basis for unconditional respect for human rights, which must be accorded to all persons despite their age, gender, health standing, economic situation, ethnic or social origins, political or religious beliefs, or criminal history. See Table 2 for the list and description of photos exhibited:

Table 2. List of photos in *Moving Pictures 2017*

Photo	Theme and short description
#BAbaLIKanTAyongDelubyo, AG Saño	**Environment** Photo about the commemoration of the 4th year of the destruction brought by Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan. The photo shows how brutal mother nature could be if global warming would persist as a result of human activities, primarily, the burning of fossil fuels.
Creativity, Not Conflict, Nikki Luna	**Women's rights** Photo of Rashida, one of the kids at the evacuation center inside the provincial capitol of Marawi city. Nikki used the programs of #StartARTproject in teaching kids how to take portraits of each other. The kids from different areas in Marawi were brought together as *bakwits* (displaced kids or evacuees). After getting to know each other, Nikki asked the kids to draw a friend (or make a new one). The project taught the kids to learn more about each other's story, family history, connecting and realizing they were not alone.

Outtake from Signos (2009-2016), Veejay Villafranca	**Climate change** Photo shows children playing around a dredged fishing boat by the shores of Tacloban bay, amid possible trauma and psychological stresses caused by Typhoon Haiyan.
Untitled photo, Hannah Reyes Morales	**Child rights** Photo of Ann, fifteen years old, with her new-born baby in her home in Manila, where one in five girls is a mother or pregnant. The photo is part of the project which follows the lives of girls in Manila who are coming of age, with a baby in tow.
Police Shadow, Raffy Lerma	**Right to life** Photo shows the lifeless body of an alleged drug pusher, Jesus Jonas, lying on the street after he was killed in a police buy-bust operation at Barangay Del Monte, Quezon City on 8 October 2016.
Contagious!, Rick Rocamora	**Prison rights** This photo shows the detainees in Police Station 9 of the Manila Police Department. The photo is part of "Bursting on the Seams" documentary project about conditions in Philippine detention centers.
Conjugal Dictatorship, Luis Liwanag	**Martial Law** This photo shows deposed President Ferdinand E. Marcos sharing a moment of laughter during one of the presidential sorties in late 1984.
Untitled photo, Jes Aznar	**Children and armed conflict** Photo about peace shows children inside the stronghold of Kumander Tata, a local warlord, in Reina Regente in Maguindanao in 2009.
Children Bathing in Murky Estero Waters, Nana Buxani	**Children** Photo shows children under a bridge along R10 in Tondo, Manila.
Justice for Kian, Justice for All, Eloisa Lopez	**Killing by the police** Photo of the slain teenager Kian Loyd Delos Santos who was killed on 16 August 2017 in what police called a "shooting encounter" near his home in Baesa, Caloocan city. CCTV footage and witnesses, however, revealed that he was dragged from one alley to another, past a basketball court, and into a dead-end corner where he was asked to run with a gun – and when he did, was shot. His death caused national outrage in the government's one-year old drug war.
Ama Mi, Xyza Bacani	**Migrant workers** Photo shows migrant workers in Hong Kong holding hands while praying in Saint Joseph church. Religion plays a very crucial role in nurturing the enduring spirit of Filipino migrant workers wherever they are.
"Maruja" Santos, 58 years old, Al "Carmen Dela Rue" Enriquez, 73 years old, Aton "Maricel Soriano" Libaton, 58 years old, Geloy Concepcion	**LGBT** Photo about three of the last remaining Manila Golden Gays. They are Filipino gay men who perform in drag, and were residing in the Home of the Golden Gays in Pasay City before it was disbanded. Homeless with no means of support, they go through these hardships of survival with their human dignity intact.

Dockworkers, Neil Daza	**Labor rights** Photo shows dock workers carrying cement bags manually to waiting trucks in Zamboanga Pier. Dock workers who are constantly exposed to hazardous working conditions usually do not have insurance or health benefits and are paid way below the minimum wage.
Pamaas, Efren Ricalde	**Indigenous people's rights** Photo shows Bai Bibyaon Ligkayan Bigkay, a ninety-two-year-old woman *lumad* leader presiding over the *pamaas* – a ritual of the indigenous peoples in Mindanao asking the spirits for justice against the hardships caused by US imperialism to their communities. The ritual involved smearing the palms of *lumad* leaders with blood from a chicken slaughtered during the ceremony.

Moving Pictures was first placed during the Active Vista International Human Rights Festival Opening on 22 November 2017 at the ShangCineplex, Shangrila Mall. After the film festival opening, the exhibit was moved to the University of the Philippines, Manila (23 – 25 November 23), University of Makati (28 November - 2 December 2017), and De LaSalle College of St. Benilde in Taft, Manila (4 – 8 December 2017). The exhibit was displayed at the Commission on Human Rights for the rest of the month of December.

DESAPARECIDOS (THE 'DISAPPEARED')

Toym Imao

> "Absence remains an open wound. But despite it, the desaparecidos remain present in our hearts and minds. Despite efforts to eradicate their existence, they will never be forgotten".
> - Artist Toym Imao

Toym Imao made forty-three figures to represent those left behind by victims of forced disappearance. Forty-three represents the number of years since Martial Law was declared until 2015 - the time when the installation was completed by the artist. Empty and hollow, each figure represents a year since Martial Law was declared. Instead of portraits and picture frames, the figures hold empty niches, signifying death, the lack of closure, the emptiness, the hollow feeling, and the gut-wrenching pain those left behind must deal with. The exhibit was displayed at the BGC Arts Center in Taguig City on 24-26 November 2017 and co-presented by the Hudyat Artists for Human Dignity and the Juana Change Movement.


Police Shadow
Kelly Lerma
ACTIVE VISTA
dakila.org.ph


ACTIVE VISTA
dakila.org.ph

Theater: Tao Po! (Mga Monologo)

Active Vista staged a four-part monologue on human rights and EJKs entitled "Tao Po!" on 26 November 2017 at BGC Arts Center.

Juana Change, the main character in the monologue, focused on her husband and son, both victims of summary killings, a photographer whose sanity was questioned by the newspaper that employed him, the apparent double life of a policeman sworn to uphold the law, and a hitman, paid to violate it, and a young girl paying tribute to EJK victims haphazardly buried in the notorious Tokhang Wall. Mae Paner played Juana Change, with script by Maynard Manansala and direction by Ed Lacson. The play was shown at BGC Arts Center to around three hundred people and was co-presented with Juana Change Movement, SPEAR and the Temperamental Brats.

Film Talk: How to Watch a Film?

A question of ways rather than a title for instruction. "How to Watch a Film" offered articulated points on how film can ignite the discourse on human rights by offering perspectives and contextual talks on the nature and opportunities in filmmaking. Film as a set of moving pictures is innately human as it captures perspectives of reality-immersive and offers familiar yet not necessarily comfortable ways of seeing life. The effect of watching a film is always up to how it is digested and read in numbers of ways, but through

utilizing the lens of being human, film can always trigger critical thinking, influence culture and ignite social consciousness and action. With speakers whose experiences are founded on the practice of filmmaking and film criticism, the talk provided an experience for the audience to understand and appreciate film through the lens of humanity.

Speakers included filmmakers Sherad Sanchez, Monster Jimenez, Erik Matti and film critic Philbert Dy. The talk was co-presented by Pineapple Lab and Rogue Magazine and was attended by one hundred twenty people who were selected from hundreds of applications to the open call.

This forum was held on 26 November 2017 in Pineapple Lab, Makati city.

Youth Forum: Heroes Hub, Youth Empowerment Summit

The first Heroes Hub took place during the celebration of the heroism of Bonifacio, the father of the Philippine Revolution, on 30 November 2017 with three-hundred youth leaders joining a conference that 1) discussed the heroic journey of Filipino heroes who have shaped the nation's past; 2) determined the prospects and challenges of the present state of the country; and 3) explored visions and versions of truths in the struggle to build

a true nation of heroes. The Heroes Hub: Youth Empowerment Summit ran from 1 pm – 7 pm on 30 November 2017 at Novotel Manila Araneta Center, Quezon city with speakers including Professor Michael Charleston "Xiao" Chua, Lourd de Veyra, Raffy Lerma, Mich Dulce, BP Valenzuela, Juan Miguel Severo, Chai Fonacier, and Atty. Pochoy Labog.

Heroes Hub: Youth Empowerment Summit started as an initiative of Dakila and Active Vista to form a network of youth leaders in Metro Manila and empower them with discussions and creative platforms to further their advocacies.

Specifically, the program aimed to:

1. Pay importance to the role of the youth in shaping discourse on pressing social issues and in formulating actions towards the common good;
2. Empower the youth towards the realization of the importance of recognizing, upholding, and protecting human rights;
3. Serve as a platform for formulating, exchanging, and collaborating creative ideas, innovations and practical solutions that can address societal concerns and problems;
4. Redefine the concept of heroism through upholding, protecting, and defending the rights and welfare of others;
5. Amplify the voice of the youth in social issues by engaging them in movements geared towards nation-building; and
6. Inspire the young generation into contributing to efforts geared towards the promotion of human rights, freedom and democracy.

An online call for participants yielded a total of five hundred forty-five applications. The organizing committee selected two hundred fifty applicants based on the following criteria: 1) understanding of heroism, 2) knowledge on human rights issues and 3) participation/involvement in related initiatives/activities. Fifty slots were reserved for event partners from youth organizations.

The program started with opening remarks by the Executive Director of Active Vista, Leni Velasco. She cited the importance of the gathering and invited the audience to participate and ask questions for the duration of the summit. Professor Michael Charleston "Xiao" Chua gave a presentation entitled "Hapdi X Kirot: Pains of the Past" that provided the audience with a context of heroism in history. He also narrated the journey of the Filipino

heroes, as well as the struggles they faced. Mr. Lourd de Veyra discussed the struggle of the Filipino nation at present, and how millennials can help shape and stir discourse and commit to their own acts of heroism.

After setting the context of the past and present, artists/activists using their creative platforms provided their presentations. This started with Raffy Lerma's talk on "Moving Pictures: Witnessing the War on Drugs" where he shared the stories of his nightcrawl as a photographer for Philippine Daily Inquirer with a beat on the war on drugs. This was followed by Juan Miguel Severo's talk, "Words that Speak: Marrying Art and Advocacy," on his experience on using spoken word to pursue his personal advocacies. Fashion Designer and Feminist Mich Dulce also shared her passion for advocating women's rights in her talk, "Fashion and Passion: Advocating for Women's Rights."

Artist/musician BP Valenzuela shared her insights, "Rights and Rhythm: Let's Talk About Equality," on fighting for equality. She also performed her music on stage to help inspire millennials on using music as a tool for advocacy. Actress Chai Fonacier's "Dealing with Diversity: The Truth about Regionalism" explained how stereotypes among people coming from different regions had divided views and opinions among Filipinos. Lawyer/musician Pochoy Labog's "Pursuing Justice: Understanding the Rule of Law" shared his experience as a human rights lawyer and provided basic knowledge on how to uphold, protect, and defend human rights in the context of the law. The event ended with a speech from Dakila's OIC Executive Director Rash Caritativo, who reiterated the importance of living a life of heroism, and launched the Heroes Hub Fellowship Program that would run on 2018.

The Heroes Hub will continue as a formation program through a series of learning sessions designed to build the capacity of selected fellows in human rights advocacy work through especially designed courses, skills training and creative workshops to be held for a year. A variety of experts from the field of human rights, arts, and media will guide, train and mentor the youth participants of the program. The call for the Heroes Hub Fellowship was announced during the 2017 Youth Summit. The fellowship will start in March 2018 and end in December 2018. Only thirty fellows will be selected for the 2018 Heroes Hub Fellowship Program.

Alab ng Puso Concert

Active Vista Human Rights Festival organized the 2017 celebration of the International Human Rights Day on 10 December 2017. The celebration consisted of a bike ride called "Padyak para sa Karapatan" (Bicycle for Rights), and art and music festival called "Alab ng Puso" which showcased performances, exhibits and events as platforms for public involvement in the human rights cause. The concert was co-organized with DAKILA, I-DEFEND Philippines and the Commission on Human Rights.

The International Human Rights Day celebration supported the start of a year-long campaign by the United Nations to mark the upcoming 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The celebration came at a very delicate time in the Philippines, with a European Union report on worsening of the human rights situation in the Philippines as a result of the government's war on drugs.

The bike ride consisted of a twelve-hour, three hundred-kilometer ride that started on 8 November 2017 from Nueva Ecija province to Quezon City. From Cabanatuan city in Nueva Ecija province, the cyclists passed through the provinces of Tarlac, Pampanga and Bulacan and finished at the "Alab ng Puso" concert in Araneta Center in Quezon city. The route covered the military camp in Nueva Ecija where staunch human rights advocate, the late Senators Jose "Pepe" Diokno and Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino were detained in solitary confinement during Martial Law period on charges of subversion. The bikers passed the Capas National Shrine (a memorial for the Allied soldiers who died during the World War II) in Tarlac province to pay respect to

those soldiers. The bikers proceeded to the newly-installed statue of Senator Diokno at the Commission on Human Rights grounds. The bike ride was inspired by the life and work of Senator Diokno who was regarded as the Father of the Human Rights Movement in the Philippines.

The Alab ng Puso concert featured performances by some of the country's top artists - Hilera, Sandwich, Bullet Dumas, Noel Cabangon, Bayang Barrios and Naliyagan Band, Cooky Chua, Gary Granada, Ourselves the Elves, BLKD, Aia de Leon, IV of Spades, Brass Pas Pas Pas Pas, Tanya Markova, Oh! Flamingo, Flying Ipis, Alfonso Manalastas, Juan Miguel Severo, Louise Meets, Abby Orbeta, and Jun "Bayaw" Sabayton.

Evaluation and Impact Analysis

Curriculum Development

As a result of the Active Vista efforts, more young audiences became aware of various human rights issues and concerns. The increased level of awareness is evident through the questions raised during forums and through their posts in social media. The most glaring measure of increased awareness of audiences were on the issues of Martial Law, EJKs, enforced disappearances, torture, LGBT, historical revisionism, women's rights and child rights which are also the most pressing issues in Philippine society in the past two years.

School institutions, realizing the need for alternative platforms for social consciousness formation and human rights education, proposed to

Active Vista a sustained and deeper partnership. Most of them have formal agreement that makes Active Vista their partner in human rights and media education for the next three years at the very least. This strategic partnership allows educational institutions to plan activities and projects with Active Vista and formally integrate them into the school calendar and curriculum. Partnership with educational institutions varies depending on the department or office of the school institution involved – arts and culture office, college department (mass communication, film, social sciences and education), office for religious formation, volunteer and advocacy programs, and student affairs office.

Educational institutions found resource materials for classroom use through the films presented, and enabled them to explore alternative forms of education that can be integrated in their curriculum and cultural and formation programs. Educators, on the other hand, were presented new approaches and relevant content they can use in human rights education. The pop culture format done through the Active Vista forums increased interest among educators on using media, art and pop culture in their education pedagogy.

Human Rights Advocacy

Civil society and human rights organizations have also benefitted from the innovations and creativity of Active Vista as a platform for social consciousness formation and human rights education. Active Vista allowed caused-oriented groups to widen their audience and reach. Their involvement in Active Vista opened up new audiences for their advocacies and gave them a platform to build awareness on their causes. For example, the partnership with Filipino Freethinkers on the screening of *CitizenFour* and *The Sheik and I* opened discourses on their advocacy for freedom of expression and internet rights. The partnership with I-Defend allowed them to broaden their public and mobilize wider support for the advocacy against EJKs.

Active Vista has also influenced government institutions especially the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) into developing more innovative and creative platforms for human rights promotion. The film festival, organized in partnership with CHR, was designed to address negative public perception on human rights by utilizing arts through a musical concert and influencers in mainstreaming human rights concerns to the Filipino public. Active Vista

is working with the Commission on Human Rights on developing materials utilizing films for their education program. There is also a plan to jointly organize a conference of educators to discuss how to teach human rights in the classroom with films as teaching/learning material.

Audience Development

Active Vista through its partnership with the Film Development Council of the Philippines and Cinema Centenario enabled the promotion of the *cinematheques* (small movie theaters) and alternative spaces in other cities in the country as venues for screening films by educational institutions to teach about human rights and social issues.

The Active Vista screenings of international full-length films contributed significantly in exposing the Filipino audiences to a worldview on human rights and gave them insights on innovations by other countries on methods that facilitate social transformation. This is especially needed at a time when the country is bombarded with negative public opinion on the importance of human rights. The worldview presented enabled Filipino audiences to see human rights as a global concern, to realize that human rights violations happen to anyone anywhere, and to empathize with human rights struggles outside the country. The existence of a human rights film festival is a strong statement in itself to help inspire the Filipino public towards involvement in the promotion and protection of human rights in the Philippines.

Film Development

Filmmakers and independent film producers have become more involved in audience development as a result of the partnership efforts with Active Vista. The filmmakers and producers now see Active Vista as an effective tool not only in developing film audiences but also as alternative platform for film marketing and distribution. The large mass base of the Active Vista Film Festival helps films reach their target audiences in a manner that mobilizes ground support for independent socially-relevant films.

The most conspicuous evidence of Active Vista's contribution to the film industry is its success in empowering audiences into demanding corporate movie theater owners to screen independent socially-relevant films. With this influence, Active Vista is sought by filmmakers and producers to

help mobilize audiences through initiatives aimed to educate audiences of the power of cinema and the importance of its social messages.

Active Vista has also become a partner of several filmmakers and film producers into strategizing relevant content and key messages of their films. It is currently working with filmmakers and producers to develop a comprehensive human rights film catalogue that shall be made available to schools and communities. This initiative will help independent film producers in distributing their films to a broader public and at the same time allow Active Vista to utilize the films for human rights education.

Community Efforts in Human Rights Education

One of the striking contributions of Active Vista is the strengthening of linkages among educators, advocates and filmmakers. This is especially evident in the regions where local filmmakers, film communities and festivals are connected to educational institutions and groups through the Active Vista. This allowed the filmmakers and film community in the area to tap into schools to widen their audience reach. At the same time, educators and schools gained access to film materials in their local context that they can use in teaching. Active Vista paved the way for these linkages to happen as evident in its regional screening efforts. For example, in Cebu, Active Vista helped forge partnership among the Binisaya Film Festival, the Motion Picture Society of Cebu and the Coalition for Better Education. Active Vista has been working hand-in-hand as well with the film community involved in the Mindanao Film Festival in Davao, Cine Magis in Cagayan de Oro and Cine Kasimanwa in Iloilo.

Solid working relations with the film community allowed Active Vista to get the members of the film community to sit down and discuss relevant human rights issues that affect the industry. The strength of Active Vista is its ability to gather film industry practitioners from groups and circles with differing stands or affiliations because it is seen as a neutral entity with a shared advocacy. As an advocacy-based film festival, Active Vista's interests lie beyond artistic cliques and business interests. This is especially evident in Active Vista's successful attempt in convening personalities in the film industry in a forum on the state of human rights in the film industry and its partnerships with various independent film producers, film festivals and filmmakers.

Active Vista has also contributed in forging stronger relations with other human rights film festival in Asia through its partnership with the Freedom Film Festival in Malaysia. The ties created strengthened cooperation among Asian countries on utilization of films as avenues for human rights campaigns and education. Freedom Film Festival Director Anna Har is a member of the Advisory Council of Active Vista and graced the festival opening in 2016. Active Vista representatives, on the other hand, attend the Freedom Film Festival. This partnership contributed to the expansion of the Human Rights Film Network in Asia. This is very beneficial to Southeast Asia as the countries in the subregion collectively face human rights issues in the process of integration as one ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

The 2017 Active Vista film festival bannered the use of documentary films in human rights education. The capacity of documentary films to surface truths in human conditions is a natural ally of the festival in its human rights education work. The film, *Motherland,* is an excellent example of the strong impact documentary films can create among audiences. Active Vista has supported documentary films such as *Sunday Beauty Queen* by Babyruth Villarama, *Bunso* by Ditsi Carolino, *Kano* by Monster Jimenez, Nick and *Chai* by Wena Sanchez. In May 2017, Active Vista participated in The Good Pitch Project Southeast Asia which paved way for its active involvement in the documentary film scene in the country. In December 2017, it co-organized a Master Class of Ramona Diaz with the Dokyupeeps and the UP Film Institute.

Summary

The most significant contribution of the 4th and 5th editions of the Active Vista International Human Rights Film Festival is in sparking the national conversation on human rights issues and concerns at a time when human rights are threatened and maligned in the country by the state itself. The value of the voice of Active Vista in the promotion of human rights is in its attempt to counter negative perception of human rights especially among the younger generation whose concept and understanding of human rights need to be addressed.

In summary, the impact of Active Vista 2016 - 2017 can be measured in two fronts – its impact on Philippine film industry and on the human rights movement.

Perhaps, the immense value of Active Vista in the film industry is that it represents the much needed programs that the film industry needs: 1) audience development; 2) alternative film distribution; 3) marketing platform for independent cinema; and 4) champion of the film industry on human rights issues vis-à-vis commercialization of films, consequently, art.

On the other front, the significant contributions of Active Vista in the human rights movement are the necessary elements that the human rights movement needs especially at a time when human rights are being attacked: 1) increased public awareness on human rights issues and concerns; 2) broadening of public support on human rights protection and promotion; 3) integration of human rights education into educational institutions through alternative platforms; 4) capacity-building of educators in pedagogical approaches to human rights education; 5) innovations and creativity in education programs of government institutions and human rights organizations; and 6) popularization of human rights through arts, media and social influencers.

Challenges and Gaps

With the election of the new President and his stance on human rights, there is an alarming culture and mindset being developed among the youth brought about by 1) the loud voices of non-respect and non-recognition of human rights; 2) the chilling effect of the atmosphere of hostility and bullying which silences the public in expressing opinions or dissent to issues; 3) the culture of violence perpetuated by the state on its stand on extra-judicial killings of alleged drug addicts, gender violence (slut shaming, harassment) and human rights in general.

There is also a widening distancing of young people in the Philippines from the human rights cause. This is evident in the lack of awareness of Millennials on the perils of Martial Law and dictatorship rule as clearly depicted in social media conversations, in the large youth support for the candidacy of the late dictator's son as Vice President and of the youth opinion on clear violations of human rights for the sake of national discipline and progress.

The social realities in the Philippines present a downtrodden state of human rights and human dignity as Filipinos fall victims to the culture of violence perpetuated by the state, a corrupt system of governance, poverty

and injustice. The state of human rights in the Philippines has two opposing faces: historic and trailblazing policy developments on the one hand and, on the other, the long and continuously growing list of victims of human rights violations from the Marcos era to the present administration of President Duterte.

The Philippines is a State party to almost all core human rights international instruments and has enacted landmark human rights legislations that have been the product of years of steadfast lobbying by human rights defenders and civil society organizations. While the human rights violations have sharply declined since 2006 before Duterte was elected President, the improved normative and legal framework has not been able to completely stop the human rights violations in the country. With the current administration, the past gains of the human rights movement in the country are in danger of being lost again.

Human Rights and the Youth

The Youth Sector forms a large percentage of the voting population in the Philippines. However, they remain marginalized, with no genuine youth representation in governance. In the local government, youth elected into the local government council and youth organizations are often used by traditional politicians to serve their own self-interests. Youth participation is limited to token representation and as an afterthought in the political process. While the youth is a major stakeholder in political processes, their voices are often ignored. The derailed enactment of a Magna Carta of Students has deprived students genuine representation in the school governing or tuition fee board, limiting participation of student governments as organizer of school events like sports festivals or fairs. Student-Youth have no voice in drafting school policies or participating in decision-making in matters that affect them.

In broader society, there is no genuine youth agenda in political platforms and programs. Laws and policies affecting youth are decided by older people. In media, youth are stereotyped as Millennials who have no concern for social issues and nation-building. Youth are seen as a large market but it is the traditional institutions, media and corporations who dictate the needs of this market.

According to a study by the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance, human rights education in the Philippines is currently at an appreciation level only. Human rights education may have been integrated into the curriculums but there is lack of emphasis on the need for citizens to assert and protect these rights.[16] In addition, there are only two educational institutions, which have established dedicated entities for human rights research and education - the University of the Philippines Institute of Human Rights and the Ateneo Human Rights Center, which are both law school-based institutions.

With the passage of landmark legislations such as the Martial Law Human Rights Victims Reparation and Recognition Act of 2013 whose Section 27 mandates human rights education program to be implemented across all educational levels, there is an opportunity to integrate into the school curriculum human rights education to pave way for a more sustained and strategic approach in the formation of young people into responsible citizens who respect, uphold and promote human rights.

While various stakeholders are working for a more strategic approach to human rights education, the most pressing need is the existence of alternative platforms for human rights education for the youth. More importantly, there is a need to explore more innovative and creative human rights education platforms and strategies.

Culture and the arts shape society and society shapes culture and the arts. The intertwining relationship is crucial in addressing methods and directions in social transformation especially in the formation of the social consciousness of the youth. With this, utilizing art, media and popular culture is important in building the capacity of young people to understand human rights as an integral foundation of responsible citizenship and nation-building so that they are empowered to participate in democratic spaces and contribute to social development.

Institutional Efforts

In this context, the challenge for the Active Vista is to sustain and increase its efforts on human rights education. While 2016-2017 marked the year of Active Vista's transformation from being solely a biennial human rights film festival to becoming a human rights education institution of DAKILA, the challenges that emerged during this period require more than that. There is

now a need to build Active Vista as an alternative center for human rights education utilizing the arts, media and popular culture. There is now a plan to make its flagship program, the Active Vista International Human Rights Festival, a premiere human rights festival in the country that consolidate efforts of artists and human rights activists in responding to the call of the times.

Active Vista aims to become the center of human rights education in the country both through grassroots and media education. More importantly, Active Vista aims to institutionalize programs on human rights education that effectively reach a broader public to counter attacks on human rights and shape public perception on the importance of human rights in nation-building.

The biggest challenge faced by human rights defenders in the Philippines is on how to win the battle for the hearts and minds of the people. While human rights defenders have been persevering hard to defend, protect and promote human rights at all fronts, the key to defending, upholding and protecting human rights lies in the education of the people on the importance of human rights in their lives, livelihood and lifestyle. Active Vista aims to be the facilitator of this learning process for people to understand the critical value of human rights on the road to genuine national development.

Endnotes

1 See Active Vista Film Festival: "Use Imagination As A Weapon Against Forgetting Truth" - DAKILA, Human Rights Online Philippines, 26 February 2016, https://hronlineph.com/2016/02/26/press-release-active-vista-film-festival-use-imagination-as-a-weapon-against-forgetting-truth-dakila/.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Re:Publiko, a project supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), was a week-long knowledge-sharing event that offered 2,500 people, mostly youth sector, the opportunity to learn about the challenges to good governance, and encouraged them to hold leaders accountable, participate in public discourse, and be more engaged. See UNDP Philippines website: http://www.ph.undp.org/content/philippines/en/home/operations/about_undp.html.

5 To watch the movie trailers, see Lucia Edna P. de Guzman, "Get Woke! Active Vista Human Rights Festival", *Business World SparkUp,* http://sparkup.ph/fresh-active-vista-human-rights-festival-film-fest-indie/.

6 See Kaori Shoji, "Director Kohki Hasei's 'Blanka' finds the strength of a young girl on Manila's mean streets," *Japan Times,*

3 August 2017, www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2017/08/03/films/director-kohki-haseis-blanka-finds-strength-young-girl-manilas-mean-streets/.

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8 Batch '81. 1982. Directed by Mike de Leon, The Museum of Modern Art, www.moma.org/calendar/events/3956.

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11 Last Supper No. 3, Cinemalaya, www.cinemalaya.org/films/new-breed/last-supper-no-3.

12 Jay by Francis Xavier Pasion at Cinema Centenario, www.facebook.com/events/279970155857250/

13 *Bunso* (The Youngest). 2004. Directed by Ditsi Carolino, The Museum of Modern Art, www.moma.org/calendar/events/3123.

14 *Himpapawid* by Raymond Red at Cinema Centenario, www.facebook.com/events/1371268226333135/.

15 *Engkwentro* (Clash). 2009. Directed by Pepe Diokno, The Museum of Modern Art, www.moma.org/calendar/events/3123.

16 See Maricel T. Fernandez and Alex B. Brillantes, Jr., *The State of Human Rights Education in the Philippines: Issues, Concerns and Directions,* Commission on Human Rights, 2012, www.ombudsman.gov.ph/UNDP4/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/The-state-of-Human-Rights.pdf.

Thinking About Human Rights with the Popoki Peace Project

Ronni Alexander

In December 2016, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Right to Peace (UNGA A/RES/71/189; 19 Dec. 2016). The Declaration begins by "Stressing that peace is a vital requirement for the promotion and protection of all human rights for all," stating in Article 1 that, "Everyone has the right to enjoy peace such that all human rights are promoted and protected and development is fully realized" (UNGA A/RES/71/189). Like many other developed countries, Japan voted against the Declaration, claiming it premature as peace has not yet been established as a human right under international law (Guillermet-Fernández & Puyana 2017, 42). The adoption of the Declaration and Japan's opposition to it has in some ways made the relationship between peace and human rights and the need for human rights education more visible.[1]

The right to peace also underscores the need for new and creative approaches to the teaching and learning of human rights and peace. Discussions of peace and human rights are frequently predicated on, or seek legitimacy in an understanding of the relative expendability of some lives as opposed to others, although those underlying assumptions are not always visible.[2] For this reason, and in order to avoid replicating many of the contradictions we are seeking to resolve, approaches to that are both critical and reflexive and are extremely important.

One way of encouraging critical and innovative thinking and expression is through storytelling. Popoki uses stories in a number of different ways: collecting and sharing narratives, and creating, drawing and/or enacting stories. Since storytelling is such an important part of our work, it seems fitting to begin with a story. This story comes from a Popoki workshop in South Africa in 2006 in the very early days of the Popoki Peace Project, but indicates a direction in which I hope we will continue to move in the future. One of the participants was a youth worker from Liberia who, after meeting and getting to know our work, asked me whether it would be possible to take Popoki home and introduce him to children in his country. His reason was both simple and radical. The children he worked with, he said, have never known peace. They have never experienced it; their parents do not

know what it is; they have no knowledge of, or experience with, the concept and/or reality of peace. How can those children, in the bare life zones of their everyday lives,[3] learn to do anything other than recreate the violence into which they have been born? Popoki, he said, might provide them with a clue for taking the first step toward transforming their society.[4]

This story exemplifies one of the goals of the Popoki Peace Project: positive action based on critical imagination and expression of peace.[5] Learning to imagine what peace might be like is an important exercise for helping to give children and adults who have grown up in situations of extreme violence a chance as individuals and as a society to do something other than reproduce that violence. Learning about human rights gives them a concrete tool to help them create peace. The need for this process of imagining peace and learning about human rights is not limited to conflict zones however. Many of us live in societies and attend educational institutions where problem solving is all too frequently conducted using violent means.[6] Popoki's methodology can help to make power relations and violence more visible. One important aspect of this is that this process can also help people to recognize and address their own privilege.

This article introduces some of the thinking and work of the Popoki Peace Project as an example of an innovative way of approaching peace and human rights issues in the classroom and elsewhere using art and other forms of creative expression. The cat, Popoki, is the symbol and energy behind the Project, a grassroots effort for peace began in 2006 and based in Japan. The objective is to share both the theory and the experience of the Project with particular reference to human rights teaching and learning. The article focuses on Popoki's approach to human rights. It consists of two sections. The first is a somewhat autobiographical account of the experiences underlying how I came to create the Popoki Peace Project. Among these, my experiences in Hiroshima in the late seventies were particularly powerful. The second part describes two different types of programs that are directly related to human rights: workshops using drawing and human rights *kamishibai* (picture stories) and activities to deepen thinking about gender equality. It will conclude with a short discussion of the meaning of this approach. It is hoped that reading this article will encourage readers to take out their crayons and work with their friends and students to explore the world and human rights using their bodies, hearts and both hemispheres of their brain.

Part 1: The Popoki Peace Project

Hiroshima and experiences leading up to the creation of the Project

The Popoki Peace Project is the result of years of thinking about and working for peace, and is based on many different experiences. One of the most significant foundations comes from understandings and questions gained while living and working in Hiroshima in the late seventies and early eighties. There I encountered the terrifying but inspiring stories of survival from many *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivors) and frequently felt overwhelmed by their willingness to remember and expose their own pain in order to promote peace and nuclear disarmament. But it was perhaps the contradictions and questions that I encountered during my years in Hiroshima and after that pushed me toward creating something new that would be active but also critical, creative and reflexive. The eventual result was the Popoki Peace Project.

In 1977, thirty-two years after the bombing of Hiroshima, the city was a bustling array of colors, sounds and movement, but in the shadows the ongoing impact of the atomic bomb could still be discerned. In those days, the Cold War threat of nuclear war was constantly present, and Hiroshima offered an important plea for sanity in an increasingly insane world. Many survivors of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who had remained silent about the horror they had experienced were beginning to speak out, and as the 1978 UN Special Session on Disarmament showed, the world was demanding nuclear disarmament.

One unanticipated outcome of the mass action around that conference was the discovery of the existence of about forty-eight hours of film of the effects of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki taken by the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey in 1945-46 and immediately declared classified. The discovery of this film led to a mass movement in Japan called the "Ten Feet Campaign" to reclaim the film and use it to make anti-nuclear documentaries. My arrival and subsequent work in Hiroshima coincided with this, and I was very much involved in the collection, translation and dissemination of the stories of *hibakusha*.[7] Not surprisingly, this had a huge impact on my understanding of nuclear weaponry and on my commitment to peace.

Hiroshima in the late seventies seemed confident in its victimhood. It was generally accepted that Japan was the "only country to have been a victim of nuclear weapons,[8] giving it a legitimacy that was not seen as being

shared by those whose exposure to radiation had come from other sources such as nuclear testing or uranium mining, and expressions of solidarity in mutual victimhood with Auschwitz were not uncommon. In asserting its legitimacy as a victim, the context of the war and Japanese aggression and atrocities in Asia and the Pacific were left unmentioned and, more importantly, unacknowledged. This drew criticism, even from those who asserted that racism was a factor in the decision to use the atomic bomb and that it would not have been dropped on civilians if Japan had been a Western country or the Japanese people white. Criticism was also directed at what seemed to be a contradictory stance of rejecting nuclear weapons while embracing nuclear power, and at the all-or-nothing understanding of peace as the absence of large-scale war.[9]

Personally I felt the contradictions in terms of wanting to present a strong appeal for nuclear disarmament, but at the same time understanding that what supported the nuclear arms race both politically and economically was the sacrifice of millions around the world to proxy-wars, maldevelopment and multiple injustices and rights violations. I wondered whether it was possible to focus on one part while still seeing and acknowledging the others.

The Popoki Peace Project

After five years in Hiroshima I left for graduate school in Tokyo and then took a position at Kobe University. The Cold War had ended, but the much anticipated post-Cold War peace was proving elusive. The Japanese economic bubble had burst, and Japan was once again trying to define its place in the world. Nuclear disarmament began to seem much less important and urgent as people turned their gaze inward. The once taboo subject of changing Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution and establishing a regular army began to surface and peace educators struggled with how to keep their students engaged. Peace seemed at once closer but also much farther away. I remained very active in the peace movement, giving frequent seminars and workshops, actively searching for my own approach. I had begun to use sensory questions such as "What color is peace?" at the beginning of these programs to help people relax and think more creatively and was always surprised by the interesting responses.

By the end of the 1990s I had been using these questions for some time. Friends had suggested that I publish a collection of the questions for chil-

dren, but I could not come up with an interesting way to do it. In 2005, I found the answer. The death of my much loved cat, Popoki, inspired me to combine the questions about peace with scenes from Popoki's life. The result was a manuscript for a picture book with questions about peace, *Popoki, What Color is Peace?* The Popoki Peace Project began in January of the following year (2006) with the initial objectives of getting the book published and then using it to promote creative and critical thinking about peace, leading to action. Popoki now features in a series of picture books and other materials which are used to question and politicize the meaning of peace, and to encourage people to find and implement ways to be involved in peace-making.[10] Popoki has friends around the world, many of whom are linked by the monthly internet publication, *Popoki News*.

The fictional cat Popoki is the symbol and mascot of the Popoki Peace Project. His presence reminds us that life is not exclusively human and communication is more than the use of human languages, encouraging us to explore all of the modes of expression available to us as humans. Based and working primarily in Japan, Japanese is our first common language but a commitment to inclusion means that we commonly use English too, and try to make activities accessible to anyone who wants to participate. Popoki helps to make this process less threatening because he, as a cat, does not need to be fluent in human languages. His presence helps to politicize the borders of human diversity and difference, as well as human and non-human life. Moreover, as Popoki is not human, he is not subject to the complex rules and conventions of human interaction such as age, gender, background, etc. He becomes whatever people want him to be – friend, teacher, parent, child or just someone sitting quietly and watching.[11]

In our work with Popoki, we aim to not only look from the outside to find the ways in which bodies, human and otherwise, are understood, governed and controlled but also

from the inside, to see what kinds of expression are possible. We take a holistic approach to peace, seeking to be a celebration of life and diversity, and emphasizing the use of all of our senses, emotions and our entire bodies to imagine, express and create peace. We began with two basic ideas. The first is that our understandings of, and engagement with, the world begins with our bodies, and that body knowledge and body memory remain extremely important throughout life (Ahmed 2008, Lutz 1998, Lutz and Abu-Lughod 2008). The second is that there is a very intimate relationship between experience and imagination, such that it is very difficult to imagine something of which we have no experience. It is, therefore, also hard to create something we cannot imagine. As we have no experience of even true negative peace, e.g., the absence of all violence, it is difficult to imagine what it might look or feel like. Positive peace requires even more imagination, as it refers to a situation that is more than just a lack of violence (Galtung 1969, Alexander, forthcoming). This understanding means that conflict resolution requires more than just stopping a fight; adversaries have to be able to imagine how things could be different. In order to create peace, we have to be able to imagine the kind of peace we want to experience, and in order to do so, we need to enhance our ability to imagine and to create. The Popoki Peace Project uses movement, art and story-telling to enhance our imagination of such abstract concepts as peace or human rights, and to envision those concepts not only in terms of overcoming the negative but also as how their images can be expressed and then transformed into action for positive peace.

Popoki's work is participatory, and challenges traditional teaching methodology in a number of ways. Perhaps the most important in the context of this article is the approach itself and the implications for teaching methodology. Most social science and other education in Japan is conducted from a liberal Western position which rests on binaries such as peace/war, male/female, rational/emotional, etc. This approach aims to provide objective, scientific analyses with universal applications. In contrast, Popoki rejects binaries in favor of difference and understands objectivity in terms of the subjectivity of the viewer and the viewed. In addition, our work has taught us the importance of both being and feeling safe. Creating peace therefore entails coordinating and negotiating not only among multiple understandings of legitimacy and truth, but also among different feelings of being, or not being, safe (Alexander 2017).

In terms of teaching and learning, the Popoki Peace Project has learned much from the work of Paolo Freire (1986) and Augusto Boal (2006, 2008). The methodology is dialogic and questioning, acknowledging the importance of each participant and trying to help them feel safe and comfortable so that they can engage in both learning and teaching. Moreover, taking the position that our understanding is rooted in our body memories, participants are encouraged to not only explore the boundaries of thought and imagination but also their relationship with physical space through performance and other participatory tasks (Boal 2002, 2006, 2008). This helps them to see complexity and challenge binary understandings, as every question produces a range of answers. Participants become more active in their own learning and have many opportunities to learn from one another.

More than participatory learning strategies, however, what is unique about Popoki's programs is the use of creative expression. As mentioned above, if we want to have peace or to change violence or oppression in our societies, we must first be able to envision a peaceful world or at least one without violence. Popoki helps us to embark on a journey to the imaginary, with the expectation that the discoveries made on that journey will become a part of work for peace in our everyday lives.[12]

All Popoki Peace Project programs share the underlying core values of equality, equity and social justice. This includes respect for diversity, including gender diversity, and recognition of the importance of historical claims including colonial injustices. The feminist approach goes beyond recognizing women, seeking to transcend gender binaries and interrogate binary ways of knowing. All of the activities of the Popoki Peace Project aim to create inclusive spaces in which participants can feel safe, a prerequisite for creative and imaginative critical thinking and for sharing.

A typical program would use various techniques, but generally begin with Poga (Popoki's yoga) to help people to relax. This might be followed by simple exercises that allow participants to discover and enjoy their similarities and differences and the reading of parts of Popoki's books. Almost all workshops have a drawing component; often participants are asked to make group drawings of a peace garden in which to walk with Popoki or a peaceful town in which they live together with Popoki. These drawings have a few common requirements including, but not limited to, the following: they must include Popoki, include sensory aspects such as scent, and must be safe and peaceful for all genders. At the end of such workshops, participants

are often asked to put themselves in the drawings and to think about how it feels to be there. By the end of the workshop it is hoped that participants have a new and/or different view of peace and understanding of the personal as both political and global.

Part 2: Popoki's Human Rights Programs

My first Popoki workshop devoted specifically to human rights was held in 2005, before the Popoki Peace Project had been organized. The workshop was for university presidents and their assistants from throughout the Kinki region[13] of Japan, and I asked them to draw a peaceful university space where human rights are respected. One group drew a classroom where all the students had their hands up, looking engaged and eager to speak. Another drew an office and all the workers were leaving on time. A third drew the cafeteria, featuring food from around the world and smiling faces. And a fourth group drew a professor's office equipped with a space to relax that featured plants and a sofa bed. These drawings were significantly different from the lists made earlier in the workshop that revealed not what had to be respected so much as what ought to be prohibited. Aside from the satisfaction I derived from having been able to encourage a room full of male (with one exception)

university presidents and their staff not only to draw but to move and be a little bit silly, this workshop demonstrated the power of drawing; it encourages people to enter new and different worlds. For this reason, drawing is an important component of almost all of Popoki's programs.

After the Popoki Peace Project began, we continued to focus on human rights, not only in terms of preventing rights violations but for creating a culture of peace based on justice. In terms of human rights education, the idea of creating inclusive, critical, democratic and safe spaces for peace learning relies on an understanding of human rights and commitment to their implementation. Here I will introduce two kinds of activities focusing specifically on human rights: the making of human rights *kamishibai*[14] (picture stories) and using Popoki to think about gender equality. As the human rights *kamishibai* workshops began after I participated in the creation of a poster series on human rights, I will describe the posters first and then discuss the workshops.

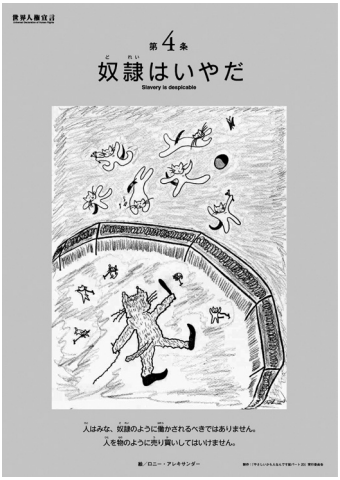
The Human Rights Posters and Human Rights *Kamishibai* Workshops

Early on in the work of the Popoki Peace Project, I was asked to join a group of local artists in the creation of a poster exhibit commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.[15] The poster exhibition was to be comprised of thirty-one posters, one with the text of the Preamble and one for each of the thirty articles of the Declaration. The posters are primarily in Japanese, using simple language and/or including phonetics to make them accessible to children and learners of the Japanese language.[16] The posters for each Article have a title and contain the text of the article and an illustration by one of six local artists. The title for each Article is a simplified version of the text, easily read and understood by primary school children, and includes an English translation. Below each illustration is the full text. I was asked to use Popoki to make posters of four articles: Articles 4 (Slavery is despicable), 11 (All are presumed innocent until proved guilty), 14 (Seeking refuge abroad is also a right) and 20 (Freedom both to get together and to stay home).

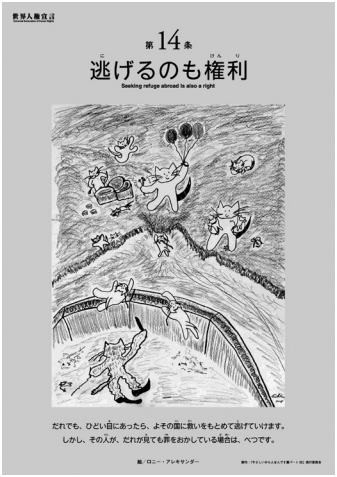
At first I found the task of making the posters very difficult and intimidating. I had a character, but had never used Popoki to directly address negative concepts such as slavery. As I struggled to design the posters, I found that my understanding was greatly enhanced when I created a story about the meaning of each Article as presented in its simplified form. I also

realized that it was only after using the four themes to create a story that I was able to find a way to make the posters meaningful for myself. The story involved taking some liberties with the material such as, for example, changing the order in which I used the four Articles. Here is my story.

Poster 1: *Slavery is despicable.* Here are the slave cats, chained and threatened by their guard cat. These are the bare life cats; existing in the space of sovereign exception, invisible and considered to be without value by the dancing, playing carefree cats inhabiting the world outside the wall. Is there a way to make the enslaved cats visible to the carefree cats? Is that a desirable thing to do? What would you do?

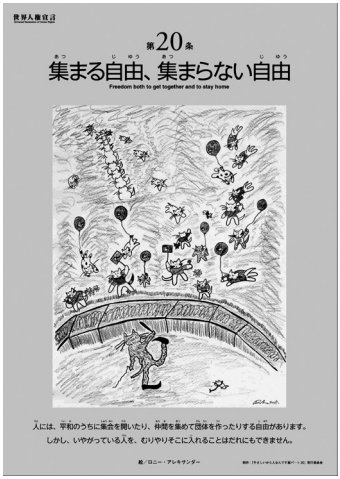


Article 4: Slavery is despicable.



Article 14: Seeking refuge abroad is also a right.

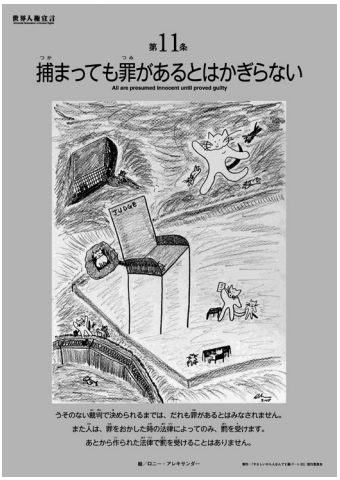
Poster 2: *The right to seek refuge abroad.* The technology of government based on liberalism and a doctrine of human rights has made slavery illegal, acknowledging the right to seek refuge abroad. Some of the stronger cats are able to break their chains and escape over the wall, leaving the world of exception behind and enabling them (if they survive) to try to exercise their right to seek refuge. Some are successful, but the smaller, weaker cats remain chained and beaten. We do not know whether some strong cats stay behind to help their weaker friends. The refugee cats are welcomed initially with open paws, and given food and shelter. Do they revel in their own good fortune and leave the others to their fate, or do they lobby for the release of their companions? In time, what happens to the refugee cats? Will they be judged to be suitable "citizens" and given their freedom, detained, or sent back to the world from which they have so recently escaped? What do you think will happen?



Article 20: Freedom to both get together and to stay at home.

Poster 3: *The right to get together and to stay home*. Here, cats have gathered in front of the wall in protest of the slavery within. Popoki leads the march and there, in the gray zone between inclusion and exclusion, he is arrested and taken away. Many of his friends have also gathered; others choose to stay home. Perhaps they are involved in this protest in other ways, perhaps not. If they raise their voices to reveal the "truth" about the zone of exception they have left behind, does anybody listen? Do they change their stories in order to get an audience? Does anybody care? They are, after all, not human…. We do not know what happens after Popoki's arrest. Perhaps his fate remains on the front pages of newspapers; perhaps it is never mentioned and he just disappears. We also do not know the extent to which their efforts have or have not been successful. What do you think will happen?

Poster 4: *The right to be considered innocent until proven otherwise*. This story has a happy ending. Popoki has a trial. He is released and celebrates his freedom joyfully. Why did the tiny judge in his huge chair release him? Was Popoki just lucky? What will he do with his regained freedom? How would you end this story?



Article 11: All are presumed innocent until proved guilty.

The posters and a small book of the drawings were published and displayed in various locations. I began using them in human rights teaching and learning, focusing on Popoki's story and the questions that arose in the context of creating the posters. On reflection, I realized that in creating that story, I moved from being a spectator of human rights to an actor in my own story about human rights. Unknowingly, I was engaging in the aesthetics of the oppressed; the experience allowed me to further de-

velop my metaphoric world – to think, imagine, dream, create parables, and to distance myself sufficiently from the reality of what I know as "human rights" to allow me to be critical (Boal 2006, 41).[17] This realization set the stage for the next human rights activities: making human rights *kamishibai*.

The publication of the posters created a good opportunity to create programs for human rights learning. I wanted of course to include art and story telling, prefaced with an introduction to Popoki's work through a reading of relevant pages of Popoki's books, and "warming up" exercises to identify the range of specific rights that are included in the term "human rights" or other terms related to the particular subject in question. When using this exercise in teaching, the students are expected to have read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in advance, and to have some general knowledge about human rights. Although most students generally complete this reading assignment, their reflections after the workshop indicate that while they had read the Declaration, they had not really absorbed the content or thought about it in personal and/or critical terms.

The exercise itself is simple. In groups, participants are asked to make a five-page silent *kamishibai* story (not an explanation but a story) about human rights. The telling of the story should not involve the use of words, although they are allowed to have a written and/or spoken title. Popoki should appear in the story. It should also include an open-ended critical question about human rights. After the *kamishibai* are completed, the stories can be shared and discussed.

The logic behind this exercise is simple; when participants manipulate concepts and use them in a familiar way, it deepens their understanding. Moreover, when they draw they use a different part of their brain and different points of reference. Drawing both frees their imagination and brings the story closer to their physical relationship with the world, transforming them from being spectators to being creators/performers. This is particularly true in this exercise because the final product must not reply on words; the use of a silent *kamishibai* shifts emphasis from words to other modes of expression. The five-page length requirement may at first appear to be a lot of pages for a limited time, but in fact, it is an easy number to work with. The first page is for the title/introduction and the fifth for the ending/conclusion. That leaves three pages, or three steps, for the body of the story. The presence of Popoki opens the door for discussion about human/non-human implications, as well as for incorporating the gentle and sensory approach

taken by the project. The purpose of the open-ended question is to lead to further discussion of the issues raised and provide another layer of human rights learning which would continue after the end of the workshop.

In 2016, the Popoki Peace Project joined in an event to celebrate the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), offering a Popoki rights workshop for children and adults. In preparation, we re-read Popoki, What Color is Peace? from the perspective of the CRC, choosing pages to read based on what rights of the child they represented. When we read those pages and talked about them at the workshop, we tried something new. A new friend, "Rights Penguin" (権利ペン), joined "Peace Popoki" (平和ポー) to read and talk about rights and peace. They began introducing themselves and discussing the right to be given a name, and then went on to read and talk about some pages from the book. This intervention not only made the presentation more fun for the participants, but it gave the Popoki Peace Project participants a chance to think about peace and rights from a new perspective. As a result, Peace Popoki and Rights Penguin continue to appear in various Popoki programs.

Next, participants were divided into groups and asked to choose a right they thought was particularly important and then use their bodies to express it. At the end of this activity, each group shared its creation and the participants talked about what they thought it represented, asking questions and offering opinions. One group, for example, chose the right to an adequate standard of living, expressing that "we can't live without money." Another group chose to dance, representing the right to self-expression. This activity was enjoyable and gave the participants a chance to think about rights more deeply not only because they had to choose a particular right, but because they had to then take their intellectual curiosity and make it visible in physical space. The physicality of the exercises changes and deepens understanding, making it more personal and, in some ways, more real.

The final activity, making *kamishibai*, had a new twist, too; participants were given a situation and questions to answer. The situation is that Popoki is not sick or hurt or hungry, but he is crying. They must include (1) the reason for Popoki's tears; (2) what they do to help him; (3) the underlying cause of those tears; and (4) everyone smiling. The resulting stories were varied and interesting. A group with both adults and small children told a story of Popoki wanting to play cards with other children, but not having any cards, while a group of adults had a story about being overwhelmed with worries and the details of their everyday lives. A group consisting of pre-teens and teenagers made a story about bullying and being ostracized. After the final presentation and discussion of the stories, we concluded with some comments on the idea of needing, asking for and offering help.

This was our first time to use the idea of Popoki crying, but it has become an important tool in our Popoki repertoire. If they see someone in distress, most people want to be comforting and also have the experience of wanting to be comforted themselves. It is easy to feel empathy with the crying Popoki, and the reasons and solutions can generally be found in everyday life. At the same time, thinking about the underlying causes can help to deepen understanding about structural violence and the ways our social relations often involve power and violence. These understandings can help lead to work for human rights and for peace.

Thinking about gender equality with Popoki

It is not possible to analyze issues of peace and violence without paying attention to the gendered relations that underlie all of our social institutions, including heteronormativity,[18] patriarchal relations and misogyny. The feminist approach of the Popoki Peace Project seeks to make these relations visible and to challenge them. This includes learning to overcome binary ways of knowing, challenging gender hierarchies and acknowledging and respecting gender diversity. Accordingly, all of the programs concern gender, regardless of whether they deal directly with gender issues or women. Many workshop participants do not think about gender relations when they try to express peace. In order to encourage thinking about the relationship between gender and peace and make gender relations more visible, most drawing and story projects include a suggestion that peaceful environments for all genders be included. Sometimes performance activities address gen-

der directly by asking participants to make tableaux of such topics as men, women, gender equality, gender violence, etc. Reactions to these activities are varied. Some participants find it extremely difficult to physically express their own gender, much more so than to express other genders. Others are quite resistant to the whole idea of expressing sex and/or gender with their bodies. Most people seem surprised to find themselves struggling with a task that sounds so simple. This says something about the level at which most participants think (or do not think) critically about gender in their everyday lives.

In addition to the above, I have also used Popoki in workshops with a specific focus on gender. Here I will introduce two techniques from these workshops that can be adapted to a variety of needs. One involves storytelling and the other challenges gender biases through simple role playing.

The storytelling program is extremely simple, but can be very effective. It began as an interesting way to remind people of something that they already knew; that gender equality is important, necessary, and something that is directly related to them. I created a story about Popoki's life from birth to old age, giving interactive examples of how it might be different if he were male or female in a global context.[19] This first story was well received and has been repeated in a number of situations. It is interesting to change the story and the storyteller, asking workshop participants to create their own stories with their own particularities, or giving a general set of rules and sharing the different stories that are created. The context for the first story was gender and development, but it can be used in almost any situation.

One variation that I have used very successfully in the classroom is to ask students to create a story involving Popoki and a victim of human trafficking. The victim must have a name and a story about how s/he got to where s/he is now. Of course, Popoki gets a story, too. This is an excellent way to draw out all of the stereotypes about trafficking (or other issues) in order that they can then be discussed and challenged.

Another variation is one that I often use with groups of professionals or in training programs when asked to focus on gender. I ask participants to make a drawing of gender equality. I might ask them to also make a story, but even without the direct requirement of a story, all drawings have one. These pictures are generally very different from what people focus on when talking about gender equality in the context of their work or social policy. The difference between what they draw and what they talk about is a good

way to begin to interrogate what is meant by gender, and how to address gender issues.

A slightly different variation and/or separate activity would be to make a gender map. This activity involves walking around the neighborhood or building, finding places that the participants think are related in some way to gender and marking them on a map. The follow-up discussion would depend on what they found and why they thought it was related to gender. If the Popoki story had been about Popoki in that particular place, then the map could from the beginning be made from Popoki's point of view, or contain encounters that Popoki had in that community. Participants could also first make the map and then either add their Popoki (and themselves) in at the end or even create their stories using the map.

A very different type of activity using Popoki is a very simple role play game. Participants are told they are teachers at a special school run by Popoki for a special group of ten students, five women and five men (or any variation of gender that seems appropriate). Each student studies for a different profession and is guaranteed a job at the end. In this undemocratic school, the teacher decides on the profession for each student. The groups of participants are given a list of professions and a picture of the students: ten cats of various colors and body types posing in different positions. They must match the cats with the professions, citing their reasons for their decisions. At the end, they must also rank the professions in the order of which they think will result in the highest income (or perhaps lead to the greatest happiness, etc.). There are many possibilities for follow-up, including asking the participants to create stories and drawings about what eventually happens to these students in their various jobs.

This exercise plays on gender stereotypes and understandings of gender roles. The choice of professions should of course be made on the basis of the desired learning outcome and should reflect the level of understanding and sophistication of the participants. The simplicity of this exercise makes it enjoyable and useful for a wide range of participants, even very sophisticated ones. It is extremely effective as a tool for promoting discussion of gender in international settings, as gender roles differ in different societies, and also with intergenerational groups. But it is also useful for young people from similar backgrounds, as it forces them to think about their understanding of gender in their society. The beauty of it is not just that there is no correct solution but that it works, regardless of whether or not participants are trying

to reject gender stereotypes, because the exercise forces them to confront those stereotypes, while also offering many opportunities to be critical.

In 2017, I used the above in a gender workshop with high school and college students from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan as part of a summer exchange program. At the end, the students were asked to respond to a questionnaire about the gender program. Most said that they had enjoyed and learned from it, and many said that they liked Popoki and the story-telling/drawing part of the workshop. Quite a few said the activity selecting occupations was their favorite. Also, many commented that they were happy to have been given a chance to learn and talk about gender diversity. Some of their final reflections include, "I realized that we often judge a person's value by their appearance and gender without being aware of it" (Japan); "Gender is not just about physical but also mental, how people think about him/herself. There are different gender[s] and respect and understanding [are] important" (Hong Kong); "There are still many things that most people use to think in our generation, but we all know how to respect and love every personality and will not judge people if their behavior is unlike their gender" (Taiwan). Several students also said that they realized that there is a relationship between gender and peace (Hong Kong).

3. Conclusion: Popoki and human rights

The purpose of this article has been to explain the origins, worldview and objectives of the Popoki Peace Project, focusing particularly on programs and activities concerning human rights. It is hoped that it has provided some hints for practitioners involved in human rights teaching, learning and activism, as well as for those interested in new approaches to peace education and peace making.[20]

The article began with the Declaration on the Right to Peace, an important first step in connecting and transforming understandings of rights and peace. The Declaration does not challenge the claim to legitimacy based on denial that make those who support human rights visible and important by virtue of the existence of those who do not. Crucial questions such as colonization, legitimacy of indigenous peoples and cultures, alternatives to the Westphalian model of governance and issues of privilege are not directly problematized in the Declaration. Here it has been suggested that without

addressing these issues in our own work for human rights, we are at risk of inadvertently re-creating zones of exception even as we try to change them.

In the work of the Popoki Peace Project, Popoki helps to blur the distinctions between human and non-human, and opens up space for critical thinking, imagination and expression. Reflections by workshop participants often include comments about having become aware of new or different dimensions to peace and/or human rights, gaining new understandings and linking global issues to their own lives. These understandings are not sufficient for transforming the world, but they are an essential part of the process of using critical, creative energy to make meaningful and sustainable interventions.

The Popoki Peace Project understands the power and importance of storytelling and creative expression, and works hard to share this understanding. It meets with enthusiasm from some, and great resistance from others. Some of the strongest resistance comes in the form of classifying drawing and storytelling as something for children, and therefore not necessary and/or useful for adults. This argument reflects age and gender hierarchies; not only stories and drawing but also emotion, creative expression, empathy and children's activities in general are seen as feminine and active participation in such activities is threatening as it is feminizing. The Popoki Peace Project of course sees this differently and understands this resistance as evidence of the need to transform understandings of femininity and masculinity as part of the process of promoting human rights and peace.

Our most recent work includes support for people in the areas affected by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake (see Alexander 2017). This work has underscored the need to understand safety and security as both physical and emotional, and we are increasingly focusing on the feeling of being safe and/or secure. We have begun to bring this understanding to work for human rights, in the belief that in order for social transformation to occur, people must be able to feel safe and to have hope.

Many years ago on a Popoki study tour to Palestine I spent many hours thinking about which comes first: social transformation or hope. I also thought about what, if anything, Popoki could contribute. My conclusion was that as social transformation must happen from within, we must try to transform our own society and at the same time support social transformation elsewhere. Perhaps the most important role for Popoki and the Popoki Peace Project lies in trying to make spaces for hope to grow through creat-

ing spaces where people can take a deep breath, relax and be able to use their imagination and creativity to think about how to proceed. Human rights will continue to be an important focus for our work as we engage in creative expression, critical imagination and inclusive action for peace.

Popoki loves stories. Won't you share yours?

* The full set of 40 Human Rights Panels can be borrowed in panel and/or CD form. Information is available in Japanese at: http://blrhyg.and org/publication/publication.html or contact Hyogo Buraku Liberation Human Rights Research Institute at: ph (81-78) 252-8280; fax (81-78) 252-8281; e-mail: blrhyg@extra.ocn.ne.jp.

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Endnotes

1 For example, the Right to Peace was the subject of a session and a workshop at the June 2017 Spring Conference of the Peace Studies Association of Japan. I was involved in the planning and implementation and have subsequently used a video made for that workshop in Popoki peace workshops to think about human rights in the context of colonization and development, as well as to introduce the Declaration itself.

2 For example, Agamben (1998) discusses bare life zones in terms of homo sacer: "One of the essential characteristics of modern biopolitics ...is its constant need to redefine the threshold in life that distinguishes and separates what is inside from

what is outside…separating life from death in order to identify a new living dead man, a new sacred man (p.131). See also Dean (1999), Duffield (2008), Fassin (2009), Foucault (1976, 1994, 2009) and Repo (2016). Judith Butler's work on the relative value of life (2004, 2009) is also important to this discussion.

3 Sylvester (2006) addresses the question of life in zones of exemption, raising the possibility of "bare life as living." For children born in zones of exemption, this is an important perspective.

4 Comment from a staff member of the YMCA of Liberia after a workshop at the YMCA World Council, Durban, South Africa, 2006.

5 For more on the Popoki Peace Project, please see http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/. In particular, please check the Archives for the monthly "Popoki News" for details of ongoing activities. Also see Alexander 2008 and Alexander 2017 (forthcoming).

6 Violence is not uncommon in everyday life in Japan. Approximately 30,000 people commit suicide annually and one in four respondents to a recent survey said they had attempted suicide at least once. Most of those were people in their twenties (Nippon Foundation 2017). Bullying at school is frequent and sometimes so serious as to result in suicide, and domestic violence and child abuse are increasing. In addition, militarization and increasing military tensions in East Asia have made children fear war and increasingly think that military solutions are desirable (NHK Television "Asaichi" 2017.8.30).

7 *Hibakusha* is the Japanese word used to describe those who suffer from exposure to radiation. It originally was used to refer to the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but is also used to refer to people who have been exposed to radiation in other contexts. It is often used in English as in, for example, the Draft Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (2017).

8 This discourse (唯一の被爆国 in Japanese) and the accompanying hierarchy of legitimacy of victims of radiation with Hiroshima/Nagasaki at the top continues to be dominant in Japan. After the 2011.3.11 disaster and the Fukushima nuclear power plant meltdowns, Prime Minister used the phrase "only country suffering from nuclear exposure in war" (「唯一の戦争被爆国」. The media and politicians continue to use this terminology to distinguish between victims of the atomic bomb and those affected by nuclear plant and other accidents (September 2017, Takemine, personal communication).

9 This was a time when peace scholars were exploring ideas of non-peace and structural violence, looking at issues of maldevelopment, poverty, racism and/or environmental destruction as important peace issues (See for example Alexander in Gentry, Shepherd and Sjorberg (forthcoming), Lawler 1995, Galtung 1969).

10 The series includes: *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1* (Kobe: Epic 2007), *Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2* (Kobe: Epic 2009) and *Popoki, What Color is Genki? Popoki's Peace Book 3* (Kobe: Epic 2013). The text and illustrations are by Ronni Alexander. Popoki's Friendship Story (Epic, 2012) is about Popoki's work in northeastern Japan after the 2011 tsunami. A short animated version of the first book, "Popoki's Peace Message" is included in Ritsumeikan University International Museum for Peace, editor, Iwanami DVD Book Peace Archives: International Museum for Peace. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten

Publishers, 2005). The same DVD contains "Popoki's Peace Machine Journey," a documentary narrated by Popoki and his kitten friend Mimi who journey to discover direct and structural violence in the 20th century. The Iwanami DVD Book Peace Archives is a series, and versions of "The Peace Machine Journey" are included in the other volumes of the series as well; the cats travel to learn about Okinawa (2006), Hiroshima/Nagasaki (2007), and air raids over Tokyo, Guernica and Chongking (2009). Narration for "Popoki's Peace Message" is in English and Japanese, and the "Peace Machine Journey" is narrated in Japanese with English subtitles.

11 Activities include such programs as workshops, seminars and camps both in and outside of Japan and involve people of all ages and backgrounds. Sometimes Popoki takes the lead and other times he is just present as the case of a week-long international camp for young children in Japan, where his foremost function turned out to be serving as a friend and confidant for lonely children.

12 One of the strengths of this approach is its flexibility; imaginaries can change and goals can be adjusted to accommodate those changes.

13 The Kinki region is composed of the following prefectures: Kyoto, Osaka, Hyogo, Mie, Nara and Wakayama. See "Kinki Area - Industrial Tourism in Japan," Japan External Trade Organization, www.jetro.go.jp/en/ind_tourism/kinki.html.

14 *Kamishibai* (picture boards) are a traditional Japanese storytelling art. The storyteller stands behind or next to big illustrations (traditionally in a special storytelling frame), focusing the attention of the listener on the pictures. I have been greatly influenced by the work of Musubi, a *kamishibai* group in Nishinari, Osaka and Yuji YASUNO, a *kamishibai* artist who began his work in the days when licensed *kamishibai* masters performed on street corners for the local children. This is no longer practiced. Yasuno was devoted to preserving the art of *kamishibai* and adamant that rather than finding a translation, the Japanese word for the art be used in all languages. Here I follow his advice. The five-page silent *kamishibai* technique also comes from Mr. Yasuno.

15 This poster exhibit was created by the Yasashii kara Hito desu Ten Part 20 Committee in cooperation with Hyogo Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Institute in 2008.

16 The full set of forty Human Rights Panels can be borrowed in panel and/or CD form. Information is available in Japanese at: http://blrhyg.and org/publication/publication.html or contact Hyogo Buraku Liberation Human Rights Research Institute at: ph (81-78) 252-8280; fax (81-78) 252-8281; e-mail: blrhyg@extra.ocn.ne.jp.

17 Agathangelou and Ling (2009) also refer to this process.

18 "Coined in 1991 by Michael Warner, a social critic, the term heteronormativity refers to pervasive and invisible norms of heterosexuality (sexual desire exclusively for the opposite sex) embedded as a normative principle in social institutions and theory; those who fall outside this standard are devalued. The concept is useful in attempting to understand the assumptions upon which heterosexuality rests, and in showing how and why deviations from heterosexual norms are subject to social and legal sanctions." International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 2008 Thomson Gale, www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/heteronormativity.

19 For example, the first story began as follows: Popoki is born. Will he survive? If he is a girl in India or China, he might not make it to birth or through infancy. If he is born elsewhere, statistically girls have a higher survival rate than boys. But if his mother is under the age of 15, he three times more likely to die than if she were older, regardless of his gender.

20 Those interested in further information or details are welcome to contact the author directly at alexroni (at) kobe-u (dot) ac (dot) jp.

Developing Skills for Peacebuilding and Human Rights: The Northeast Asia Regional Peacebuilding Institute Experience

Kathy R. Matsui

Violent conflicts are associated with gruesome and terrible violations of human rights and human dignity. Japan colonized Northeast Asian countries and committed military atrocities during World War II. Japan is still being criticized for not fulfilling its moral obligation and social responsibility for committing crimes against humanity in the past. Unless properly addressed by Japan, the harm doer, establishing sincere and lasting relationship with its neighboring countries in the Pacific would be very difficult. To overcome this difficulty, there is a strong need to reframe diplomatic relations and enhance a mutually-positive and beneficial environment for both parties. The Northeast Asia Regional Peacebuilding Institute (NARPI) plays a grassroots role in reframing relations and in enhancing a beneficial environment for countries in Northeast Asia.

Ogawa (2000) wrote that

> Japan's World War II occupation of a substantial part of Asia left indelible scars. The Nanking Massacre and the plight of the Korean "comfort women," stand out among examples of Japanese cruelty during the war era" (page 42).

If human injustice is committed, it is important to restore honor to those who have been treated in an undignified way. There is a need to call for basic human rights to uphold the dignity of human life and pursuit of justice. Processes of public forgiveness, apology, justice, and reconciliation are considered instruments for social healing (Montiel, 2002, 221). Thus one method of reconciliation and retaining justice is for all participants of Northeast Asia gather to learn and work together for peace in the region.

The mission of NARPI is to transform the culture and structure of militarism and communities of fear and violence, into just and peaceful ones by providing peacebuilding training, connecting and empowering people in Northeast Asia. War is the greatest violation of human rights. NARPI offers a place in Northeast Asia for peace activists and students where they can

receive practical education and training. Peace education, an interdisciplinary pedagogy which includes human rights education and conflict transformation education, is not widely understood concepts. They must become known in order to prevent armed conflict in the region.

History of NARPI

Northeast Asia is a subregion of historical, territorial, military and nuclear tensions. Today, vast amount of human and financial resources support the militarization of Northeast Asian nations. Transforming the existing culture of animosity and militarism into a culture of peace and reconciliation is possible through education and a fundamental paradigm shift. However, a void exists in the area of education and training where people can be empowered with the skills, knowledge and resources needed to bring about this change. This is why NARPI is such a necessary institute for this region, to provide vital training in conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

The idea of NARPI was born in 2009 from the discovery of needs and demands from activists and students working in the field of peacebuilding. NARPI is made up of partners from Northeast Asia and trains participants primarily from within Asia.

NARPI has been working since 2009 to strengthen and empower people in Northeast Asia through peacebuilding training and cross-cultural network-building.

The NARPI Summer Training rotates to different locations in Northeast Asia every year, providing the opportunity for first-hand learning about

the history of conflict and peace in the entire subregion, and also giving a chance for more people to participate every year.

NARPI Program

The NARPI Program offers two five-day sessions with three days of local fieldtrip experience. There is a choice of three to four courses for the first and second sessions. Basically, Conflict and Peace Framework and Theory and Practice of Peace Education are introductory courses offered every year. There are courses held annually focused on restorative justice, peacebuilding skills and trauma healing pertaining to the needs of the place where NARPI is being held. Other courses cover local issues and needs. The list of training courses held, excluding the introductory courses, is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. NARPI Summer Training Courses

Training	Courses			
2011 Seoul & Inje, South Korea	Understanding Conflict and Peace	Historical and Cultural Stories of Peace	Restorative Justice	Trauma Healing
2012 Hiroshima, Japan	Community-based Restorative Justice for Schools	Historical and Cultural Stories of Peace	Critical Understanding of Conflict & Peace Issues	Peacebuilding Skills
2013 Inje, South Korea	Trauma Awareness & Healing	Restorative Justice: Aiming for Healing and Reconciliation	Gender, Sexuality and Peacebuilding	Nonviolent Communication & Facilitation
2014 Nanjing, China	Restorative Approach to Historical Conflict	Arts and Stories for Peacebuilding	– Presenting Our Histories Justly – Psychosocial Trauma: Awareness and Response	Peacebuilding Skills: Transformative Mediation
2015 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	Peacebuilding and Sustainable Development	Restorative Justice: A New Lens for Justice	Applied Theater in Peacebuilding	Conflict Transformation in Organizations
2016 Jinshan & Taipei, Taiwan	Restorative Justice: A New Lens for Justice	Trainer's Training	Nonviolent Struggle for Social Change	Optimizing Peacemaking by Ending Generational Trauma
2017 Nago, Okinawa	Identity-based Conflict	Restorative Justice: Rebuilding Identity, Community, and History	Nonviolent Response to Militarization	Optimizing Peacemaking by Ending Generational Trauma

All the courses offer active learning and experiential method of learning where participants experience the cognitive phase of awareness and understanding; the affective phase of being concerned, responding and valuing; and after returning to their respective countries they experience the active phase of taking practical action for change. In other words, NARPI offers an experience where participants think, feel and act for change.

Every training program has human rights content in relation to the topic areas offered. The program adopts the perspective that reforms in the international system would contribute to the protection of human rights and the establishment of a just legal system that maintains a peaceful world order. NARPI sees that the major learning comes from acquiring knowledge and skills needed to develop the legal norms for, and cultivate the social values of, a culture of peace. Such learning calls for an inquiry into the relationship among responsibilities, rights, and law, on the one hand, and the institution of war on the other. NARPI offers an educational experience that explores the values and principles associated with human rights and international humanitarian law in order to demonstrate how educating for human rights provides tools for the transformation of the current war system and culture of violence into a culture of peace. Furthermore, learning about humanitarian and human rights law and institutions is preparation for the realization of social justice. To assure peace, human rights must be protected. Many issues in Northeast Asia constitute human rights violations and obstacles to the fulfillment of international human rights standards such as Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Simulation activities are conducted to foster the study of the ongoing process of the International Criminal Court and War Crimes Tribunals dealing with violations committed in the wars such as Military Sexual Slavery (Comfort Women Issue) and Nanjing Massacre. As therapy for the human rights violations, learning activities that build skills such as Ho'oponopono (Hawaiian Circle Process of Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation) are held to provide means to reconciliation and healing.

Another aspect of human rights education is to develop a broader understanding of what is meant by human security. Learning about the process by which victims of human rights violations seek justice is important. In the restorative justice courses and field trips, participants meet and hear

survivors who give testimonies on the experience of hurt done to them. The participants conduct further investigation that includes the needs of both the victims and the perpetrators. A process that follows the stages in human rights learning adapted from The Bells of Freedom,[1] a training manual used in Ethiopia, is employed:

1. Developing respect for dignity and fair rules. All human rights are based on the value that respects the universal dignity of all persons;
2. Making links between human rights and social responsibility. Global citizenship education is offered to develop active citizens who can realize human rights for all and take responsibility to assure that rights are protected and fulfilled by the state and other citizens;
3. Seeking justice; using analysis. Human rights education advocates education for empowerment and action. Participants are taught to value justice, to critically analyze situations of injustice and the potential of human rights standards.

The training includes inquiry into specific ways of developing proposals to implement recommendations or assure the realization of the international human rights standards.

Fieldwork Experience

From the field trip experience and the sharing by guest speakers, participants learn the value of the stories and activism work of victims – both at the national and personal levels - in the local areas where the NARPI session is being held. Each field trip highlights incidents of violation of human dignity and rights that all members of humanity should be aware of and reflect on to prevent such incidents from being repeated in the future.

The August 2011 and 2013 field trips consisted of visit to the House of Sharing and the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in South Korea which offered first-hand experiential learning for the participants. The House of Sharing is a museum and a home to former "Comfort Women" survivors of sexual slavery at the hands of the Japanese military during the Asia-Pacific War (1932-1945).

NARPI participants visited the House of Sharing and talked to women who survived sexual slavery at the "comfort stations" of the Japanese military during World War II. The victims of Japan's military sexual slavery have carried the hurt and shame for more than sixty years (Coday, 1988; Mackey, 2005). It was a military institutionalization of sexual violence during the war. The victims were women who were abducted and confined to sexual slavery facilities.[2]

The victims and the civil society organizations that supported them filed lawsuits demanding that the Japanese government apologize and pay state reparations.

In the group debriefing held after the visit, participants processed what they learned through drawings and sharing of their reflections.

There are also evening events that included discussions on various topics, presentations about non-governmental organization (NGO) activities in the subregion, personal stories, and movie screenings. One of the participants wrote on the final evaluation form,

> There was a big impact on my thinking and [study] about peace in NEA [Northeast Asia]. I was also able to deepen my understanding on the present situation in Korea regarding the "comfort women" issue, the Jeju Island issue (construction of a US military base), and the DMZ.

In the August 2013 field trip, participants spent time visiting Hiroshima Peace Museum and Peace Park and Okunojima, the site of poison gas manufacturing by the Japanese Army during World War II. At the Peace Museum, Sadae Kasaoka, a Hiroshima *Hibakusha* (survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing) shared her painful story of the devastation of the A-bomb. Though she had difficulty each time she told her story, she would still do so in order to "personally and urgently appeal for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons."

The August 2014 training, the fourth annual NARPI Summer Peacebuilding Training, was held at Nanjing University, Nanjing, China. The field trip on 14-15 August 2014 consisted of visits to Nanjing Massacre Museum, John Rabe House Museum and other historic and cultural sites.

The field trip enabled the participants to experience the horrors of war. Narpi helped the peacebuilding participants process this terrible incident and envision a positive way forward by proposing what they could do to change this cycle of violence and hatred.

The lived story of a Nanjing Massacre Survivor was shared. The Nanjing Massacre happened in 1937 in Nanjing, China where the Japanese military committed the genocide of 50,000 to 300,000 victims (according to scholarly research the lowest estimate is 50,000 and the highest estimate is 300,000 given by the Chinese government). A survivor met by the participants was an eight-year-old girl in 1937. She and her four-year-old younger sister were the only survivors in her family. The Japanese soldiers forced their way into their house and killed her father immediately. A Japanese soldier took her youngest six-month-old sister from her mother and threw the baby on the floor. Her mother was killed. Her grandfather and grandmother led her, two older sisters and a younger sister to the room at the end of the hallway and hid them in a closet. In no time, the Japanese soldiers rushed into the room and shot her grandparents. When the soldiers tried to drag her older sisters out of the closet, the survivor bravely tried to stop them, and she was stabbed three times in different parts of her body. She fainted and woke up to see one of her sisters naked on the table and the other naked on the bed. Both of them were dead. Her younger sister was saved by hiding inside a box and gradually recovered. She and her younger sister both lived a hard life. Her sister was taken to an orphanage. She was brought up by her uncle and aunt. She withstood all hardships and lived to tell the story.

The records of the cruel history were displayed at the Nanjing Massacre Museum. The walls with 300,000 names to commemorate the victims were the first sight that caught the eyes of the participants at the entrance hall. All the visitors paid respect to the people named on the wall. The museum was filled with records of inhumane atrocities that took place in Nanjing.

During the subsequent briefing session, the participants (young Chinese, Koreans, Mongolians and Japanese who have taken peace education and peacebuilding courses) all thought deeply of the museum visit and responded in solidarity: What we need to do is to design peace education and human rights education programs that would enable present and future generations to find nonviolent ways to resolve conflict and change the structure of the world from the culture of war to the culture of peace. Having taken the peace building and education sessions, they felt that their attitudes

had changed. Some Chinese participants said that they were brought up to hate the Japanese, but the five-day training completely changed their mindset to more cooperative and accepting attitude. They eased their ill feelings as they worked together with the Japanese and learned about peacebuilding.

This change of attitude is the hope of the future. The young generation can learn how to make decisions and find positive ways to go forward. Peace education and human rights education focus on the learning of values, attitudes and behaviors to learn to live together in a world of diversity and pluralism.

In August 2015, NARPI held its training in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Experiential learning included tasting cheeses, curds, horse milk, and the overflowing mounds of meat of the local cuisine, entering the comfy *ger* of a nomadic family, and learning about the history, culture, and current issues of Mongolia. These were all part of a community-based peacebuilding movement that was still a new field of practice and academic concern in Mongolia.

The Victims of Political Persecution Memorial Museum is a little-known museum in Ulaanbaatar. The museum was formerly owned by Prime Minister Genden. Though initially backed by Stalin, he was arrested by agents of the then Soviet Union for speaking out against the destruction of institutional Buddhism in Mongolia and for his increasing nationalism. He was executed on 26 November 1937, Mongolia's Independence Day. His daughter initiated the idea of converting their house into a museum.

The participants learned about the political victims of the Stalinist repression (1937-1952) at the museum. During the repression period, many of the intellectuals, nationalists, wealthy people, and especially those practicing Buddhist Monasticism were targeted for being anti-Soviet. 22,000 to 33,000 Mongolians were believed killed under Soviet and Stalinist influence. After visiting the museum one participant raised a question: "How can humans be so cruel?" Also, many of the Mongolian participants admitted that they had never taken the time to think about their history despite their knowledge of what had happened. The time spent at this museum was truly meaningful as all of the participants, both Mongolian and non-Mongolians, reflected on the history of Mongolia and of Northeast Asia.

Once again, the field trip reminded the participants of the gruesome record of the past of Mongolians including Mongolian Buddhist monks being brutally massacred, a grave violation of human rights and dignity. The expe-

rience touched the heart of the participants and triggered their determination to continue their work for peace so that such genocide would not recur.

The NARPI Summer Peacebuilding Training took place in Taiwan for the first time on 7-20 August 2016. Week 1 courses were held at the Jinshan Youth Activity Center in Jinshan, New Taipei City, along the northern coast of Taiwan. Week 2 courses were held at three different venues near the Taipei Teachers Hostel.

The three-day NARPI field trip provided a deeper understanding of Taiwan's history. The 228 Memorial Museum tells the story of the clash between soldiers sent from Mainland China after the Japanese Imperial Army left Taiwan and the people living in Taiwan. It started with an argument about contraband cigarettes on 27 February 1947, during which one officer shot and killed a bystander. Violence escalated quickly, and the troops from Mainland China under Chiang Kai-shek started a widespread massacre. The following era of suppression of political dissidents was called "White Terror," which lasted until 15 July 1987.

The Jing-Mei Human Rights Memorial and Cultural Park was the site of the Jingmei Military Detention Center, where accused political dissidents were held and tried in military courts during the White Terror period. There, three former political prisoners shared their personal stories and also gave a tour of the memorial. It was a deep honor for the participants to meet these individuals who suffered under the most violent faces of war, including imprisonment and torture, and who lived with a passion to ensure that the next generations in Taiwan would protect human rights.

In addition to witnessing the history of Taiwan, a great example of current peace work happening in Taipei was introduced by Jiazhen Wu, a representative from the Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty (TAEDP). She shared the struggle of human rights NGOs in Taiwan against the death penalty policy.

Throughout the field trip, the key phrase that appeared often in both sessions on Taiwanese history and on current NGO work was "human rights." The participants learned that along with democracy and freedom, respecting human rights was one of the main values of the Taiwanese society. These learnings are reflected in the NARPI courses.

In August 2017, the NARPI summer training was held in Nago, Okinawa. During the field trip, the venue was moved from the isolated mountain-top Nago Youth Center to the more urban Naha International Youth Hostel.

During the field trip, there was invaluable first-hand learning through three full days of stories, site visits, and history discussions. The theme of the first day was "Feel the present," with a focus on the presence of U.S. military bases in Okinawa. The second day focused on history, specifically the Battle of Okinawa - "Touch the past." And the third day was more forward-looking - "Imagine the future."

The participants heard stories from four survivors of the Okinawa Battle. The survivors shared their memories during the war as children, and the impact of the experience on them till the present. One memorable experience of a male survivor was the hiding in a cave of thousands of villagers while Japanese soldiers searched through the wreckage of destroyed homes and buildings.

On the second day of the field trip, the participants visited Abuchira Gama, a natural cave in southern Okinawa area where soldiers and civilians hid and students of a girls' school tended to the wounded during the Battle of Okinawa. The cave was used as hospital, lodging area, and supply storage. The back cavern of the cave was used as a place where wounded soldiers

were left alone in the dark to die because the Japanese army had lost the capability to take care of them. We also saw the abandoned attempt to create an alternative exit to the cave. One of the chilling moments during the visit to the cave was when the guide asked everyone to turn off their lights. The participants all stood together under the weight of the impermeable darkness thinking of the soldiers and civilians who were in the cave surrounded by the dark damp rock walls during the Battle of Okinawa. While the cave has a heavy past, these days it has become a peace education site for students and other people.

On the third day of the field trip, the session focused on imagining the future of Okinawa. There were five small groups, and each group heard from local peacebuilders and discussed ideas related to their topic. The issues discussed were:

- How to put an end to crimes related to the U.S. bases – Solidarity between women victims in Okinawa and throughout Northeast Asia;
- How to win social justice – A trial that reviewed data and facts to evaluate the need for the existence of the U.S. Marines;
- How to connect the past with the future – Aging survivors and young successors;

- How to overcome divisions and conflicts among community members – Utilizing a process of making multicultural community for peacebuilding;
- How to engage "ordinary" citizens in protest movements – Changing political-based movements to non-political-based movements.

Some groups had stimulating dialogue about the political climate in Northeast Asia; others heard moving stories of oppression, while others discussed possibilities for the future of peacebuilding in Okinawa.

The NARPI Participants

Since the first Summer Training in 2011, over 250 people from the subregion have joined the NARPI trainings and have shared a common vision for transforming this subregion.

The NARPI participants consist of the following:

- NGO/NPO staff and interns;
- Peace educators and activists;
- Teachers and professors;
- Students (high school graduates, university and graduate school students);

- Government officials, military and police;
- Community leaders;
- Religious leaders;
- Anyone interested in peacebuilding in Northeast Asia.

The participants have a commitment to peacebuilding and ability to participate in workshops conducted in English.

NARPI has acted as a "safe space" where participants of different backgrounds and nationalities can truthfully share, listen, and learn from each other and be trained and empowered as peacebuilders. Together they experience peace. However, peace, though sought by all, is often forgotten, overshadowed by the surrounding political reality. At the end of the training, participants return home with conviction, vitalized by the knowledge of the human capacity that they experienced at NARPI. Peace is the way.

Conclusion

Many people expressed commitment to share the NARPI experience in their home communities, and leave the training with a determination to work for

peace and human rights in their communities and with more skills to equip them. Some participants found new directions for their future through the coursework. One of the participants shared,

> There was a learning opportunity far greater than what I had expected. I am determined to study more, get more experience and become a restorative justice practitioner.

Some participants shared about personal change resulting from their coursework. One participant wrote, "I can decide my way because of NARPI. The Trauma Healing class really helped to find the real me and to choose my future direction." Others shared that their experience at NARPI will help them to mediate conflict, whether it is in their daily life or on the scale of community or region and that meeting people from all over the world and understanding the dream of peace that they have in common is what they liked best about NARPI.

Many of these individuals took ownership of the vision of NARPI.

These are some of the ways that NARPI alumni are working toward their vision of peace:

- Giving peace building trainings in their home communities;
- Pursuing study or work in peacebuilding areas;
- Staying in touch with other NARPI alumni by sharing knowledge and resources and visiting each other to find out more about different peacebuilding efforts in the region.

These are some ways that NARPI alumni are supporting NARPI:

- Sharing about their NARPI experiences with family, friends, and colleagues;
- Continuing to join the NARPI Summer Peacebuilding Training;
- Recruiting participants for the NARPI Summer Training each year;
- Giving small donations to NARPI.

Both participants and NARPI people learned and were reminded of the many important aspects of peacebuilding in Northeast Asia during the 2017 training in Taiwan. They rediscovered that all were influenced by the same history of their parents' and grandparents' generations. They also re-realized that the mission of their generation was to find ways to respond differently and creatively to this history of past generations.

In 2018, NARPI will be held in Jeju Island, Korea. There is an expectation of another successful training in developing facilitators for peacebuilding.

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Endnotes

1 Action Professionals' Association for the People (Addis Ababa, 1996).

2 Yayori Matsui (2000, para. 2) reported that "Japan's military sexual slavery [the so-called "comfort women" system] before and during the Second World War was one of the most horrendous forms of wartime sexual violence against women known to this century." About forty-five years after World War II in 1990, the Korean "comfort women", victims of Japan's Military Sexual Slavery, spoke for the first time to unveil these atrocities. This revelation was followed by victims from China, Taiwan, North Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Netherlands. Matsui (2000, para. 4) further informed:

At the Fourth UN World Women's Conference in Beijing, the Platform for Action was adopted which clearly stated that systematic rape, sexual slavery and other forms of violence against women in armed conflicts are war crimes and crimes against humanity; and that governments and international organizations should in-

vestigate, and prosecute alleged war criminals to the end of offering full redress to victimized women.

Ahmed (2004) further described that "despite the tireless work of legal scholars in articulating the principles of international humanitarian law throughout the twentieth century, the unresolved cases of the 'comfort women' make it painfully clear that these principles are still far from being realized" (page 122). This is a crime against humanity or violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Empowering Journalists for Quality Journalism

Kh.Naranjargal

Completely landlocked between China and Russia, Mongolia is one of the sparsely populated countries in the world. It embraced democracy by guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of its citizens in the 1992 Constitution.

Mongolian journalists and media played a great role in the democratic movement that started at the end of 1980s. One of the demands of the first political hunger strike in March 1990 was liberalization of the government-controlled broadcast media, the only one existing in the country at that time.

On its path towards media freedom, Mongolia has seen some inspiring developments but has also faced major setbacks. Following the political transition in 1990, print media sprang up extensively, and since the late 1990s a host of electronic media programs were launched. As a result of the 1998 Media Freedom Law, government-owned newspapers were privatized and the only Mongolian radio and TV stations at that time were converted into public broadcasting service companies according to the Law on the Public and Radio and Television passed by the Parliament in 2005.

The actual media output in the capital as well as the countryside is impressive both in number and variety. According to the Mongolian Press Institute survey, there were 446 media outlets at the end of 2016 serving a population of 3.1 million people, 25 percent of them operating in the rural areas. The number of news websites radically increased to ninety-six websites in 2016. More than sixty TV stations are located in Ulaanbaatar, the capital, out of recorded total of two hundred eighty broadcast stations all over the country. The number of daily newspapers dropped from sixteen to fourteen. A total of 4,716 media practitioners work in the media field and 66 percent are journalists. Six newspapers are published in English and other foreign languages.

Journalism Education in Mongolia

Since the collapse of communism, Mongolia has faced the challenge of building an entirely new media system that meets the requirements of a

Mongolia journalists covering an event.

young democratic state. While inspired by the social and political changes, Mongolian journalists had to learn the concept and principles of democratic journalism. The training of journalists and media management training are vital parts in the equation. For this reason many multilateral organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Mongolia have been extraordinarily active in Mongolia in terms of journalism training over the past years.

Until 1990, journalism was only taught at the State University of Mongolia. The State University of Mongolia started only one class on journalism for the first time in 1961. By now, a total of seventeen journalism colleges and universities offer journalism courses in Ulaanbaatar and most of them are privately run. On average, these schools have a total student body of around 1,500 students at any given time.

The curriculum and course syllabuses of those schools were developed in compliance with Journalism bachelor education standard approved by a resolution of the National Council of Standardization and Metrology in 2003. Therefore, the contents of these curriculums are similar. However, each school has a right to develop and enrich curriculum content depending on their schools' specifics. Thus, schools improve their curriculums every two to three years which have to be verified by the Professional Education

Authority of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sports. About 25-35 percent of all courses taught in the undergraduate journalism program are about democratic ideals and their development. For example, the General Education courses include subjects on History of Mongolia, Politics, Theory of Economics, Contemporary International Relations, and Basics of State and Justice. The Journalism Foundation courses have subjects on Mass Communication Theory, International Journalism, History of Mongolian Journalism, Investigative Journalism, Civic Journalism and Practical Journalism. Most universities have their own studio, computer laboratory and reporters' facilities.

The Journalism Higher Education Organization of Mongolia supported the publication in 2010 of the Mongolian language version of the UNESCO series on journalism education entitled *Model Curricula for Journalism Education in Developing Countries & Emerging Democracies* translated by the Press Institute of Mongolia. Copies of the publication were distributed to university instructors. Within the framework of the project, seven Basic Journalism and Practical Journalism class syllabuses were improved and the Curriculums for Development Journalism were done anew. Professors and tutors of ten public and private universities worked as a team in developing the seven journalism syllabuses of universities. Currently, most Journalism Schools (except the State University of Mongolia) follow the "Model Curricula for Journalism Education (eight classes) in Mongolia."

The UNESCO study entitled *The Mongolian Media Landscape. Sector Analysis* conducted by Media Consultant Anke Redl, CMM Intelligence (China) and Associate Professor Poul Erik Nielsen, University of Aarhus, Denmark published in December 2006 states:[1]

> While there are a great number of journalism schools, there are no media management courses. Fifteen years since Mongolia's move to democracy, there is still little to no understanding of how to manage and grow an independent and balanced media outlet that exists for the sake of providing free and independent information or for the sake of being a business in itself, without having to depend on political and/or business support.

This conclusion remains valid until now.

The 2016 report entitled *Assessment of Media Development of Mongolia*[2] that used the UNESCO Media Development Indicators notes that[3]

> Most of the training mentioned under indicator 4.1 has targeted junior to medium-ranking reporters rather than managers. The first major training event targeting media managers was in 1998, when the World Association of Newspapers, in cooperation with the Mongolian Publishers' Association and with the support of the Free Press Foundation (a DANIDA-established independent printing house), conducted a newspaper management training which resulted in the launch of the first newspaper advertisements. In the following years between 2000 and 2014, about 10 training events were organized by the Press Institute specifically for media executives. In 2012, GIC [Global International Center] trained ten community radio managers in their workplace.

This UNESCO-funded assessment also gives an overview of professional media training:[4]

> In 1996, the Mongolian Free Democratic Journalists Association organized the first training course for a wide range of media workers introducing the principles of media independence and professionalism and describing the role of a free, pluralist and professional media in a democracy and for election coverage. Since then, three non-academic institutions had been the main players in systematically providing training courses on democratic and professional journalism: the Mongolian Journalists Association, the Press Institute (PI) and Globe International Center (GIC). Most of these training events have been made possible through the assistance of international donors, including bilateral donors (DANIDA, USAID, JICA, SIDA), the European Union (TASIS programme, EC projects), overseas foundations (the Asia Foundation, Open Society Institute, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung), international governmental organizations (IGOs) (UNESCO, UNDP, WB) and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs).

The training topics include a wide range of issues on democracy and development such as good governance, anti-corruption, anti-violence, social justice, equality as well as reporting on human rights, politics, economy, business, gender, environment etc. Investigative journalism has been a part

of the training program of Globe International Center (GIC) which started with the UNESCO IPDC (International Programme for the Development of Communication) project in 2005 in cooperation with the Zorig Foundation and Press Institute.

A number of the training programs offered by the international projects as part of their information and communication programs include the issues of good governance, economy, environment, health, etc.

However, apart from the heavy investment in mid-career training and despite almost all journalists being able to cite the virtues of a free and responsible press, the standard of Mongolian journalism has very little improvement in the interim.

The assessment of the media development was undertaken by GIC in cooperation with the Confederation of Mongolian Journalists, Press Institute and Transparency Fund in 2015.

Legal environment for the Mongolian media

In 2002, GIC conducted the first ever study on Mongolian laws and the media in cooperation with Article 19, a London-based international NGO and published the report entitled *"Mongolia in Transition. Legal Analysis of the Domestic Legislation Affecting Freedoms of Expression and Information."* Since that time, GIC remained the most active group in reviewing the national laws and advocating for favorable legal environment for the media.

The Mongolian Constitution guarantees its citizens the right to publish and freedoms of expression and information. The 1998 Law on Media Freedom bans censorship, prohibits the government from owning media outlets and states that the Parliament shall not adopt any laws restricting media freedom. The law also obliges the media outlets to take responsibility for their publications and programs.

The Law on Information Transparency and Right to Information (LITRI), passed on 16 June 2011, was ranked 65th in the global right to information rating (out of 111 countries).[5]

Under Article 18 of the LITRI, information will not be made public (1) if there are well-grounded reasons that the public release of the concerned information might be detrimental to the national security and public interest of Mongolia (18.1.1), (2) if the concerned information is related to matters under review by the Mongol Bank, the Financial Regulatory Commission,

or by the state administrative organizations in charge of competition or specialized inspection (18.1.2), and (3) if it is necessary to protect state secrets, organizations and/or individuals during the process of inquiry, investigation and prosecution (18.1.3). LITRI also protects intellectual property (Article 19), personal secrets (Article 20) and secrets of any organization or business entity (article 21). Disclosure of intellectual property-related information is prohibited without the permission by the owner (19.1).

The regime of exceptions of LITRI is problematic for the following reasons:

- It fails to protect key confidentiality interests and renders confidential some issues that should be open;
- Many exceptions are not harm-based; and
- There is no public interest override to ensure that information of significant public interest is disclosed.

GIC lobbied for the enactment of this law for seven years. In practice, the implementation of the law is very weak and awareness of the citizens and public officials on the law is still poor.

Civil and Criminal Defamation

Reputation is protected by civil and criminal defamation laws. GIC's free expression monitoring reports reveal that there were twenty-seven criminal defamation cases between 2005 and 2012, but only seventeen in 2013-2015.[6] All the plaintiffs of criminal defamation cases in Mongolia were elected authorities, powerful public officials and public organizations including the Speaker of the Parliament, Prime Minister and Ministers. For example, in the criminal defamation case filed by Prime Minister N. Altankhuyag against an editor-in-chief and two other journalists, the Chilgeltei District Court convicted the defendants and fined them twenty million Mongolian Tughrik (MNT) (approximately 11,000 US dollars) with three-month imprisonment in case of failure to pay the fine. The Supreme Court sustained the decision of the Appeals Court and fined Defendants with over fourteen million MNT (approximately 7,800 US dollars).

Criminal defamation has become alarming for social media users. On 18 August 2014, the Initial Court found Ts. Bat, a Twitter blogger, guilty of insulting and libelling A. Gansukh, the Minister of Road and Transportation.

Ts. Bat was arrested and detained for three months and ten days. On appeal, the court decided on 9 September 2014 to further investigate the case and released Ts. Bat on bail.

In 2017, a new Criminal Law repealed the provisions on libel and insult. The Law on Administrative Offenses now imposes fines equal to 2,000,000 MNT to individuals and 20,000,000 MNT to legal entities for disclosing and distributing through mainstream and social media information defaming the honor and dignity of a person. However, general criminal defamation remains under the new Criminal Law.

Reputation is protected by Article 497 of the Civil Code, but there are two main problems: 1) the law allows public bodies to bring defamation legal action and 2) places the onus on the person who disseminated the allegedly defamatory statement to prove that information was "accurate" or that it was "truthful". This poses a significant burden on the defendant and has a chilling effect on freedom of expression.

Freedom of Expression During Elections

On 25 December 2015, the new Election Law was enacted and it integrated the regulations of the previous Parliamentarian and Presidential elections. Article 70 titled "Prohibition of the Illegal Campaigns" imposes more restrictions on media, online and messaging spaces by prohibiting them from distributing any type of information which is false, libelous or insulting and any type of activities with purpose of "determining political ranking" (Article 70.1.6), or "call on citizens to refrain from voting" (Article 70.5.7). Furthermore, a ban is placed on printing or publication of news, pictures and materials of any type as well as broadcast of songs related to religion in election broadcast programs that disseminate false information, and materials that are libelous and insulting to people (Article 70.5.13). Media bodies are required to sign an agreement and pledge not to release all types of information and news about any parties participating in the election, during the election campaign (Article 70.7).

Sanctions against media are included in various parts of the Election Law, such as the following:

- A media body found guilty by a court of disseminating, publishing and airing "flashy" and false information on parties, coalitions and

candidates, shall reimburse the expenses spent for the campaign (Article 70.8);

- In case websites breach the provision against "determining political ranking" (Article 70.1.6), the Communications and Regulatory Committee (CRC) shall terminate the license for six months based on the conclusion of the government administrative organization responsible for fair competition;
- Radio and television stations that breach the law shall be warned once; but repeated violations would allow the organization which issued their license to order their operations to stop until the voting day (Article 82.19);
- In the case of the breaches specified in this chapter, license of the broadcasters shall be terminated until six months from the day breach occurred (Article 82.21);
- In case, the identity of the bodies and media individuals who breached this provision could not be determined, the website shall be blocked until the end of the voting by the regulatory body (Article 83.7);
- Procedures on election campaigns on radio and television and on their monitoring shall be adopted by the Central Election Organization and the CRC in accordance with Article 82.17. The CRC shall monitor election advertising and may take measures to prevent violations of the law or stop the violations in cooperation with police, election organizations and specialized non-governmental organizations (Article 82.18).

The involvement of the government entities (Authority for the Fair Competition and Customers and the CRC) on election campaigns through the media encourages government censorship, in violation of the Media Freedom Law.

Safety of Journalists

Mongolia does not have legal protection for whistleblowers or for journalists' confidential sources, and it tends to prohibit journalists from remaining anonymous.

The Globe International Center (GIC), which has been monitoring free expression violations since 2005 and produces the annual *Media Freedom Report,* recorded three hundred thirty-two violations of journalists' professional rights during the 2011-2016 period. This is not the complete number of violations because many journalists do not publicly report them. The number of court cases against journalists increased to fifty-two during the 2011-2016 period. In 2016, 52.5 percent of cases of violations out of a total of sixty-one cases were against websites and the social media, 26.2 percent against broadcast media, 14.8 percent against print and 6.5 percent against individuals and freelancers. More than 57 percent of free expression violators are politicians, high government authorities, public officials and public bodies.

Globe International Center and Journalism Training

GIC was founded in 1999 with the mission of supporting Mongolian democracy and civil society by spreading the power of information and knowledge. Its vision is to establish a democratic culture, with informed and empowered citizens.

Besides Ulaanbaatar, GIC operates in eight *aimags* (provinces) and twenty remote *soums* (provincial districts). In ten *soums* of four western *aimags* where national and ethnic minorities dominate, GIC established community radios with the support of UNESCO, Beijing Cluster.

GIC strongly believes that information leads to change and the public's right to free expression, access to information and free and independent media are essential to consolidating and developing a democratic, civil, and healthy society which respects human rights and truly serves the public.

Its strategic message is "Informed People are Powerful" which translates into considering the media as the primary source of information for the people. Necessarily, an independent media is essential; and without access to accurate public information, citizens are not aware of their rights and freedoms.

GIC's strategy is organized through complementary and inter-related programs:

1. Supporting the rights of independent media to play a leading role in the development of democracy and society. The program priorities are free expression monitoring and legal aid to journalists,

the creation of a more favorable media legal framework, media and elections, media and gender, community media, specialized and investigative reporting;

2. Promoting Good and Transparency Governance to improve governance and social accountability in public institutions that would enable them to provide a truly good public service. The program priorities are promotion of government transparency and social accountability, and community development and civic engagement;
3. Empowering the Public through Information and Communication and Arts is aimed at education and community-level communication systems supportive of the creation of an environment for citizens to exercise their rights. The priorities under this program are the use of the United Nations human rights mechanisms for human rights advocacy, anti-corruption legislation awareness raising, fighting gender-based violence and protection of human rights defenders.

GIC conducts various studies, surveys and monitoring of media-related issues including the implementation of the Right to Information (RTI) Law. It also holds capacity-building activities to train ordinary citizens on monitoring government transparency. GIC has been conducting media monitoring on presidential and parliamentary elections coverage since 2004. It lobbied for the enactment of the Law on the Public Radio and Television for five years and monitored the transition process of the state broadcasting office into a public service institution in 2006.

GIC translated the UNESCO Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media and piloted it on the Mongolian National Broadcaster (MNB), Mongolian public service broadcasting company, Ulaanbaatar Broadcasting System (UBS), a private TV channel and Confederation of Mongolian Journalists as well conducted a comparative content analysis of coverage about women politicians in media in 2012.

Since its establishment, GIC has been the NGO most actively advocating the issues of freedom of expression (namely, public service broadcasting, protection of sources, freedom of information, decriminalization of defamation, state secrecy law reform, community media), and directly engaged in attending the sessions of the United Nations human rights mechanisms.

GIC is the Secretariat of the National Committee of UNESCO's International Program for Development of Communication (IPDC).

Empowering the Journalists

Over the last fifteen years, GIC has trained more than one thousand journalists through more than forty workshops and training programs.

With four out of five founders of GIC being former journalists, GIC believes that a strong and independent journalist is able to produce accurate and powerful stories that truly serve the public interest.

The small media market in Mongolia is highly saturated; there is no fair market competition and economic conditions do not allow media to thrive as business. Influential politicians and business groups close to those in power own most of media outlets. Training at the journalism schools and NGOs tends to focus on how to operate in an ideal, professional media market, rather than on the one that actually exists. Once graduates are released into the world, they find that the skills they were taught at university do not apply to the conditions they have to operate in. The situation is aggravated by the financial dependence of journalists on the local government, as is often the case in the rural areas, or by the small community environment where journalists dare not speak freely for fear of being ostracized from their community.

Despite all the challenges and problems, GIC strives to empower the journalists and promote quality journalism. Powerful journalists play a vital role in the editorial culture and are a value to any media outlet.

The journalists are vulnerable when they are ill-informed about their duties and are unaware of ethical, responsible and accountable journalism.

The GIC strategy in empowering journalists is based on the 3Ms: *Medeeleltei* (Informed), *Medlegtei* (Knowledgeable) and *Mergeshsen* (Specialized).

Foremost to a journalist's everyday job, is being informed of political, economic and social matters - understanding international media and journalistic communities.

Secondly, journalists should be knowledgeable about the environment (legal and otherwise) they work in, and the conditions for effective media. They should have the know-how to protect themselves and ensure their own safety and security.

Journalists should specialize on topics they cover to gain community confidence as well as public trust. The journalists should be human rights-sensitive while covering political, economic and social issues.

GIC holds general training programs on professional reporting associated with topics on ethical, responsible and accountable journalism. As part of specialized reporting, GIC educates on reporting on human and disability rights, gender, elections, mining issues, court trials, etc. It cooperates with the Independent Agency against Corruption (IAAC) and other civil society organizations on educating the journalists on anti-corruption legislation and issues.

Digital security and safety are essential elements of the GIC programs. Workshops on corruption risks associated with mining sector and digital security have been held in cooperation with Marcel Oomens from the Dutch NGO Free Press Unlimited and funded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Mongolia.

The first GIC training on human rights reporting was organized in 2002 with the support of the United Nations (UN) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Six selected female columnists from six daily newspapers based in the capital were trained on how to cover child and women issues. Since then, GIC has published educational materials that included issues such as domestic violence, child abuse, persons with disabilities, women participation in decision-making as well as how to use the UN human rights mechanisms.

The development of investigative journalism is a leading priority of professional training in Mongolia. With UNESCO funding in 2005, GIC organized the first investigative journalism training in cooperation with the Zorig Foundation and the Press Institute, under the banner of "Media for Transparent Governance." Workshops promoted discussion and conveyed ideas on how to develop investigative journalism in Mongolia.

GIC subsequently organized two basic investigative reporting training for forty journalists from Ulaanbaatar and the provinces. Following-on, four teachers of the Press Institute held hands-on workshops for Ulaanbaatar-based journalists that led to the formation of four collaborative projects that gathered information for corruption stories in education, health, environment and economic sectors. The course deepened the knowledge for journalists on research, data analysis, building a database, finding sources, and improvement of investigative techniques. The workshops employed the

principles of teamwork and innovation. Since teamwork was not widely recognized by journalists, there was an initial difficulty in creating an atmosphere of trust and understanding. However, due to the efforts of trainers, journalists saw the benefits of teamwork.

The journalists' research reports were translated into English and sent to international expert, Yvonne Chua, from the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. She later came to Mongolia and conducted consultancy training: "Packaging Stories for Investigative Journalism." Following her evaluation of the four teams' investigative reports, she stressed to the journalists the importance of:

1. Independent verification of allegations made by human sources or documents through multiple sourcing (e.g., the health team relied only on the letter alleging wrongdoing against the former Chief Executive Officer [CEO]);
2. Adequate research to understand the law, processes and systems before launching investigations (e.g., the environment team failed to study fully the law and decrees/orders on protected areas. The agriculture team has not checked international standards);
3. Providing context (e.g., the health team still did not know much about the history of the company and the former CEO);
4. Adequate documentation (e.g., the education team was unable to photograph the transactions between the applicant and middleperson); and
5. Obtaining as much information as possible from important sources at first meeting (e.g., the agriculture team assumed it would be given a copy of the full report, only to discover that the state inspector later refused to cooperate after premature publication of the report summary).

The differences between the evidence the journalists gathered and the evidence that investigators gather was explained. The teams had difficulty organizing data and structuring stories. Many struggled with their leads, tended to bury the findings of their investigations in the stories and failed to appreciate the importance of adding color to the stories through succinct quotes, anecdotes and descriptions. Some journalists tended to editorialize, opine or include unverified information or rumors. Some journalists ac-

knowledged that these practices put the press in bad light - and now understood why readers tended to think that news reports were based on rumors.

As a result of these workshops, four teams of twenty journalists developed corruption stories, and three of the twelve investigative materials were produced for radio programs and articles for newspapers.

Members of the team who worked on an entrance examinations bribery case refused the publication of their stories, for fear that the law would not protect them - even through their solid evidence would stand up in court. The journalists could not be forced to take risk, so instead wrote: "Freedom to Journalists!" This story and other materials were published by the daily newspaper *Ardyn Erkh* under the banner "Corruption is Everybody's Concern."

Five years later, GIC returned to investigative journalism training. This time, with the support of a UNESCO grant and use of its manual entitled *"Inquiry-based Story"* which the Press Institute translated into Mongolian. GIC organized a three-day "Train the Trainers" workshop in October 2011 that involved a mixed group of seventeen journalism teachers, working journalists and Globe International trainers. The sessions were ably assisted by Georgia's ILIA University Professor Mr. Oleg Panfilov. Through its e-mailing list, GIC extended invitations to more than a thousand reporters and teachers and selected applicants based on several criteria, including: commitment and experience in investigative reporting.

The local trainers conducted the two residential workshops for Ulaanbaatar and provincial journalists. The sessions revealed a number of factors affecting their investigations. The main issues as identified by the participants consist of the following:

- Mongolian journalists are highly engaged in self-censorship because of outside pressures;
- Political censorship is increasing;
- Need to develop the media free from economic pressure;
- Journalists' organizations need to be strong and protective of their members;
- Journalists need education on the media legal framework;
- Journalists should unite in their efforts and reinforce the campaign for a more favorable legal environment;
- Journalists need legal protection and their right to investigate should be legally guaranteed;

- Journalists write and expose the facts about corruption, but police and judiciary take no action on the cases that have been exposed; and
- Journalists should cooperate with the civil society organizations to promote greater efficiency.

Local trainers on investigative reporting together with Georgian trainer, Mr. Oleg Panfilov.

Investigative journalism in Mongolia is still underdeveloped and it is encouraging to see the Press Institute seriously taking this matter up with Deutsche Welle Akademie (DWA) support, and a group of journalists establishing the Investigative Journalism Center (EREN). It is hoped that more journalists and the public would realize the need to lobby for a friendly legal environment for the media. GIC sees it as vital for journalists to get involved in its current campaign to strike down anti-media laws, promote press freedom and the right to information.

GIC started election reporting training in 2004, and in 2009, with the assistance of a trainer from the Kiev Office of Internews International, organized a training on how to run an efficient televised debate during the Presidential Elections.

With UNESCO funding, GIC started working with Kazakh journalists in 2005. The project involved a weekly training for media practitioners in Kazakh aimag Bayan-Olgii with the participation of BBC and GIC experts.

Subsequently four selected trainees from Bayan-Olgii went for studies at the journalism department of the Kazakh State University in 2005. In 2006, one professional cameraman from Olgii TV was dispatched to Radio Television Malaysia to up-grade his skills Later, GIC selected four Kazakh journalists for internship in the national media outlets that included the Mongolian National Radio and TV and the biggest daily newspaper *Udriin Sonin,* to give them opportunities to improve their professional skills. GIC also held training for members of minority communities as well as for journalists of Uvs aimag where ethnic minorities such as Durvod, Bayad and Khoton dominate.

Since 2015, GIC has been focused on training the media on social accountability mechanisms and reporting on governance issues.

The results and recommendations of GIC studies, surveys and results of monitoring provided information on the trainees' needs and topics of training programs.

Trainees of the community radio workshop interview members of the Kazakh community.

Training Modules and Methodology

GIC aims to offer journalists efficient and innovative programs and in doing so carefully designs education formats - the first element for successful training. In 2012-2014, GIC organized four regional investigative reporting trainings for the rural journalists while it offered weekly face-to-face training for Ulaanbaatar journalists. Selected reporters came to the GIC office weekly for legal consultation and to get more information on the topics they were working on.

Field trips have taken journalists to a wide range of small and medium-sized enterprises - from kindergartens to artisan mines and chicken farms - to gain first-hand experience of issues affecting those industries.

GIC's instructive method called "Information Points" involves four to five experts or stakeholders who extensively discuss with journalists the issues in the training program. During the training on reporting issues associated with persons with visual impartiality, journalists had a chance to talk to a blind computer trainer, massage therapist, musician and teacher and human rights activist. At the training on citizens' participation in making administrative decisions, GIC invited a government official, a lawyer, a judge and a civil society expert.

Field visit to Taragt soum of Uvurkhangai aimag where seabucktorn plants thrive.

Another method occasionally used is the game "How to Produce TV Talk Shows" where journalists play different roles including herder, NGO leader, and others. Indeed, the people represented in the roles are information sources for journalists producing news and other media products.

Digital security session with Trainer Marcel Oomens, Free Press Unlimited.

Using "Arts" as an effective educational tool, GIC has produced human rights documentaries, videos and slideshows to demonstrate corruption, with follow-up discussion for learning reinforcement.

The "dialogue training method" was first used in civil society training in 2004 on how to conduct media campaign. Journalists were invited to attend the discussions of a mixed journalist-civil society activist group. Participants had a great opportunity to learn from each other and became aware of the human rights issues that some NGOs work on. Rural journalists and members of the local police force participated in domestic violence training and in 2016, GIC organized "Media and Civil Society Dialogue on Domestic Violence" using civil society expertise and with Austrian government support.

Beyond journalism trainings, GIC also runs programs for public officials, lawyers, citizens, and youth groups. To demonstrate and engage the students of law schools and secondary schools on issues around corruption, it developed two modules using images from a twenty-eight anti-corruption episodic TV series. The TV episodes narrating twelve corruption stories were produced by private channel NTV, as a public awareness-raising component of a project funded by Asia Foundation. For the secondary school program, GIC has trained five law school students to deliver the school program.

Staged reading of the short play "Big Brother," which is about a female journalist who faced criminal defamation case because of her article disclosing human trafficking.

GIC has a project on "Theater for Human Rights" and produces readings of short human rights plays. Readers Theater, sometimes called staged readings, is quite simply the reading out loud of the script of a play for an audience. It is a "no-frill" production, but a production nonetheless. The readers are actors. The main difference between Readers Theater and a fully-staged production is that there are no costumes or elaborate sets and lighting. The focus is on the script and acting.

GIC uses this form of theatrical show for advocacy and education purposes because there are less production aspects to deal with, staged reading allows the presentation of human rights issues closer to the hearts of audience. In 2012, it first developed the scripts for two short plays for use in the decriminalization of defamation campaign. These plays are based on real stories of two female journalists who faced criminal defamation cases when they published their articles disclosing corruption and human trafficking. Using the videos of the staged readings, GIC is now developing a training module on free expression for judges, police officers and prosecutors.

Challenges and Opportunities

According to the Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF), Mongolia has had a partly free press since 2002 and remains a country with notable problems of press freedom.[7]

There are many challenges to the development of free and independent media in Mongolia. The violations of freedom of expression discussed earlier are in themselves problematic, but even more seriously they are part of a more critical problem related to the general political and financial dependence of the media. The immense influence political and financial groups have on the media leaves little room for accurate and independent work. The media are saturated with so-called "business news" in the form of paid articles or paid programs. While political and financial influence is common the world over, it is a major cause of concern in Mongolia. Since politicians and corporations are media owners, the journalists themselves do their reporting for the companies or the politicians. This situation risks losing whatever credibility is left of the profession and prevents the journalists from making critical reports on these companies or politicians. Journalists lose credibility when they cannot report honestly, and readers, listeners and viewers do not know what to believe when there is no distinction between advertorials and independently-prepared reports.

Some media outlets do not accept "business news," but they often have a hard time avoiding it since it is such a common practice among journalists. On the other hand, problems regarding the exercise of the labor rights of journalists and their working conditions also affect the quality of journalism.

An Assessment Report of the Media Development of Mongolia states:[8]

> Under the previous political regime, journalists, following the Soviet model, were obliged to become members of the Trade Union of Cultural Workers. This monopolistic trade union system collapsed during Mongolia's shift to democracy. The new Constitution and the 1991 Law on Trade Union Rights gave Mongolian media professionals the rights to assembly and to form unions and, more generally, to freely protect their labour rights in line with international standards.
>
> Several associations were created following this liberalization process, including the Mongolian Free and Democratic Journalists Association (MFDJA) [which] was actively engaged in the introduction of a new democratic media culture and in the promotion of media freedom, the Mongolian Newspaper Association, the Mongolian Free Newspaper Association,

the Daily Newspapers Association, the Local Newspapers Association, the Local Radio Association, the Mongolian Television Federation, the Academy of Television and Radio, the Association of News Websites, the Mongolian Website Association and the Association of the Parliamentary Reporters. However, issues of wages and social insurance as well as working conditions, safety and security are rarely discussed openly and collectively.

Given that no surveys had been conducted on journalists' labour rights and awareness of trade unions, the authors of this report conducted such a survey. The sample included 40 journalists (20 males and 20 females) from 32 media outlets: ten television channels, two radio stations, five websites, nine newspapers, five magazines and one news agency (MONTSAME). The results showed that most media employers establish labour contracts when they hire new journalists. Small media outlets rarely have contracts. In some small media organizations, journalists work for a year without a contract. Some progress has reportedly been made regarding the payment of employees' health insurance. The results from this study show that journalists lack awareness of trade unions and labour rights. The majority (73 percent) believe that in order to form a trade union, they need permission from their employers or representatives from the Mongolian Journalists Association. However, the Mongolian Journalists Association is an NGO that does not play the role of a trade union; and it is not legally entitled to negotiate salaries and labour rights with employers. It is also common understanding among journalists that by establishing a trade union, they fall under the strict scrutiny of their employers and jeopardize their job security. Some journalists (26 percent) thought their editors or directors would not welcome the idea of a trade union. Many journalists did not know the benefits of a trade union. Furthermore, the survey suggests that young journalists tend to avoid talking about trade unions due to a belief that it will harm their careers. On the other hand, more senior and experienced journalists expressed an interest in trade unions but were rarely active in promoting their importance. Out of the 40 participants surveyed, eight were editors or managers. Almost all of them (seven persons) answered that they would not be opposed to the active participation in trade unions of the journalists under their supervision. In 2011, the Udriinshuudan newspaper formed and registered its own trade union and started collecting membership fees of 5,000 MNT (approximately US$ 2.5). After less than five years, the union's chairperson resigned and the union stopped operating.

In 2016, global media passed through a dark and difficult period with media accused of propagating and disseminating "fake news." It made journalism the target of political propaganda, but this so-called "post-truth era" presented both challenges and new opportunities for journalism. It affected the public's right to be well-informed and participate in the decision-making process on issues regarding democracy and changes in their lives. For the last year, media leaders, media policymakers and academia have been scratching their brains to find out what went wrong. Some blame the Russians, technology and Internet, while others wave an accusatory finger at social media giants such as Google, Facebook and Twitter. Others blame the media itself in those failures because the press is too politicized and broadcast systems are owned by the wealthy.

Media in Mongolia is totally abused and manipulated by the politicians. False news, fake news and disinformation are indeed both old and current problems of Mongolia. Interpreted as libel and insult by the political elite, debates have sharpened during discussions of the Criminal Law and Law on Administrative Offense in the Parliament. To the politicians, journalists are at fault for circulating "negative" information about them. Unfortunately, they seem to forget that many of them have their own media outlets.

However, GIC still believes that informed, knowledgeable and specialized journalists are those most able to bring about change. The pen is still mightier than the sword, and groups of well-trained and educated journalists will always have power in solidarity.

Training Forever!

Endnotes

1 The Mongolian Media Landscape. Sector Analysis, full report available at www.globeinter.org.mn/images/upld/Media%20secotor209x279.pdf, page 35.

2 The full UNESCO report is available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002453/245364e.pdf.

3 UNESCO, Assessment of Media Development of Mongolia, 2016, page 91.

4 Ibid., page 89.

5 Access Info Europe (AIE) and the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), Global Right to Information Rating, www.rti-rating.org/indicators-comparation/.

6 Globe International Center, Media Freedom Report, 2015, www.globeinter.org.mn/images/upld/Hevleliinerhchol002016eng.pdf.

7 For reports on Mongolia media, visit Reporters Without Borders, https://rsf.org/en/mongolia.

8 UNESCO, op. cit., page 95.

BRAC Migration Program: A Lighthouse for Migrants

Bonosree Sarker

Overseas migration of Bangladeshis is contributing significantly to the Bangladeshi economy. These migrant workers are the unsung heroes of the country. Their stories are both the stories of hope and despair. Each year, over half a million people go abroad to fulfill a dream of a better future for themselves and their families.

Bangladesh received almost fifteen billion US dollars of remittance by its workers abroad in 2016 and almost thirteen billion US dollars in 2017.[1] During the 2015-2016 fiscal years, the remittance ranged from almost 8 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Bangladesh in 2015 to 6 percent in 2016.[2] The remittance earnings are more than the total amount of foreign aid (two billion US dollars) or foreign direct investment (1.3 billion US dollars) that the country received. Only the earnings from garment exports at twenty-eight billion US dollars are higher than remittance earnings. Migration becomes therefore a major contributing factor in Bangladesh's economy. Moreover, with an increasing migration rate, remittances are expected to play an even more prominent role in the future which will help Bangladesh become a middle income country by 2020.

Overseas Migration

According to the United Nations Population Fund (IMPFA), there is economic growth potential "from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64 years old) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 years old and younger, and 65 years old and older)."[3] In other words, "economic productivity … occurs when there are growing numbers of people in the workforce relative to the number of dependents."[4] Due to the rise of the working age population, two million young people are added to the labor force each year, making it difficult to accommodate them in the domestic labor market. Here overseas migration plays a crucial role in absorbing the new entrants to the job market.

Migration has become so popular in Bangladesh that migrant workers constitute 4.9 percent of the total working age population of Bangladesh.[5] Evidently overseas migration, especially labor migration, has been one of the prime catalysts for the rapid economic development and livelihood development of Bangladesh. On the other hand, the migrant workers' story is full of exploitation, failed migration, harassment, trafficking and other problems. Besides, high overseas migration cost and lack of skilled workers are the main obstacles in reaping the full potential benefits from migration.

In Bangladesh, overseas migrant workers, the actors behind this economic development and growth, have to deal with great difficulties to get necessary services from authentic and recognized formal source. Since government services and private recruiting agencies are mainly operated from large cities, migrants from the rural areas have difficulty getting proper information and service. There are District Employment Manpower Offices (DEMOs) at the migrant worker-prone districts, but their scope of work is very minimal relative to the huge service demand of the Bangladeshis. Also there are very few civil society and private sector service providers in migrant worker-prone communities.

Without information and services at the grassroots level, people often choose the informal and unsafe channels of migration. One of the reasons for the high migration cost is the informal migration procedures which are traditionally managed and organized by brokers who work for private recruiting agencies. A large number of aspirant migrant workers become victims of unethical practices of recruiting agencies, operating in collaboration with the so-called *dalals* (brokers), and are forced to pay an excessively high price for migration-related procedures. As a result, Bangladeshis face some of the highest migration costs in the world, ranging from 1,675 to 5,145 US dollars.[6] *Dalals* and recruiting agencies receive a big amount as commission for facilitating the migration process.[7] The rest is spent on airfare, passport, visa, medical certificate, and other expenses.

Issues

There is a no reliable channel or services to trust at the community regarding overseas jobs. The potential migrant workers do not know how to register for overseas jobs, obtain a passport, purchase an airticket and know the cost involved in processing documents for migration. In addition, they do

not know how and where to get a medical check-up and loan for migration. The costs associated with this process become very high due to several layers of *dalals* involved in the whole process. Anecdotal information suggests that there are more than 50,000 *dalals* currently active in the labor export sector of Bangladesh. High migration cost has become a major hurdle for overseas migration and a high source of risk for migrant workers given the poverty level of potential migrant households.

Most of the overseas migrant workers from Bangladesh predominantly belong to less-skilled category that leaves them in a vulnerable position in terms of both net remittance earnings and their bargaining power with employers. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Employment and Training (BMET), of the half a million Bangladeshis migrating annually for overseas jobs most have no skills training, working with a very low wages and face vulnerabilities. Under these conditions, less-skilled workers from Bangladesh are at an increased risk of forced labor, exploitation, abuse, and even human trafficking in their destination countries. Some find themselves in situations of forced labor or debt bondage where they face restrictions on their movements, non-payment of wages, threats, and physical or sexual abuse.

Another risk associated with this practice is the failure to recover the amount paid to *dalals* by the applicants who fail to fly to destination countries due to unexpected circumstances. Migrant workers are often promised overseas employment in certain occupations at certain wages which are not met due to the fraudulent practices of *dalals*. Most of the migrant workers do not get their expected job and salary (as promised by *dalals* or agencies) when they start working abroad. This leads workers to resort to staging strikes or escaping from their existing employers in search of other jobs. This leads to harassment by law enforcement agencies in the destination countries. Finally, they are migrating without receiving training or information related to country of destination (legal rights and duties of foreign workers, cultural sensitivities, and the physical environment), and even airport formalities.

A big number of overseas migrant workers who return each year to Bangladesh cannot contribute to the national economy of the country due to lack of knowledge and information on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) or business advisory services at the community level. They face various problems including lack of information on prevailing business trends and lack of advisory services for new business start-ups and job op-

portunities in Bangladesh. The scenario is the same for both male and female migrant workers. They bring back new knowledge and skills from the experience they obtain through overseas employment. But due to lack of information and services at the community level for returnee migrant workers to start up a new business, they are spending money in a very unproductive way and not able to change their economic situation even after their return.

In summary, the Bangladeshi migrant workers face major problems. The potential migrants do not have the necessary information and knowledge available before making a decision to travel for overseas jobs. There is a lack of public or private institutions at the district level to develop their soft[8] and hard[9] skills needed in the jobs abroad. They have difficulty gathering funds to migrate. After returning home, they often fail to sustain their economically uplifted condition due non-availability of knowledge on productive utilization of remittance, entrepreneurship development and financial support for new business creation.

BRAC Migration Program

To address the issues faced by the migrant workers, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) Migration Program started its intervention in 2006. The program is designed to fill the void in three specific areas: lack of knowledge and information regarding migration and its formalities; pervasive cheating and criminal activities by fraudulent migration agencies; and lack of contact between host country agencies and Bangladeshi agencies. The BRAC Migration Program operates to improve the migration process in migrant worker-prone communities in Bangladesh.

Program Goal, Objectives, Focus

The BRAC Migration Program aims to ensure safe migration of skilled Bangladeshi workers and to support the sustainable livelihood of the migrant workers and their family members.

Specifically, the program has the following objectives:

- To ensure safe migration of Bangladeshi migrant workers at three stages of migration;
- To increase access to essential information and services for migrant workers and family members;

- To facilitate socio-economic reintegration of returnee migrant workers;
- To influence migration policy through advocacy, networking and media mobilization; and
- To promote innovation and best practices to improve safe migration.

BRAC Migration Program Milestone

The BRAC Migration Program started as a pilot project under the Safe Migration Facilitation Centre (SMFC) initiative of BRAC. It started with awareness-raising activities to promote safe migration among the thirty-six migrant worker-prone sub-districts of Bangladesh. The safe migration awareness campaign in the community started with volunteers, in addition to establishment of community-based organizations (CBOs). These CBOs are community-based voluntary migration forums working as a community-based information and support mechanism. The members are local people including returnee migrant workers. These CBOs were immediately recognized and accepted by the migrant workers and their family.

The urgency of providing support for victims of fraudulent recruitment schemes started the legal aid support system for the cheated migrant workers under the program. This legal aid support is provided in collaboration with BRAC's Human Rights and Legal Aid Services (HRLS) program. However, in most cases, cheated migrant workers and their families do not have the required documents to go through the legal procedure. For this reason many cases failed to get filed at the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET). The program added the component of helping migrant workers recover the lost money through a social arbitration process. The community volunteer and CBO member discuss the cases with influential people in the community and create pressure on the *dalals* to return the money. The community volunteers contribute greatly in this process. They are continuously working at the community level to disseminate safe migration information, and assist the BRAC Migration Program people in organizing community-based awareness campaigns at local areas.

The program expanded its geographical coverage by working in six SMFCs by early 2010. At this point, a migration alliance network National Alliance for Migrants Rights, Bangladesh (NAMR, B) was initiated. NAMR, B

started as an informal migration alliance network. The program undertook several advocacy initiatives separately and jointly with the alliance.

The program went through great transition during the 2011-2012 period. It secured BRAC's core fund under the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) that continued to support the six SMFC-based interventions to promote safe migration. During this period, the introduction of Migration Loan Program for the migrants was one of the major initiatives of BRAC. The program also undertook three pilot projects with the International Labour Organization (ILO) during this period. These projects aimed to promote safe internal migration and decent workplace for internal women migrants. An advisory standardized information package was developed for the local government and internal migration stakeholders by the end of the project period (2016). At this time, foreign migrant workers in Libya were facing crisis situation. The program worked side by side with government in an emergency response to aid the Bangladesh migrant worker returnees from Libya. The program also assisted the government in creating a database for migrant worker returnee from Libya.

Finally, during this period, the program had the crucial change of moving from project approach to that of programmed approach. From early 2013, apart from the ongoing SPA-funded project, the program started implementing other significant projects. The program started implementing a project with Japan Social Development Fund, which was managed by World Bank. The program again expanded its geographical coverage to ten more SMFCs covering most of the migrant worker-prone areas of Bangladesh.

In this course, the program partnered with eighty local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) – under the World Bank fund. The program started to implement UNWomen-supported pilot project for returnee migrant workers reintegration support, specially focused on women. Besides, income generating activities and small and medium enterprises (IGA-SME) skill development trainings were also provided to the returnees under the SPA-funded project. These trainings developed the capacity of the returnee migrant workers to engage with IGA-SME. In 2015, the program partnered with ILO with a pilot project to develop the capacity of potential woman migrant workers to avoid trafficking.

The program developed internal capacity with increased human resource; development of comprehensive packages of information, education and communication (IEC) and behavior change communication (BCC) mate-

rials; creation of migration program trainer pool; and trained a pool of over a thousand community volunteers. The program also initiated community-based voluntary language school. The program signed a memorandum of understanding with the government on capacity-building on migration.

In recent years, the program increased advocacy and communication effort. The program undertook a series of advocacy initiatives engaging the government, migration organizations, journalists, national and international institutes, migration experts, and think tanks. The program revitalized the National Alliance for Migrants Rights, Bangladesh (NAMR, B). Besides, the program also partnered with various international alliances and networks like CARAM Asia, Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives (CAPI) located at the University of Victoria (Australia), and Migration and Development Civil Society Network (MADE).

In 2016 BRAC developed a new plan on comprehensive pre-departure and reintegration support. Since the scope for donor-supported interventions shrank after Bangladesh was declared a lower middle-income country in 2015, only a self-sustaining approach could ensure the continuance of need-based services for migrants, and the social enterprise approach fitted in best. Using this approach, the program established a number of comprehensive, accessible and authentic service bases in districts prone to migration.

How the Migration Program Works

The program has a series of services that address three major stages in the migration cycle: decision-making, pre-departure preparation and reintegration into society.

Safe migration campaigns

The program provides information to grassroots communities through various awareness-raising activities such as interpersonal communication, interactive popular theater (IPT), video show, court yard meeting, *miking* (loudspeaker announcement), school quiz, pre-decision orientation, day celebration, workshops, seminars, etc.

The IPT and other awareness campaign activities reveal the real problems related to migration to the people in the community, getting them sensitized about the issues as a consequence. The theater shows are staged at the grassroots level.

IPT is part of the popular theater program of BRAC which has the following objectives:[10]

- To build up awareness against all sorts of crimes/wrongdoings, injustices and corruption in the community;
- To stimulate the poor to build up their capacity, self-reliance, and self-confidence;
- To promote active participation of the oppressed people of the community in their wellbeing;
- To complement in the achievement of the objectives of other rural development initiatives of BRAC; and
- To promote folk culture of rural Bangladesh by using theatre in the development of people.

The IPT team conducts area studies to collect information on local incidents and facts on migration. After the study, they produce an IPT story based on local incidents. The IPT show entitled *Shapno Dekhi Bidesh Jabo* (Towards a Dream) is based on real stories. Currently, more than fifty IPT teams are raising awareness and disseminating safe migration information in migrant worker-prone districts of Bangladesh.

BRAC's theater shows have three major parts as discussed in a report:[11]

> Performing the theatre:
>
> A place centrally located in the village is preferred for the theatre venue as it is likely to be convenient for all villagers from any part of the villages to attend the show. The venue is selected as such that there is enough room for the audiences to sit in front and in sides of the stage. Liaison is made with community leaders and villagers around the venue so that the theatre can be held without any disturbance. [Programme Organizer, Social Development Programme] PO SDP and Communication Worker go around the village and invites everybody they come across to attend the theatre particularly women. Elected public leaders, local elite, NGO leaders, and government officials all from their and neighbouring villages are especially invited to the theatre. The PO SDP compulsorily and other POs, such as PO Micro Finance from the Area Office, voluntarily attend the theatre to assist the team in their performance.
>
> Dialogue session:
>
> At the end of the play a dialogue session is conducted by the BRAC staff and theatre team with the audiences. The session in fact is the continuation of the dialogue between the players and the audiences that has already been started during the play. The session has three dimensions:
>
> - An organizer, usually PO SDP, of the theatre facilitates the audiences to express their perspectives, opinions, responses, and reactions based on what they have watched in the theatre.
> - Any elite like UP [Union Parishad] member, if present in the session, voluntarily or in response to facilitation share his/her insights and learning from the theatre. This is usually done by combining events presented in theatre with the experiences from the villagers.
> - The facilitator requires the audiences to get together at a place next day to hold a community meeting. Facilitator encourages them to think about the existing problems of their village and to figure out how the problems can be resolved/mitigated – issues to be discussed in next day's meeting. Post reactions of the audiences about the play are also recorded.

Community meeting:

As proposed, next day a SDP-initiated community meeting is organized by the villagers. The objective of the meeting is that the villagers will make some concrete plan to improve their condition after being inspired by the theatre they observed. In the case of the theatres organized by the Advocacy Programme three community meetings are held. The first meeting is held following the theatre day, whereas the second and third meetings are held within 7-15 days intervals.

Audio and video materials are both popular and effective tools of communication for rural people. To reinforce the message on migration, educational video/audio shows are played in the community. Live theater shows, live folk song shows and other tested communication activities are implemented through the program to sensitize the community about safe migration.

One study documents the awareness campaigns involving students:[12]

Starting early awareness on safe migration with school children

Migrant workers from Bangladesh are relatively young – more than three quarters belong to the 18 – 35 age group.[13] Schools are therefore an important starting point for generat-

> ing awareness on safe migration practices. The SMBW [Safe Migration for Bangladeshi Workers] project realized this and piloted an innovation in Narsingdi, a district in central Bangladesh, where up to 8 per cent of the population works abroad.
>
> Courtyard sessions were carried out by the project in 164 schools, colleges and madrasas, in collaboration with head teachers, to promote safe migration and remittance management, with the participation of 3,726 students of grade 10. This helped reach aspiring and existing migrants among students' friends and families, and generate awareness. With more community engagement, these children may become the community champions of safe migration, informing others and ultimately, implementing safe migration choices in their own lives.

Other activities like workshops/seminars at different levels are organized to inform, sensitize and activate people in different stratas concerning migration rights. The seminars are held at the national, regional/district, sub-district and union levels attended by representatives of the government and NGOs, professionals, academics, members of civil society, potential migrants, migration victims, media people and other relevant stakeholders.

The program provides pre-decision orientation workshops for potential migrant workers that enable them to analyze social and economic costs and benefits of migration as well as other information needed to make an informed decision. The objective of these orientation workshops is to create awareness among the potential migrant workers on safe labor migration practices using real life stories. Most of the time, these orientation workshops help migrant workers make the decision on migrating abroad in terms of having better preparation and going through the proper process. Many potential migrant workers decide not to go abroad after finding out that it is not profitable at all.

Pre-departure orientation and services

BRAC links those who decide to go abroad after the orientation workshops to pre-employment skill development training for better employment and higher wages in destination countries. The migrant workers and their families are also given orientation, access to information and referrals to affordable financial instruments to help cover the upfront costs of migration, including the provision for training, services, information and hands-on experience for improved management and use of remittance. Therefore, the

main objective of this program is to disseminate in-depth information on how to follow the migration process safely.

The program also offers referral linkages to provide skill enhancement training at the government Technical Training Centers (TTCs) and other private training centers with the goal of making the migrants eligible for better wages as skilled workers.

The BRAC's SMFCs provide migration services to the migrant workers such as pre-departure orientation, visa checking, DEMO registrations, legal aid support, money recovery through arbitration, support to get compensation for accidental death. Pre-training is provided to selected departing migrants who do not have sufficient time to attend the batch of country-specific pre-departure training activities. Through this day-long training, the participants are oriented on the culture, social environment, laws, rules, expected behavior and other realities at the countries of destination which can help the departing migrants handle the new situation confidently.

Departing labor migrant workers receive their visa through various sources, mostly from *dalals*. They face huge difficulty and uncertainty to get their visa check done. Mostly, due to lack of any service provider they migrate without checking their visa. Often times, they fail to work in the country of destination because of fake or wrong visa. Hence, it is important to check the visa before departing to destination countries. The program provides visa check support at the District and Upazila levels to ensure safe migration and protect the migrants from vicious failed migration.

Reintegration awareness and services

The program provides economic reintegration support to the migrant workers through Income Generating Activity (IGA) training, enterprise/new business creation, and training on productive utilization of remittance. The social reintegration support is provided through individual counseling, family counseling, and community awareness campaign to reduce stigma and discrimination. Besides, migrants are referred to various service providers for loan support, legal aid support and medical treatment.

Capacity-building of government, media, partners

BRAC provides training on human rights and migration to government officials (DEMO, BMET), journalists and media personnel. It also

provides coaching support to DEMO officials at district level for migration management.

Policy advocacy and local level advocacy through networking

BRAC implements an advocacy program at the national, regional and local level for the rights of the migrant workers. BRAC advocacy efforts are planned to reduce irregular migration, regulate migration governance and reduce the migrant workers' vulnerability at home and destination.

Migration Program's Approaches

Volunteers

The program has reached over ten million people in Bangladesh. This would not be possible if there were no dedicated volunteer pools. More than a thousand volunteers have been involved in the program. The volunteers spend time spreading useful messages to people in the communities. They have been trained as migration program volunteers.

The program volunteers are involved in carrying out different activities including assisting potential migrant workers in the migration process, assisting migrants in filling up passport form and assisting them in the registration with the DEMO. They support BRAC in facilitating behavior change activities in the community by arranging courtyard meetings, theater and road shows and conducting interpersonal communications (IPC). They disseminate information, education and communication (IEC) and behavior change communications (BCC) materials. They support the program communication workers (CW) and community-based organizations' (CBO) facilitators in holding mass awareness-raising activities in the community. They assist in social arbitration process to recover the money of the deceived migrants. Not only these, they also create database of potential and returnee migrant workers at their respective communities.

The program has developed pools of community-based volunteers by providing capacity development trainings and orientations on safe migration process. BRAC gives priority to returnee migrant workers and their spouses in selecting the volunteers. The volunteers are trained on various issues related to migrant workers' rights and how they can work to assist migrant workers in various stages of migration. They are trained on how to inform people about safe migration choice, what necessary process should

the migrant workers follow and how they can assist the migrant workers in following the process. The volunteers also help the migrant workers in reintegration stages and are trained on various reintegration services. They are also trained on how they can collect information about the returnee migrant workers so that the program can assist the returnee migrant workers. The trained volunteers play a great role in protecting the rights of the migrant workers by informing them about the services that they are entitled to have.

Without the outstanding contribution of the volunteers, the operations of the program could not have been executed smoothly. The volunteers help in reaching out to people in the community. They are well-acquainted with their own localities. They possess a greater knowledge on how to deal with the local people. They identify the migrant workers who need help, making the work of the program much easier. They have the capacity to capture people's attention and make them pay attention to the messages of the program. They promote safe migration and ensure that the idea of safe migration is maintained in the community.

Collective efforts with community-based organizations

The program aims to secure the rights of migrant workers with the participation of the local people. In view of this aim, the program has formed partnership with eighty community-based organizations (CBOs).

These CBOs work to protect the rights of the migrant workers and implement activities in conformity with the demand of the community. BRAC helps in building the capacity of the CBOs at the initial stage. The CBOs subsequently come up with innovative ideas to address the needs of the migrant workers. This grassroots-level work helps people in their decision to work in other countries. The program collaborates with existing CBOs and also facilitates the establishment of new CBOs.

Being local organizations, CBOs can identify the problems of the community members more profoundly. As a result, there is greater acceptance of the CBOs by the people.

The CBOs act as Migration Resource Centers in the community, a reliable source of information needed by potential migrant workers, migrant workers and their family members. The most significant task of the CBOs is to provide timely and accurate information to the migrant workers and their family members. Under the program, CBOs provide monthly, quarterly and annual reports to the respective SMFCs in their areas. They also conduct workshops, arrange for advocacy and awareness-building activities at the district level.

Other than uniting people in the community, the CBOs contribute in protecting the rights of migrant workers and managing different types of services coming from responsible government authorities and service agencies. They can help recover money through social arbitration at the local level.

The CBOs provide services to people in the community by responding to their demand. They can act to secure the dignity of the migrant workers. These organizations can link up the victims seeking services to legal aid authority or any other person/ organization having opportunity to work for the migrant workers. The CBOs can act as key organization at the community level to protect the human rights of the migrant workers and their family members.

Shared responsibilities in protecting the rights of Bangladeshi migrants

There is an urgent need for better policies and practices on protection measures that ensure the well-being and dignity of the Bangladeshi migrant workers and family members. The National Alliance for Migrants' Rights Bangladesh (NAMR, B) is a dynamic national network working for the protection of the rights of migrant workers and their families in Bangladesh. It brings together civil society organizations, community organizations, media organizations and journalists to advocate for the rights of migrant workers in Bangladesh.

NAMR, B started in 2010 with the aim of protecting the rights of migrants and creating a platform for the Bangladeshi civil society organizations to support migrant workers. NAMR, B is working together with existing civil society organizations to advocate nationally, regionally and globally for migrant workers' rights, policies and practices.

In 2014, NAMR, B undertook significant steps for policy advocacy endeavors. In March 2014 the alliance organized a consultation on "Way forward to collective efforts for protecting migrant workers' safety and rights." This consultation focused on media report on the violation of rights, risk and hazards of Bangladeshi migrant workers at the destination countries.

In June 2014, the alliance organized a national level consultation titled "Kafala violating migrant rights: Can FIFA help to abolish?" The consultation advocated for the protection of migrant workers through FIFA since Qatar was selected as the host for FIFA World Cup 2022. Speakers at the consultation advocated for the protection of the migrant workers in the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) through FIFA and other international organizations so that they could force the GCC countries to abolish the maleficent *Kafala* system[14] existing in those countries.

In August 2014 NAMR, B raised voice to demand justice for the victims of the Greece shooting incident. The alliance organized a press conference at the National Press Club titled "Greece verdict should be reviewed." It demanded a commitment from Greece to review the court decision acquitting the Greek farmers of human trafficking.[16] It also demanded that Greece ratify the 1990 Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

NAMR, B is planning to set a new advocacy agenda for the next five years. It will focus on skills development and reforming the migrant worker recruitment industry; reintegration of the returnee migrant workers; imple-

mentation of the Overseas Employment and Migrant Act – 2013 and protection of migrant workers' rights. BRAC acts as the secretariat of NAMR,B at present.[15]

BRAC's Social Enterprise

BRAC realizes that merely providing information is not enough to make migration safe for the migrant workers. Therefore, BRAC has now launched migration support enterprises in three migrant worker-prone districts where a full 360-degree service - starting from information, language training, and skilling and job placement services - is being provided for a fee. The goal is to reduce the cost and increase the quality of migration.

This migration support enterprise (MSEP) is providing various services. These include visa checking, providing migration information pack, migration counselling, general pre-departure training, country specific pre-departure training, life skills training, trade specific training, direct referrals for overseas job placement, counselling for returnee migrant workers, and entrepreneurship training. These services will enable migrant workers to reduce their dependence on *dalals,* which will result in reducing the number of failed migration, migration cost, harassment and fraud. The MSEP is designed to become a self-sustaining system in the coming years. This sustainable approach will create a lasting source of authentic and timely support service base for the migrant workers and their family members near their locality. The program has also established language and training centers at *upazila* (sub-district) level. These training centers are providing pre-decision orientations, language training, and visa checking and life skills training. They are ensuring the improvement of language and communication skills of the migrant workers, provide basic information and education, and reduce their vulnerability by reducing their dependence on *dalals* and other informal sources.

These service bases are expected to reduce harassment and vulnerabilities, and ensure safe and quality migration by providing authentic, reliable and timely support. This pay-per-service approach will also ensure the continuation of service for protecting the rights of migrant workers.

In areas where MSEP does not exist, the program is implemented. MSEP is an integral part of the program that is launched in areas that are ready for services that can be provided for a minimal fee.

Concluding Remarks

Labor migration is one of the major tools that Bangladesh employs to eliminate poverty. But the ill motives of some people turned labor migration into a risky enterprise. It is essential that the Bangladeshi migrant workers are provided a comprehensive package of information and services that is needed before leaving Bangladesh and useful while working in their country of destination. The migration program of BRAC plays a crucial role as a lighthouse for the migrant workers toward a safe and secure migration journey.

Endnotes

1 Bangladesh: Some Selected Statistics, Appendix 3, Annual Report 2016-2017, Bangladesh Bank, page 267, www.bb.org.bd/pub/annual/anreport/ar1617/app03.pdf.

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3 Demographic dividend, United Nations Population Fund, www.unfpa.org/demographic-dividend.

4 Cited by Abdullah Al Mahmud Shohag, "Demographic dividend: Reality and possibility for Bangladesh," *The Independent,* 22 August 2015, www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/12596.

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7 International Labour Organization (International Institute for Labour Studies), *Bangladesh Seeking Better Employment Conditions for Better Socioeconomic Outcomes,* 2013, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_229105.pdf.

8 Soft skill: Life skill, pre-departure skill, language skill

9 Hard skill: Trade-based skill.

10 Mohammad Rafi Hasanur Rahman, "Popular Theatre and BRAC," Research Monograph Series No. 40, August 2009, BRAC, page 6, http://research.brac.net/monographs/monograph_40.pdf.

11 Ibid, Rahman, pages 8 - 9.

12 BRAC/World Bank, Promoting safe migration through innovation, December 2016, www.brac.net/sites/default/files/portals/Safe_Migration_through_Innovation_December_2016.pdf.

13 Note 11 of the study: "The Homecoming – Profiling the returning migrant workers of Bangladesh, ILO, MoEWOE."

14 Under the *Kafala* system a migrant worker's immigration status is legally bound to an individual employer or sponsor *(kafeel)* for their contract period. The migrant worker cannot enter the country, transfer employment nor leave the country for any reason without first obtaining explicit written permission from the *kafeel*. The worker must be sponsored by a *kafeel* in order to enter the destination country and remains tied to this *kafeel* throughout their stay. The *kafeel* must report to the immigration authorities if the migrant worker leaves their employment and must ensure the worker leaves the country after the contract ends, including paying for the flight home. Often the *kafeel* exerts further control over the migrant worker by confiscating their passport and travel documents, despite legislation in some destination countries that declares this practice illegal." Migrant Forum Asia, Policy Brief No. 2: REFORM OF THE KAFALA (SPONSORSHIP) SYSTEM, www.ilo.org/dyn/migpractice/docs/132/PB2.pdf.

15 Visit NAMR,B website for more information: http://namrb.net/.

16 Forty-two Bangladeshi workers filed an application with the European Court of Human Rights (Chowdury and Others v. Greece [application no. 21884/15]) against the Greek government for failing to protect them from human trafficking. The court ruled that the "Bangladeshis were subjected to forced labour and did not receive effective protection from the Greek State" which violated the European Convention on Human Rights provision on "prohibition of forced labour" (Article 4 §2). The workers were also awarded compensation ranging from 12,000 to 16,000 Euro each. See "Greece: Human rights court awards €576,000 to forced labour migrant strawberry-pickers," European Convention of Human Rights, 30 March 2017, www.humanrightseurope.org/2017/03/greece-forced- labour-undocumented- migrant-strawberry-pickers-win- human-rights- complaint/.

Human Rights Education in Myanmar (Burma)

Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)

Following the peaceful, student-led uprisings in 1988, many activists were arrested and subjected to long, harsh prison sentences. The Saffron Revolution in 2007, led by Buddhist monks, saw hundreds of thousands of people protesting the regime and a huge increase in the number of political prisoners. From the one-party state under the Burmese Socialist Party Program (BSPP) to the military dictatorship of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), later the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), and finally to the military-backed government of Thein Sein — opposition groups struggled in a landscape dominated by the regime. Due to this intolerance, journalists, political activists, ethnic nationalists, and human rights defenders risked imprisonment because of their political beliefs and activities. They would not only be handed down harsh sentences, but also treated badly while in detention. Torture continues to be a common occurrence during interrogation to elicit false confessions and individuals can be imprisoned in remote locations, far away from their families, making family visitation difficult.

In 2011, the nominally civilian Thein Sein administration initiated a series of political prisoner releases. One major release of hundreds of political prisoners on 13 January 2012 was considered a watershed in Burma's democratic aspirations. In one fell swoop, a high proportion of prominent activists such as 88 Generation leaders (Min Ko Naing and Ko Ko Gyi), Journalists (Zaw Htet Htwe and Hla Hla Win), Monk leader (U Gambira), and Shan ethnic leader (Khun Htun Oo), were also released. While the releases of political prisoners were celebrated, they were released into an environment that repressed basic civil and political liberties; where the threat of re-arrest was ever present.

Burma continued to be institutionally dominated by the military, brutally repressing the democratic opposition until November 2015 when Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), won the general elections in a landslide victory, resulting in the first democratically-elected civilian government in half a century. The NLD officially took power in March 2016 with the inauguration of President U Htin Kyaw. Aung

San Suu Kyi was unable to take the official party title of "President" due to stipulations outlined in the military drafted 2008 Constitution.

The new democratic government has presented new opportunities for legislative and policy reform and even some hope for the political prisoners' situation. On 17-18 April 2016, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and President U Htin Kyaw respectively granted mass amnesty to a total of one hundred ninety-eight political prisoners across the two days. However, despite promises to release all remaining political prisoners, lobbying and campaigning for the release of hundreds of incarcerated individuals continue. There are still arrests, detentions, denial of bail, and harsh prosecutions of those who exercise their right to freedom of expression and for publicly criticizing or challenging the policies and actions of the government, the military, and its officials. People accused of committing these crimes are also frequently charged under a combination of these laws, resulting in even more severe and lengthy sentences. Individuals arrested and charged with these offences are rarely granted bail and are often held in prison for months awaiting trial.

Assistance Association for Political Prisoners

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) was founded on 23 March 2000, the 11th anniversary of the arrest of Min Ko Naing, a student leader and prominent figure during the 1988 uprising who spent nineteen years in prison for his political activism. From 2000 to the present, AAPP has its headquarters in Mae Sot, Thailand, due to the exile of most AAPP team members. AAPP has successfully adapted to the on-going political transformations within Burma. Since 2012, the Burmese government has released a great number of political prisoners, and most of the former political prisoners involved with AAPP have now been removed from the government's blacklist, which allowed it to open another office in Rangoon. As such, AAPP saw an opportunity to further develop efficient nation-wide assistance programs to meet the needs of those released from prison.

In 2013, AAPP helped secure the release of a total of three hundred eighty political prisoners.

AAPP was a key member of the Committee for Scrutinizing the Remaining Political Prisoners (CSRPP) of the government since its formation in January 2013 until its disbandment at the beginning of 2015. Despite AAPP's dedication and central role in the CSRPP, the government chose

to exclude AAPP from the new body, the Prisoners of Conscience Affairs Committee, formed in January 2015. AAPP continues to campaign for the release of all remaining political prisoners. In 2018, despite promises from the NLD to release all remaining political prisoners, AAPP still holds records of sentenced and incarcerated political prisoners, and hundreds of individuals awaiting trial for politically motivated actions.

As long as political prisoners exist inside Burma, the country will not be free. They represent the struggle for democracy, human rights, equality, and freedom for the people of Burma. This makes the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners an integral part of Burma's transition to democracy and the drive for national reconciliation.

Core Activities

As core activities, AAPP

- Provides humanitarian assistance and vocational/educational training to current and former political prisoners and their families,
- Offers mental health counselling services through the Mental Health Assistance Program (MHAP) to current and former political prisoners, their family members, and members of the general population, and training community-based organizations (CBOs) in mental health counselling,
- Promotes and protects human rights by delivering human rights awareness sessions to students in Government State High Schools and Universities as well as training on human rights, human rights documentation, and transitional justice to civil society organizations (CSOs), lawmakers, and the public in Burma to increase the capacity of these stakeholders to protect human, civil, and political rights,
- Monitors and documents political prisoner cases, prison conditions, and violations of human rights,
- Publishes reports related to political prisoner issues based on trends identified through monitoring and documentation as well as translations of international human rights treaties,
- Collaborates with civil society organizations (CSOs), governments, and international organizations on prison reform as well as institu-

tional, legislative, and policy reforms relating to civil and political rights, and

- Advocates for the amendment/repeal of repressive laws and lobby the government to sign and ratify international human rights treaties.

AAPP is widely recognized as a reliable and credible source of information on Burmese political prisoner issues by the United Nations, foreign governments, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and respected media outlets around the world.

Human Rights, Human Rights Documentation, and Transitional Justice Training

AAPP provides training on human rights, human rights documentation, and transitional justice to former political prisoners, members of political parties including the NLD, Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), regional parliaments, activists, and other stakeholders in the human rights arena to protect and promote human rights. AAPP firmly believes that a strong knowledge of human rights is necessary for protecting human rights. The training provides participants with a firm knowledge of human rights and citizenship rights and responsibilities. One major benefit of the training is that it creates an oversight body among civil society members, as they are able to monitor human rights violations in their area. Furthermore, increasing lawmakers' knowledge of human rights facilitates the amendment and review of legislation in line with international human rights standards.

Structure of Training Program

Each training session generally lasts for eleven days, six days on human rights and human rights documentation, and five days on transitional justice. The main aim of the human rights training is raising awareness of human rights issues. At the beginning of the training, participants are asked about their expectations of the training and their understanding of human rights. Next, they are taught about basic human rights, concepts including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the history of human rights. They analyze human rights violations, particularly those perpetrated by the Burmese government, and how to monitor, document, and

prevent them. Group discussions give participants the chance to actively take part and reflect upon their own knowledge and understanding of human rights concepts. Participants also get the opportunity to familiarize themselves with civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights in comparison to the UDHR. All contents of the training are taught in relation to the Burmese context, the 2008 Constitution and its National Human Rights Commission Law to make the participants develop ideas on how to improve the human rights situation in Burma.

The transitional justice training helps participants gain an understanding of the theory and concepts behind transitional justice. They learn that transitional justice is not about revenge, but about reparation, truth, justice, and institutional reform. Additionally, they learn about the importance of the documentation process and the need for practical and systematic information gathering. Case studies and lessons learned from transitional justice mechanisms in other contexts are provided to illustrate the application of these theories.

As part of the series of regular trainings on Transitional Justice, AAPP held one long training in October 2017. An eleven-day training (4-14 October 2017) was organized in Bhamaw Township, Kachin State. The training was administered by AAPPS Human Rights Trainer, Ma Zun Pan, and Human Rights Documentation and Transitional Justice Trainer, Ko Kyaw Oo. A total of twenty-eight people including seventeen females and eleven males from Good Hope Foundation, Buga Ning Shaung, and 88 Thway Tit participated in the training. The students were from Burmese, Shan-Kachin, and Kachin backgrounds. This region faces issues with land confiscation and arbitrary detention.

Advanced Training Session

AAPP holds two advanced training sessions per year. The advanced training session serves as a capacity-building measure, aiming to enable the participants to act using the democratic system. In 2017, two advanced training sessions were held in May Myo, Mandalay Division, and Thanbyuzayat Mon State. The participants were given in-depth details of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the 2008 Constitution. Participants included former political prisoners, ethnic youth, and repre-

sentatives of civil society organizations. Participants for advanced trainings are identified during the prior training sessions that they attended.

On 9-20 November 2017, a twelve-day advanced training session was held in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State. The training was administered by AAPP Human Rights Trainer, Ko Saw Than Hlaing, and Human Rights, Human Rights Documentation and Transitional Justice Trainer, Ko Sai Myint Thu. Twenty-two participants including thirteen females and nine males from AAPP, NLD, Human Rights Foundation of Mon Land (HURFOM), Network for Social Development Peace (NSDP), Mon Youth Organization (MYO), Dawei Women Union, Karen Student Union, Youth Network, Kyone Doe Youth Network, Aung Lan Youth Network, Yesagyo Youth Network, A Nyar Myay Peace Network, Lann Pya Kyal Sin, Mar Ga Youth, and Rays of Lights Organizations attended the training sessions.

Expansion of the Training Program

Since AAPP started to provide the trainings in 2014, they have rapidly gained momentum. The Human Rights and Transitional Justice trainings have been requested in different townships and by a range of different participants. Responding to this demand, AAPP expanded the reach of the trainings to different states and divisions and adapted the training programs to suit the needs of different participants.

Training in Mawlamyine township, Mon State.

(Above and below) Advanced training at Asia Light Monastery, Pyin-oo-lwin Township.

Originally, the intent of these training sessions was to provide former political prisoners with skills and expertise to allow them to reintegrate back into society and become valued and confident members of the community once again. However, the success of AAPP trainings resulted in expansion to new groups of participants. Based initially on word of mouth from former

participants, the news of AAPP trainings spread to ethnic youth, various political party members, civil society organizations, and members of ethnic armed organizations. They approached AAPP to join the training, and AAPP, recognizing the opportunity and importance of including these groups into the trainings, began to include a wider demographic of individuals in the program.

Table 1 details the locations and dates of trainings across 2017. Originally these trainings were only conducted in Mandalay, but AAPP now conducts these trainings over nine states and divisions. AAPPs ability to expand like this was due to the increased demand for trainings coupled with a strong relationship with regional governments and Members of Parliament (MPs) who allowed AAPP to conduct trainings in these areas without fear of consequences.

Table 1. 2017 Human Rights, Human Rights Documentation, and Transitional Justice Trainings

Location	Date
Yenanyoung Township, Magwe Division	January 6-16
Myitkyina Township, Kachin State	January 16-26
Mogoung Township, Kachin State	January 31 – February 9
Budalin Township, Sagaing Division	February 16-27
Palaw Township, Tenasserim Division	March 7-18
Tamu Township, Sagaing Division	March 16-26
Thahton Township, Mon State	March 20-31
Bilin, Mon State	April 1-11
Downtown Kalay, Sagaing Division	April 20-30
Ma Mone Kai, Kachin State	May 3-13
Kyaington, Shan state	May 7-17
Tachilaik, Shan State	May 19-30
Hpa-an, Karen State	June 3-14
Kyaukme, Shan State	June 9-19
Kwakeirik, Karen State	June 16-26
Thandwe, Arakan State	August 13-24
Salin, Magway Division	August 16-26
Yesagyo, Magwe Division	September 6-16
Zayarwaddy, Eastern Bago	September 24-29
Bamaw, Kachin State	October 4-14
Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State	November 9-20
Taunggyi City, Shan State	December 12-16

Human Rights Lectures

Under the military-backed regime of U Thein Sein, it was impossible to conduct human rights lectures in government schools. Under the new NLD government, the influence of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and AAPP's relationship with many Members of Parliament and lawmakers, AAPP have been able to hold human rights lectures in government-run schools.

The government still does not have any policy in place to teach human rights. Using Thailand as an example to show the disparities between Burma and other ASEAN nations, Thai students are introduced to human rights in grade 7. In Burma, only law students learn about the subject and even then, only in their third year of university. This lack of information extends to teachers as well – it is not just that human rights are not being taught in schools, but that the lack of knowledge about the topic is true throughout the country and across all ages.

AAPP wants to teach students and teachers their own rights, but also their responsibility to abide by the law and protect others' rights. This initiative is an awareness campaign, with the aim of raising awareness to not only teachers and students, but also stakeholders and policymakers. The lectures, focusing on human rights generally (including teaching the UDHR) and child rights, are acting as a direct message to the government on the importance of including human rights in school curriculums nationwide. The lectures were first held in eight state schools in the Yangon Region and three state schools in Bago in 2016. The provision of lectures expanded widely in 2017, from eleven to seventy-two schools, after gaining permission from the region's chief minister and the Ministry of Education.[1] AAPP streams the lectures on social media, and report on them monthly in the newsletter. Coupled with the success of the activities and word of mouth from participating schools, the demand from other regions and states increased. Due to its strong relationships with regional governments and MPs, AAPP was able to accommodate the increased demand, and expand the program.

According to Pyay Township Education Officer, Daw Mar Mar Zin, "The human rights introduction program is starting in the schools [in] our town under an agreement [with] the Government and the Education Ministry in Pyay"[2]

As reported in *The Irrawaddy* online newspaper, AAPP's two-hour curriculum introduces the UDHR and the Convention on the Rights of the Child

with cartoons, videos, talks, and insights from human rights educators and activists.

Quoting the head of AAPP's Rangoon Office, Ko Aung Myo Kyaw,[3]

> We aim to acknowledge respect for each other's human rights and fundamental freedoms for the students.

The news article continued to explain that anywhere from one hundred to seven hundred students joined the training sessions at each school. The program began on 1 August 2017 and concluded on 30 September 2017. AAPP visited the Taung Gyi and Monywa districts to check on the progress of participants and instructors.

Ko Aung Myo Kyaw added,

> We found out that even the teachers didn't clearly know what human rights were. They were also actively interested in program, and they asked for a CD and training [guidance] for further teaching in the classes. Some requested that we talk about responsibilities as well in the topics. We are glad to get this chance as a discussion for promoting human rights.

In 2017, AAPP conducted one hundred fifty-eight lectures across Bago, Rangoon, Irrawaddy, Magwe, Sagaing, and Tenesserim Divisions, and Shan and Chin States reaching approximately 57,000 individuals. See Table 2 for the details of the human rights lectures held.

Table 2. Human Rights Lectures

Month	Location	Number of Lectures	Number of Participants
January	Rangoon Division Bago Division Irrawaddy Division	16	6,000+
February	Magwe Division Mon State	3	2,000+
March	Tenesserim Division Sagaing Division, Mon State Chin State	13	4,000+
April	Shan State	7	700+

May	Bago Division Rangoon Division Mon State	7	400+
June	Bago Division	1	700+
July	N/A	N/A	N/A
August	Bago Division Rangoon Division	35	Approx. 12,748
September	Bago Division	30	14,503+
October	Bago Division	13	4,101+
November	Shan State	26	9,394+
December	Bago Division	7	2,340+

Human Rights Awareness Teaching and Learning Materials

To make these trainings as effective, digestible, and informative as possible, AAPP use visual aids. AAPP created informative UDHR posters which are displayed around the training locations and, in conjunction with Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB), UDHR booklets. AAPP provide to participants the local language version of the UDHR translated by HREIB. AAPP looks to expanding its trainings and once accomplished it will begin to produce training materials in ethnic languages to reach more people than before.

Basic Education High School (1), Bago Township.

Basic Education High School (1), Thingangyun Township.

Computer University (Taungoo), Taungoo Township.

What Have We Learned?

It is clear that the training has had an immense impact on participants. Participant feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Many participants expressed the need for more training in their area. Further testament to the impact of the training was an invitation to AAPP from the Chairperson of Irrawaddy Regional Parliament to hold a workshop in the Regional Parliament in Pathein, Irrawaddy Division. This was the first opportunity for AAPP to work with the Regional Parliament. Over the three days of training, the participants learned about human rights, the UDHR and other conventions, democracy, the role of government, and how to apply these ideas in the context of Burma.

Aside from providing participants with valuable skills and knowledge about human rights and transitional justice, the training programs provide insight into the different human rights violations affecting the different regions of Burma, provide training and advice to human rights defenders on how they can be documented and their issues adequately addressed.

The sessions are particularly valuable in helping to reform the political environment in Burma. They not only allow for more comprehensive documentation of human rights violations throughout the country, but also allow civil society to better engage in discussions involving transitional justice mechanisms and facilitate their engagement in the national reconciliation process.

The training program and human rights lectures are two of AAPP's key activities. AAPP are aware that training and educating the whole country is a huge goal. While AAPP welcomes any and all to its activities, it targets change makers including the members of the civil society and law/policy-makers for the trainings, and students and the next generation (as they will constitute the future) for the human rights lectures. Both these activities are projects that will not come to an end any time soon. They are much-needed, essential projects that the people of Burma deserve to have access to after sixty years of authoritarian control. AAPP will continue advocating for the unconditional release of political prisoners until there are none left, as while one individual is imprisoned for political reasons, Burma cannot be free. It will continue fighting for human, civil, and political rights until Burma reaches true democracy; and if and when this is achieved, it will continue working towards nationwide human rights education.

Endnotes

1 Thu Thu Aung, "Human Rights Program Launches in High Schools," The Irrawaddy, 24 August 2017 Yangon, www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/human-rights-program-launches-high-schools.html.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

Human Rights and Contemporary Indian Journalism: Towards a "Journalism for People"

Gopalan Ravindran

In 2018, India remains an incredible nation, in its positive and negative planes of existence. In India, forces of modernity are struggling to make their presence felt in the face of the continued supremacy of the forces of tradition. In contemporary India, forces of feudalism are working overtime to prevent the forces of progress and development to succeed. This peculiar condition of a nation that prides itself as the largest democracy also makes it a land of a million inequalities. Inequalities are the antithesis of the fundamental rights guaranteed in the Indian Constitution. How to grapple with this situation where a modern nation is also unable to work against the forces which seek to make it either less modern or more feudal, at least, in terms of ideas? How to facilitate media and society interfaces, particularly the site of journalism, in this task? Is there a way ahead, at least from the perspective of a journalism teacher/professor? These are the questions the present article focuses on to provide an understanding of the state of affairs concerning the domains of Indian journalism, journalism education/training and human rights.

Indian journalism, like the nation, remains a peculiar entity. One needs to look at this institution critically. There is a dire need to look critically at human rights, fundamental rights and how they are promoted or not promoted by the supposedly democratic pillars of a modern state. It is obvious that if we want to change something like our society or nation, firstly, we must come clean in our individual roles as family members, citizens and public servants.

In 2018, there is no single site of contestations against modernity and progress; there are many hidden sites which make social, cultural, political and economic progress problematic. One of the sites, which collaborates with the site of politics in rendering the meaning of progress and development of a modern state like India problematic and challenging, is Indian journalism. Like the Indian society, Indian journalism is a feudalistic enterprise and anti-modern, despite its use of modern media technologies

in print, television, radio, internet, mobile phone, and other mediums and its origins in the Western/colonial contexts. This may be read as a harsh comment, but if one gets to engage with contemporary Indian journalism's engagements or lack of it with the issues of social inequalities and human rights violations, even without the help of scientific tools of research such as content analysis, one would be shocked to realize the role of Indian journalism as a promoter of social inequalities and human rights violations.

We are a nation where hype scores and scores more even as truth becomes hidden, but does not get erased or buried for long. For instance, any one who reads India's English newspapers or watches its television programs or films would get the impression that India is colorful, modern, progressing and "incredible," as the nation's tourism slogan proclaims. But this does not tell the entire story or truth. This does not tell the sufferings, agonies and suppression of its rural and urban poor or its marginalized communities or its women and children. Why? The answer is Indian media and journalism are as casteist as any other social institution and as corporatized as any other modern business enterprise. Indian media are owned by the upper castes and do not have on their payroll journalists from lower castes such as *Dalits* in any significant number. Moreover, Indian media/journalism is also a class enterprise, owned by the upper crust of the society and serviced for/by the middle class, against the marginalized and excluded classes of society. The feudal and class parameters of ownership of media promotes human rights violations and social inequalities.

This is not to deny the role of individual journalists working for Indian media or newspapers in promoting social equality, progress or human rights. They may be right thinking and responsible individuals. But they exist more as the helpless worker portrayed brilliantly by Charlie Chaplin in his 1936 film, *Modern Times.* They are caught in the crushing wheels of the social logic of Indian journalism (casteism), the political logic of supporting the party in power and the business logic of corporatization of journalism.

Every age gets its journalistic dues as well as its dues of inequalities and human rights. Every age also becomes instructive about what to do and what not to do in the sphere of journalism. What are the lessons for contemporary Indian journalism as regards human rights and the scope for its promotion through journalism.

When Indian journalism was born in the efforts of James Augustus Hicky, an Irishman, who was annoyed with the inequalities and violations

of human rights among the British living in Calcutta of 18th century, he was raring to go as a voice against Warren Hastings, the Governor General and his "corrupt" wife, Marian Hastings, through the medium of newspaper. His newspaper, *Hicky's Bengal Gazette* or *Calcutta General Advertiser,* started in January 1780, is normally cited as the first newspaper of India. *Bengal Gazette,* must be seen as the first ever attempt in India that used the medium of print to rebel against social inequality and human rights violations, even though both Hicky and Warren Hastings were fighting against each other, not as natives, but as British subjects of the East India Company's version of colonialism in India.

When Hicky started his newspaper, he had no direct conflict with the forces of corruption, his problems started when he was asked to pay bribe to the Governor General's wife for using the postal services to distribute his paper, in the face of what Hicky felt as the partisan attitude of East India Company officials to favor his rival newspaper, *The India Gazette,* which was started later. Hicky protested, ran a campaign against the inequality he suffered, worked against the violation of his right to free expression and the corruption in the establishment. He was jailed, but he continued to publish his paper from jail. His press was seized in 1782, forcing him to give up his right to express his views through the medium of print. He became poverty stricken after his release in 1784 and died en route to China in 1802.

What are the lessons here for contemporary Indian journalism and the sphere of human rights? Hicky's kind of journalism may be read as an ideal version where there was no source of inspiration other than his individual wish to fight corruption, secure his right to express freely and fight against inequality in the then East India Company social circles in Calcutta. There was no institutional framework for the first journalist of India. He was the *institution.* He was the moral arbiter. He was the reporter. He was the editor. He was the owner. He was the one-person army against public corruption made possible by the greed of the beneficiaries of the globalization of the East India Company's colonialism.

We cannot have Hickys today for obvious reasons. Contemporary Indian journalism is governed by its institutional framework where the likes of Hickys have no place. Because much water has flown down the decades and centuries since the fire of journalism was extinguished in steps and stages since the times of Hicky. The last time when Indian journalism was made to fight against the powers that be before extinguishing itself was during the

periods of India's national emergency (1975-1977) and the post-emergency period of 1980s. The 1990s and 2000s brought about the signs of death of journalism, as we knew it earlier, and ushered in the phase of corporatized and "journalism as a business only enterprise."

If one goes through the pages of the Indian newspapers and magazines published during 1970s and 1980s and compare them with that of contemporary pages of Indian journalism, one would realize the enormity of the crisis ushered in by the institution of journalism in collaboration with the forces of corporatized politics, lawmaking and judiciary. This means that all the four pillars of democracy are working against the spirit of the Indian Constitution which seeks to promote human rights as fundamental rights and fundamental rights as human rights. This is not a brazen comment again. One would agree with this comment, if one cares to examine the acts of these four pillars in the recent past.

Silence of Mainstream Media on Issues of the Marginalized

In the pages of contemporary Indian newspapers there is silence that smacks of silence in funeral processions on matters where religious fundamentalism in the name of right-wing politics has taken a toll on the lives of the minorities, marginalized and the oppressed sections of Indian society. The conventional definition of who is a minority, marginalized and oppressed is thrown out in favor of a new liberal definition where the ruling block defines its versions of minorities, marginalized and the oppressed. Here is the case of an oppressor defining the site of its target, the oppressed. The oppressed becomes a non-subject in the corporatized discourses of Indian journalism. The oppressed are the people who are at the receiving end in the face of draconian and shortsighted policies of the current Indian government regarding *demonetization* (when on the night of 8 November 2016, the Indian government announced that 500 and 1,000 Indian Rupee notes were not valid any longer) and the start of *Aadhaar* card system, originally meant as a tool of proving a citizen's identity but progressed as a site of violation of privacy rights of citizens and a state surveillance system. The growing attacks on the food cultures of the majority as well as the minorities, by the cow vigilantes, is also a cause for concern, not for Indian media or its journalists, but for the activists and the families of the people who were/are killed in the name of

protection of cows as sacred animals by the workers of right-wing *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP) and its affiliates.

The conventional Western logic measures the relationship between human rights violations and the right to free expression by media in terms of the number of journalists who get killed in a country or the number of journalists who get arrested in a country. This article argues that we need to suspend this logic or avoid this logic in the Indian case, where the number of ordinary people who got killed in the wake of the failures of the pillars of the democracy are hundred/thousand times more than the number of journalists killed for the cause of protection of human rights, free speech and social inequality.

"Journalism for People" Project

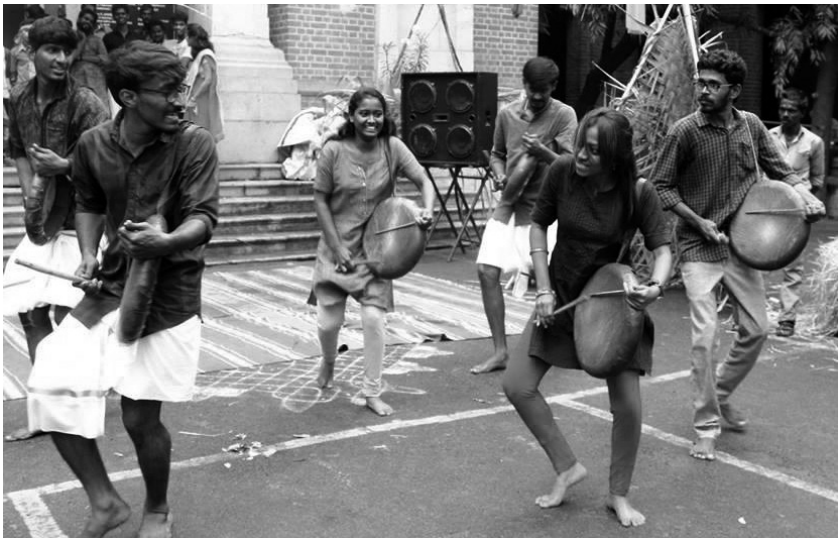
Let us move on with the possibilities of rescuing Indian journalism from its bed of death. One small step forward initiated in 2015 in University of Madras' Department of Journalism and Communication was the non-institutionalized project, "Journalism for People." This project seeks to put the minorities, marginalized and the oppressed back on the agenda of journalism as a people-driven framework, even as it seeks to strengthen the linkages between freedom of expression and human rights as integral domains of Indian journalism. This project seeks to cultivate an anti-thesis of Indian journalism which has erased the people from its domain and brought in political and corporate vested interests as the primary definers of news. This project seeks to leverage people as the definer of news and journalism.

This project also seeks to address the failures of the corporatized and alienated journalism. It is no secret that the mainstream media are not including ordinary people and their struggles in their news agenda. "Journalism for People" is conceptualized as an ideological and pragmatic counter to the contemporary trajectories of Indian journalism's multiple avatars - "Journalism for Corporates," "Journalism for the Middle Class", "Journalism for the Government" and "Journalism for Politicians."

At present, masters' students of journalism at the University of Madras are working with people and children of fifteen marginalized communities in Tamil Nadu to drive home the need for a people-centric journalistic and human rights approach to resolve their issues and express themselves, without depending on mainstream newspapers and media.

The "Journalism for People" project seeks to transform the children of marginalized people as future journalists. "Journalism for People" project hopes to help the children of marginalized people to become journalism students, journalists, film makers, poets, short story writers, novelists, photographers, artists etc., "Journalism for People" project will be a change agent for the future generations of the marginalized communities in Tamil Nadu. This project is driven by the passion of the members of the theater and folk arts group, *Muttram* (Courtyard), which seeks to leverage folk and theater arts for the cause of human rights awareness and people-centric journalistic practices. *Muttram* was established on 25 November 2009 as a "Class outside Class" to leverage the communication and journalistic skills of students through folk and theater arts, outside the framework of a time-table- and mark-driven journalism classroom.

Photo shows Muttram members performing on 10 January 2018 during the harvest festival program with *Parai*, a leather drum associated with *Dalits*, which is being leveraged as a tool of empowerment against casteism by journalism students of the University of Madras in the courtyard of the university, which is normally used for parking cars.



"Journalism for People" is driven by the passion and commitment of a group of teachers and student volunteers of the Department of Journalism and Communication, University of Madras, who want to bring alive the journalistic and communication talents of the school children of marginalized communities in Tamil Nadu over a period of the next five years.

Workshops

Muttram's first "Journalism for People" activity, the first field workshop, had good innings for three days during 15 – 17 September 2015 in the villages of the tribal people of Yelagiri, a picturesque hilly region on the Eastern Ghats in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Yelagiri is 228 kilometers from Chennai. There are fourteen villages in Yelagiri. We decided to embark on the first "Journalism for People" journey to Yelagiri for the reason that tribal people were the ones who figure high on the scale of marginalization as per the 2011 census, assuming literacy as one parameter of development. The literacy level of tribals in Tamil Nadu was 41.5 percent compared to the overall literacy level of 73.5 percent for Tamil Nadu. In a sense, as regards literacy, tribals in Tamil Nadu are marginalized or lagging behind other communities to the extent of 32.0 percent.[1] Illiteracy must be read as a barrier to human rights and people-centric journalism.

This figure supports our experience in the Department of Journalism and Communication with regard to the question of who enters the Masters' programs in journalism and communication at the University of Madras and who does not enter these programs. The ratio of tribal and non-tribal journalism students during the past five years defies computation as we have had only two tribal students from Tamil Nadu's thirty-six tribal communities (both from Eastern Ghats), one transgender and one student from Pazhaverkadu fishing region in comparison with scores of *Dalit* students, during the past five years. This is proof enough that marginalization has taken a toll on these communities as far as the prospects of higher education for the tribal children in Tamil Nadu is concerned.

This issue has not figured in any news story or editorial, to the best of our knowledge in the pages or airtime of Tamil/English newspapers and television channels in Tamil Nadu during the past five years. This is proof enough that the sphere of journalism in Tamil Nadu has failed to take notice of the backward state of the thirty-six tribal communities in Tamil Nadu

as regards literacy. This is also proof enough that their marginalized socio-economic realities are not seen as newsworthy by this sphere. Hence, these were reasons enough for the volunteers of the "Journalism for People" project to embark on the journey to transform the lives of the school children of Yelagiri villages as future journalists of their communities. They will be the change agents working with the tools of digital communication to work against the forces of marginalization in the years to come.

The members of Muttram employ street theater to create social awareness among adults and children in the communities where they have been conducting the "Journalism for People" workshops. Their plays also aim to cultivate and promote media literacy skills among children. For the past few years, the children of Karambai village (Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu) have been given orientation through street plays on the appropriate modes of engagements children should cultivate with media, media celebrities and mobile phones. The children and adults, more importantly, the local leaders of fisherfolk villages of Pazhaverkadu were made to introspect on the lives of the fisherfolk, particularly the womenfolk and youth, with the help of a street play titled, *Karuvadu* (Dry Fish). In Yelagiri, the village children were made to perform a street play in the village square on the threats to their education and their parents' lives by the policies of the central government. In all these cases, the children showed themselves as keen observers and ended up pleading with the members of Muttram not to leave them and would normally walk a few kilometers to bid adieu. The adults, particularly elders, would request the Muttram members to do more. In one instance, the village leader of Karambai took a seven-hundred-kilometer journey to the University of Madras to thank the professor and the Muttram members for their work in the village.

The members of Muttram are likewise learning from the experience of staging theater plays in the communities. Ms Krithika Srinivasan, who acted as Karuppi has this to say about the influence of Muttram in her life. She said that "Only Muttram gave me social awareness. That's where I could learn about casteism, feminism and the plight of the marginalized". She was not a journalism student. She was a sociology major student, but was accepted as a member of Muttram, in tune with the principle behind Muttram. Muttram is the courtyard in traditional Tamil architecture, where there is no ceiling and all the elements of nature enter the house. The courtyard is surrounded by pathways, where members of the joint family used to pick conversations

even as the sun light, air, rain water and smells of nature entered the house. Unfortunately, traditional houses with Muttram are fast being replaced with modern houses in Tamil Nadu.

Ms Krithika Srinivasan, who acted as Karuppi, with other students (from left to right: Ms Yazhini (II MA), Ms Karthikga (II MA) and Mr Salai (II MA)

Magazines and Other Results

It was heartwarming to see thirty-five students of the Department of Journalism and Communication, University of Madras, training the tribal children of Yelagiri villages the basics of reporting and writing from the con-

fines of their villages and schools. The number of journals made possible by the enthusiastic filing of reports by the children of Yelagiri villages exceeded our initial target of five issues of magazines. The workshop also provided several interesting sessions for the masters students of journalism to practice their writing and reporting skills in the verdant settings of Yelagiri villages and introspect on human rights issues affecting the tribals. The school children of these villages were inspired by our teachers and student volunteers to discover their native creative talents in the areas of poetry, theater, photography and journalism. The visit also provided opportunities for our budding young scholars to map the communication/spatial practices of villagers in Yelagiri.

Street workshops use any available space in urban poor places near Chennai, as in this case, a sitting bench in a small shop, as these poor neighborhoods do not have the same spatial advantages as rural villages.

Sukumar (above) and Kavithran (below) are PhD students in marginalized neighborhood of University of Madras, Lock Nagar. They are teaching journalistic skills. Kavithran was the first student to enter the one hundred sixty-year old University of Madras from Lock Nagar.

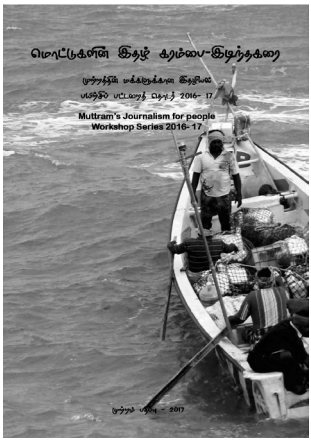
Sukumar (above) and Kavithran (below) are PhD students in marginalized neighborhood of University of Madras, Lock Nagar in December 2017. They are teaching journalistic skills. Kavithran was the first student to enter the one hundred sixty-year old University of Madras from Lock Nagar.

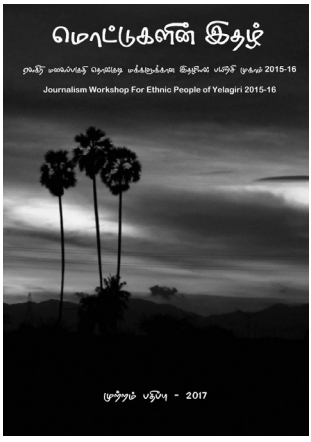
Masters students of journalism with the children of Koraikuppam village, Pazhaverkadu, Tamil Nadu, in a "Journalism for People" workshop in 2017.

(Opposite page, below, and above). The "Journalism for People" Workshop at Yelagiri Tribal Villages, Tamil Nadu in 2017.

The magazines brought out by the school children, with the support of the members of Muttram, are of two kinds: i) handwritten magazines; and ii) printed magazines. The former are released at the end of the "Journalism for People" workshops in the villages and the latter are the result of compilation, editing and printing of content that appeared in the handwritten versions. The content of these magazines reflect the children's views on issues regarding politics, elections, environment, family and, more importantly, their love for their villages. The drawings and photographs of the children are included in the magazines. In Idinthakarai, a fisherfolk village (Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu) that has been witnessing long running people's protests against a mega nuclear project at Kudankulam, which is within its neighborhood, the children's expressions in the printed magazine are mostly focused on the threats to their health and environment from the nuclear plant. In Karambai, a farmers' village (Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu), the children are more concerned about the drying up of village ponds and wells and water scarcity. Some of them are also appealing to their readers seeking financial support to help them continue their studies. For instance, the first page of the Karambai magazine has a note from A Suresh,

Std. V, "My father died after he was hit by a falling fertilizer bag. My mother is working as a daily wage earner. We are four in the family. Please help us to

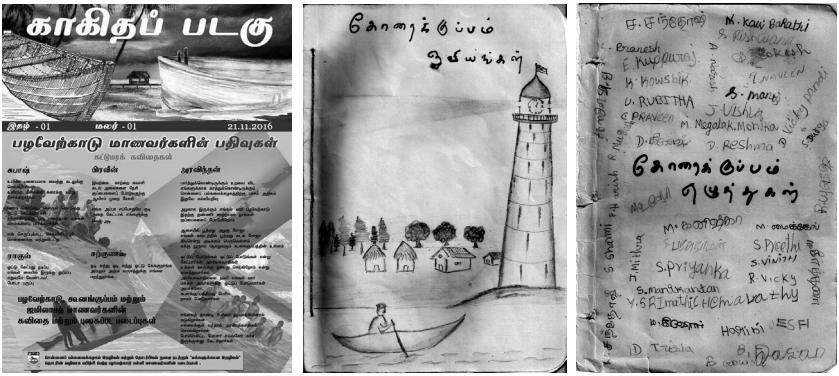




The covers of magazines brought out during the "Journalism for People" Workshop at Yelagiri Tribal Villages, Tamil Nadu. The first cover is titled "I am longing to become a Bird.

study. Please ..." In Yelagiri, children are evocative in relating to the beauty of their hilly environment.

In Pazhaverkadu, children of the fisherfolk are more politically aware and, like the children in other regions, are more concerned about their environment. The wall newspaper, *Paper Boat*, brought out by the children of Kunamkuppam village, Pazhaverkadu, Tamil Nadu on 21 November 2016 has hard hitting poetic content against electoral politics, particularly the deceptive acts by politicians against the poor. It included a poem by Rahul: "Seeking votes is acting. We have our oars. We do not want anything from



The wall newspaper, *Paper Boat* (left), brought out by the children of Kunamkuppam village, Pazhaverkadu, Tamil Nadu.The magazine, *Koraikuppam Letters and Art* (center and right), brought out by the children of Koraikuppam village, Pazhaverkadu, Tamil Nadu. The names of the children can be seen on the second cover.

you. Get Lost!" The children of Koraikuppam village, Pazhaverkadu, Tamil Nadu brought out the magazine, *Koraikuppam Letters and Art*, in 2017.

Close on the heels of the successful "Journalism for People" field work in the villages of Yelagiri, members of Muttram decided to work with children of the fisherfolk communities in Pazhaverkadu/Pulicat region, sixty kilometers north of Chennai. They have been working with the students of Kunamkuppam, Koraikuppam and Jameelabad villages, three of the more than thirty fisherfolk villages in the historic town of Pazhaverkadu/Pulicat. Pulicat figures in the work of *Ptolemy* as the ancient port and became famous when the Dutch set-up their trade post in this ancient port town in the 17th century. *Pulicat checks*/*Madras checks* became the prized textile export by the Dutch from Pulicat during their heydays of trade.

For nearly three months since 20 February 2016, every Saturday, members of Muttram were engaged in a workshop with a very meaningful format - teaching journalistic/communication skills to school children of Kunamkuppam, Koraikuppam and Jameelabad and instilling in them the need to continue their studies beyond school level. Muttram volunteers continued their workshop routines and field visits until 8 April 2016. Nearly fifty children were nurtured by the members of Muttram to discover their native talents (literary, visual, spoken, dramatic, etc.) through the media of poetry, photography, videography, short stories, storytelling, etc. The members of Muttram added areas from the marginalized neighborhoods of Chennai during 2017 for their field work.

Concluding Statement

The "Journalism for People" project is not only teaching journalism skills to the school children, but also creating human rights awareness with the hope that the next generation of Indian journalists would be more caring and concerned about the social inequalities and human rights violations in India and the failures of corporatized Indian journalism in addressing the same. This project believes that we cannot change the current crop of journalists and journalism. This initiative believes that we can change the mindset of the future practitioners of journalism and promoters of human rights.

Endnote

1 The gap in literacy rate between general population and tribal population as per 2011 census is available at the site of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India at http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=85918.

Human Rights Programs of Human Asia

SOH Changrok

Founded in January 2006, Human Asia is striving to establish an Asian regional human rights protection system and to realize a peaceful coexistence of the diverse cultures of Asia. In order to improve the human rights situation in Asia, Human Asia carries out human rights advocacy activities and campaigns, organizes field activities utilizing humanitarian aid, coordinates educational and training programs to nurture young human rights activists, and regularly publishes human rights reports. In July 2015, Human Asia became associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) that enabled it to collaborate with the UN Information Centers in the area of communications and outreach.

Human Rights Education Program

Human Asia offers a wide range of educational and training opportunities to support and train the youth (particularly teenagers), young adults, and human rights activists, and help them to acquire experience and knowledge of human rights situations in Asia. Valuing the youth who are ultimately leading the future, Human Asia believes that the youth are the ones who have to know their human rights, and take responsibility to protect themselves, their peers and their communities. Thus, Human Asia developed a series of human rights programs for different age groups and tailored to their level of understanding. The programs aim to raise awareness about the challenges faced in Asia, and to make them active in the cause of human rights.

Human Rights School for Teenagers

This program takes place once every spring and autumn with various human rights topics targeting lower and upper secondary students. Lectures on human rights and group activities allow the students to learn and share knowledge with peers. The three-hour classes are held in Korean language. Students who participate in this program are generally more interested in human rights than average peers, and likely to join every human rights class due to their interest on various topics being offered. Students are not only

able to learn contemporary human rights issues, but also engage in activities that promote equity, justice, and human dignity for all people.

The most recent human rights school for teenagers took place in September 2017. Titled "Women's Rights through Films," students learned the history of women's rights and how the rights of women were portrayed in current films. Topics on women's rights include suffrage, fight against discrimination and sexual abuse, and initiatives to realize women's rights. Students watched short clips of movies, expressed their thinking about the main theme or topic related to the movies, and listened to lectures related to the topics that arose in the movies. For example, students watched two- to three-minute movie clips of *Suffragette* (2015) and learned the meaning of women's suffrage followed by a discussion of the opposition to women's suffrage in the past. In discussing the fight against discrimination, some students brought up problems that they themselves witnessed inside classes or school. As a final activity, students presented their opinions discussed in small groups on movies assigned to them.

Human Rights School for Teenagers.

Global Human Rights School

This program is held in English every summer for Korean students studying abroad or non-Korean speaking students in Korea who have interest in human rights issues. Lectures on various human rights topics and group activities are held to allow the students to gain in-depth knowledge of human rights. The classes under this program run for eight hours including

lectures, lunch and group activity. They are encouraged to take advantage of the invited lecturers and staff to fully understand the human rights topic and to closely work with fellow participants in the group discussion. Similar to the *Human Rights School for Teenagers, s*tudents in this program are not only able to learn the contemporary human rights issues, but also learn how to take action that promote equity, justice, and human dignity for all people through a street campaign activity.

The Global Human Rights School of 2017 was a joint activity with the 3rd Korea Refugee Film Festival that took place in Deahan Theater in Chungmuro, Seoul on 24 June 2017. The students worked as volunteers by promoting the film festival to passersby early in the morning before the start of the festival. They attended the morning session of the 3rd Korea Refugee Film Festival, and watched two documentary films (*Salvation* and *Limbo*). After showing the movies, the director and the movie star, Jung Woosung, shared the stories behind them. The discussion was meant to make the participants become familiar with the term "refugee" and what people around the world were working on to make the situation better. In the afternoon, a lawyer gave a lecture while a former refugee from Australia did a hands-on learning activity. The film festival participants were able to understand how refugees were removed from their homes against their will for various reasons and the difficulty of preparing the appropriate personal belongings to bring in their precarious journey ahead. After the lecture, students joined a street campaign by holding signs and information panels to raise public awareness on refugee rights.

Global Human Rights School.

Visiting Human Rights School for Teenagers

Similar to above programs, Human Asia organizes visits to schools or their human rights clubs upon request to undertake educational activities. These activities are tailored to the request received. A minimum number of thirty students is required for the school visit to be held.

Human Asia recently visited Hankuk Academy of Foreign Studies located in Yongin (outside Seoul). The school was celebrating its annual "Human Rights Festival," and the human rights club in the school specifically wished to learn about the North Korean human rights situation and the plight of defectors. The club members made posters to show the human rights violations faced by North Koreans. Human Asia invited the President of New Korea Women's Union, an organization promoting the rights of North Korean women defectors to speak before the students. As a former soldier, she told vivid stories on the life of ordinary people in her home region, Hamkyeongbuk-do, in North Korea and the human rights violation cases involving the army. The students were very knowledgeable on the North Korean human rights situation, and asked questions regarding freedom of religion or freedom of movement based on the documentaries they previously watched.

Visiting Human Rights School, Yonging.

Asia Human Rights Forum

The Asia Human Rights Forum aims to create a strong regional network that will contribute to the establishment of an effective human rights protection mechanism in Asia. Every year, the forum deals with human rights issues that are of common concern in the region. Human rights practitio-

ners, scholars, and government representatives come together to identify and contemplate on possible solutions to these problems.

The forum was first held in 2006 and has been held annually since then to deal with the following issues: Child Labor and Trafficking; Regional Cooperation for Migrant Children; Migrant Workers and Local Perceptions of their Contribution; Protection of Ethnic Minority Refugees; and most recently on Business and Human Rights.

It offers both general sessions on the international human rights norms and human rights protection mechanisms, and thematic sessions on contemporary issues and case studies in Asia.

In August 2016, the 10th Asia Human Rights Forum took place under the title of "Prospects and Challenges of Regional Cooperation for Human Rights Protection and Promotion in Asia." The forum hosted a variety of extensive and comprehensive discussions while highlighting the need for governance and human rights improvements in the international community. The forum took a multilateral approach in promoting unity and peace by advocating for the practical and fundamental role of institutional and regional human rights regime, and by inspiring interest in its foundation not only by South Korea but by neighboring countries and the Asian region as a whole.

In April 2017, the 11th Asia Human Rights Forum took place under the title of "Human Rights and Asian Corporate Leadership." The forum recognized the acceleration of the globalization of the world economy and the dramatic increase of the role of corporations in such a situation. The corporations were recognized as critical entities in realizing development goals, and not passive players that comply with rules and laws of states on labor and environmental issues. The forum brought together corporate and civil society stakeholders who shared perspectives, discussed challenges, and devised ways of ensuring greater business respect for human rights. In addition, there were discussions on ways to systematize the implementation of mechanisms that integrate education and research and enhance corporate capability in linking human rights to business.

Workshop for Young Human Rights Activists

Human Asia's annual *Workshop for Young Human Rights Activists Program* has been running as a practical capacity-building program since 2006 with

10th and 11th Asia Human Rights Forum.

over two hundred prospective local human rights activists attending it. The training program is aimed at nurturing human rights activists in Asia who will contribute to making better places to live for the most vulnerable and marginalized sectors in the region. The topics of the program include child

labor, human trafficking, migrant children and workers, refugees across Asia, transitional justice and protection and promotion of human rights in Asia through regional cooperation.

In 2017, the 12th Young Human Rights Activists Workshop was held as a thirty-day project instead of a joint workshop with the Asia Human Rights Forum. It was sponsored by the city of Seoul and aimed to educate the North Korean defectors and South Koreans interested in human rights in North Korea. This workshop also worked to nurture future leaders who could improve the human rights of North Koreans and North Korean defectors through leadership development and empowerment as human rights activists. The participants learned of the basic concept of human rights, issues being faced today, and the experience of human rights defenders who were actively working in the field. They also put into practice their newly-acquired knowledge and skills through group activities, role plays, case studies and discussion. In addition, the participants interacted with other committed individuals facing shared challenges in working for change in their communities and shared tools and resources through building a network of human rights activists.

12th Young Human Rights Activists Workshop.

Model UN Human Rights Council UPR

The Model United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR), launched in 2013, is an annual program designed to provide a good opportunity for participants (mainly university or graduate students) to broaden their awareness of international human rights issues and promote understanding of the cooperation between international organizations and states. It allows them to explore ideas on how to solve human rights issues through international cooperation and develop diplomatic approaches to human rights issues. The Model UN Human Rights Council UPR gave way to two programs: Model UN Human Rights Council UPR Competition for High Schools and International Model UN Human Rights Council UPR.

Background

Since its establishment in 2006 as a new universal mechanism, the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process has become an important instrument for the promotion and realization of human rights in general as well as a uniquely comprehensive monitoring system. After the two cycles of the UPR, a comprehensive source of information on the overall national situation of human rights and the critical concerns relating to all of the UN member-states has developed. The UPR likewise encouraged the engagement of non-state actors including civil society and citizens on human rights issues that contributed to the strengthening of the national human rights system. In this regard, UPR is playing an increasingly important role in initiating and resuscitating multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation on contentious human rights issues.

Along with these developments, there is a growing number of students interested in human rights and actively participating in human rights activities, yet there has always been a lack of interconnected programs to translate knowledge into practice. Students might have learned important human rights concepts and issues through our human rights education programs or from other channels, but they have insufficient opportunities to gain in-depth knowledge or better understanding of human rights protection mechanisms.

To that end, in 2013, Human Asia along with Korea Human Rights Foundation and Seoul National University Human Rights Center (with

the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Korea) initiated an annual human rights training program simulating the procedure of the UPR. Since then, Human Asia has successfully been hosting the model UPR for college and graduate students, which provided better understanding of the inner workings of the UPR of the Human Rights Council through hands-on-learning experience. Its international version is designed to lay the foundation for cooperation among states to promote and protect human rights, which is a worthwhile endeavor in maintaining peace and security in Northeast Asia. Moreover, with the ability to operate and implement the program, Human Asia expanded its scope to the youth in secondary school by successfully hosting the first and second model UN UPR competitions with grants from the U.S. Embassy in Seoul in 2016 and 2017.

4th Model UPR.

Human Asia firmly believes that the continuity of this project is important in order to further develop and broaden the scope of younger "human rights resources" through a comprehensive educational program that the project offers.

It will inaugurate the first International Model UN Human Rights Council UPR in 2018.

International Model UN Human Rights Council UPR

Participants from Northeast Asian countries in the International Model UN Human Rights Council UPR are expected to become responsible mem-

bers of the international community because of higher level of awareness of contemporary human rights situations in Asia and to contribute to the creation of a regional mechanism for the promotion and protection of human rights in Asia. Moreover, Human Asia strongly believes that the International Model UN Human Rights Council UPR, the very first simulating program of UPR in the region, will become a pioneering initiative that can be expanded to other regions where the framework of this project is applicable.

This project, a simulation of UPR of the UN Human Rights Council, aims to increase understanding of the importance of the UPR process as an effective mechanism to strengthen the national human rights system, provide a basis for regional cooperation, and broaden the view of the world through interactive discussion of current human rights challenges in Northeast Asian countries. Through the experience of assuming the roles of representatives/diplomats of different countries and discussing specific human rights issues, students/youth are expected to develop an appreciation of differing viewpoints, develop a system for cooperation in the field of human rights in Northeast Asian countries, and foster human rights sensitivity. They will also be exposed to diplomatic language and environment, where they can develop academic and practical skills such as research, public speaking, writing, critical thinking, teamwork, and leadership ability through negotiation agenda preparation, meeting new friends from neighboring countries with similar interests, and experiencing the use of diplomatic language in a diplomatic environment.

Program Methods and Design

The sessions in this project are designed to enhance understanding of the UN Human Rights Council UPR process in three ways.

First, an information session will be held to provide overall information on the UPR and to introduce the Model UN UPR system (along with its objectives and modalities) as a new experiential human rights training methodology. The information session will be held for both the participants and the public to draw the attention of a wider audience.

Secondly, a series of lectures will be offered to participants who will advance to the finals. Human rights experts will lecture on the international human rights protection system and the diverse aspects of human rights. A simulation of model UPR will be also held to make participants increase familiarity with the UPR mechanism.

Lastly, the finals will have a similar format as the UN Human Rights Council UPR process, comprising of a State under Review and the Recommending States. Through a simplified UPR process, the participants will have the opportunity to review some UN member-states. The working language of the finals sessions will be English.

Activities of Model UN UPR

Participants taking part in the project will compete as a paired-up team and as a national team. They are expected to research as a team on the contemporary human rights issues and foreign relations policies of the state they represent as well as the recent UPR recommendations (or those from current on-going cycle) and their implementation status. This will help them prepare for answers when asked to represent a government agency of the "State under Review (SuR)." Participants are also expected to raise questions, comments, and make recommendations to the state being reviewed, when they take on the role of "Recommending States (RS)." This interactive exercise will offer in-depth learning of human rights situations in represented states and contemporary challenges faced in Northeast Asian countries.

This project will also develop the academic and practical skills of participants by engaging in research, public speaking, writing, critical thinking, teamwork, and taking leadership role through a series of assignments. During the preparation period, it will require immense teamwork in researching national reports, reports from the treaty bodies, special procedures and UN agencies, such as UNDP and UNICEF, and recommendations from the previous two cycles of UPR or current on-going cycle of UPR. Students will have opportunities to develop their ability to articulate social issues from a human rights perspective and to broaden their view of the world by taking diplomatic relations and international human rights norms into account. They will also be able to learn and develop public speaking skills using diplomatic language by delivering statements at the finals. Finally, participants will learn about responsibility and cooperation while working as a team.

Concluding Statement

Training and education employing the experimental cognitive approach proved to be useful in building solidarity and activism for social justice at local, national and international levels among the youth. Human Asia will

continue to innovate and act as the leader in the human rights education movement in Asia for the next few years through programs that are greatly enriched by the participation of Asian human rights activists working on diverse human rights challenges, and intensively engaged in human rights programs.

Cyberbullying and Cyber Human Rights: The Case of Iran

Mehrak Rahimi

With the quick expansion of the information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure, almost all people of all walks of life across the globe are given access to the virtual world and its vast possibilities. People in different regions and countries are now connected with the click of a mouse or just a touch of the screen of a smartphone. One of the key reasons of people in using the Internet is to connect to each other and communicate via social media to make communities of shared interest and opinion. The advantages of the virtual world and the Internet are endless and the educational, commercial, industrial, and even entertainment benefits are countless. As a consequence, many governments expand the technological infrastructures and use of new technologies to facilitate increase convenience in life. This situation changed the personal and professional lives of people and the way they perceive the world around them.

Based on the theory of technological determinism, technology is now related to almost all activities of human beings and is so much correlated to power, wealth and knowledge. Any society that targets a prosperous future needs to keep up with the pace of technological development, expand its information technology (IT) infrastructures according to global or regional standards and raise the IT literacy and competencies of their people. The penetration of technology into the society and how technologies are being used for educational, industrial, social, and economic advancement now constitute an index of a country's development and prosperity.

With all that being said, the negative side of using ICT raised many controversies about the way access to technology should be granted to different people:

> All over the world, numerous concerns and issues have been raised, ranging from online safety and security (identity theft, scams, system phishing, hacking, online predators and cyber bullying) to misuse of information (plagiarism, access to inappropriate contents, and misrepresentation) to health and mental hazard (long exposure to screen, back and arm pains, and game/internet addiction) (Tan, Park, Patravanich, & Cheong, 2014, 1-2).

On one hand, many now are discussing if limiting access to technology affordances is a violation of human rights. On the other hand, many believe that technology use without limitation and required legislations leads to the rise of modern crimes that ultimately goes against the benefits of modern technology to the society and human rights.

"The Asia-Pacific (AP) region has not been exempted from various forms of ICT abuses, including spamming, intellectual property infringement (plagiarism and piracy), addiction, delinquency, health and wellness issues, cyberbullying, identity theft, fraud/ scams, pornography, and online sex trafficking" (Tan, Park, Patravanich, & Cheong, 2014, 1-2). Iran, as a developing country in this region, is now experiencing such a situation. With a high rate of educated young population, people demand free access to any type of technology for entertainment and social relationships. Technology and its affordances are used in Iran basically to make virtual communities; thus social media is so popular in the country.

There are now forty-eight million smartphones in use in Iran, with forty seven million social media users (techrasa.com). More than half of the Internet users in Iran are young people and adolescents. Although the purchase of mobile phone lines is restricted for minors in Iran, many parents provide their minor children with mobile phones and Internet access and many of these young people are active members of social media.

Although certain benefits for social networking have been reported for young people such as "self-presentation, learning, widening their circle of relationships, and managing privacy and intimacy" (Livingstone & Brake, 2010, Bhat, Chang, & Linscott, 2010, 35), risks of using such environment without supervision such as the "loss of privacy, bullying, and harmful contacts" (ibid.) are also noted. The penetration rate of Internet (45.3 percent), computer use (41.2 percent) and mobile use (77.9 percent) in Iran shows that many Iranians now are using mobile social networking. This indicates a kind of omnipresent use of social media in Iran, signaling certain social and individual advantages and disadvantages.

The ubiquity of technologies and the use personalized technology tools particularly combined with technology literacy, awareness, and caution can lead to enhancement of education. The benefits of mobile learning has been documented and many developed countries are now directing the potentials of the Internet and mobile social networking on collaborated learning via

mobile learning (m-learning). The use of m-learning has opened doors to lifelong learning and education for everyone, anytime, anywhere.

However, when technologies are introduced to the country without cultural agendas and/or careful execution of strategic plans, the villainous potentials of the Internet show up and criminals take over the control of communication, interactions, and relationships. One such danger of social networking includes cybercrime. Cybercrime is defined in Iran as

> cases of intrusion into computers or information network systems (computer systems) without justifiable access privileges or access which exceeds permitted access privileges or causing damage, destruction, or alterations to systems, data, programs and causing disruptions (impairing performance or causing system failures) in communication networks (computer systems) (cyber.polic.ir).

Cybercrimes frequently take place in three main domains in the Iranian context: economic, social, and ethical. It is reported that more than 80 percent of cybercrimes are related to account theft and data leak. These types of crime cause both emotional and physical damage to the victims and can ruin their personal and emotional lives. For a country like Iran where cultural values play a huge role in relationships, the spread of personal and private data may do a lot of harm to users, especially young people and female members of the social networks.

The government has tried to control cybercrimes by enacting new legislations and implementing filtering policy. However, the slow pace in adopting strategies to prevent cybercrimes and educating users of the cyberspace is observed. This has now created complicated situations in the country, increasing the number of victims, and spreading pessimistic views on the value of IT tools. The rate of fraud, defamation, and cyberbullying in the country shows that people are not aware of the dangers of the cyberspace and are required to be educated with respect to cyber dangers and rules/regulations to be able to defend their cyber human rights.

Cyberbullying

While meeting in person needs identity revelation, in a virtual world people can have hidden, unknown, and fake identities. This actually opens up many

opportunities for intruders and cyber criminals. Actually, many criminals have found safe places in the cyberspace and are now more courageous to do any type of crime where their true identity seems to be difficult to be revealed. Many of these criminals have extended their illegal activities into the cyberspace or have invented new ways for fraud and felony.

As new types of crimes, or cybercrimes, developed and emerged with the advent of new technologies, new prevention strategies and legislations are required for the societies of the 21st century. People's awareness of the dangers they or their family members may face, cautions they must exercise while sharing their personal information with others, and how the law could protect them against any cybercrime and protect their human rights in cyberspace are just a few things people should know before or while they get involved with the Internet or any type of social media.

Cybercrime is also defined as "the use of information and communications technology to intimidate, harass, victimize, or bully an individual or a group of individuals" (Bhat, Chang, & Linscott, 2008, 54). In other words, cybercrime is a crime in which a computer is the object of the crime (hacking, phishing, spamming) or is used as a tool to commit an offense (child pornography, hate crimes) (www.techopedia.com). Different types of cybercrimes have been identified such as identity theft, spam and phishing, malvertising (malicious advertising), and stalking or cyberbullying. Yet, whether cyberbullying is a serious case of cybercrime or not is open to contradiction. Cyberbullying in its mild status can be just like any face-to-face offense. Many of us do not take action against offenders, unless the situation goes seriously wrong.

To bully in general means "to threaten to hurt someone or frighten them, especially someone smaller or weaker."[1] In the same vein, cyberbullying is a type of bullying that takes place in cyberspace or by using digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. As a result, cyberbullying can happen both offline and online, while in both cases technological devices are involved. People can be bullied by Short Message Service (involving only text) and Multimedia Message Service (involving photos and videos). The situation worsens when people are bullied while using the Internet especially social media (such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, etc.) where people voluntarily share private information of various types including personal photos, bank account numbers, social security numbers, addresses, and many other information. Someone who cyberbullies may access some-

one's private information without permission and/or with a cunning plan and then send, post, or share negative, harmful, false, or mean content about the person (www.stopbullying.gov) and ruin the person's social and professional integrity. The cyberbully may even go on with blackmailing or forcing people to do things against their will. Examples of cyberbullying include:[2]

- Posting hurtful messages, images or videos online;
- Repeatedly sending unwanted messages online;
- Sending abusive texts and emails;
- Excluding or intimidating others online;
- Creating fake social networking profiles or websites that are hurtful;
- Nasty online gossip and chat; and
- Any other form of digital communication which is discriminatory, intimidating, intended to cause hurt or make someone fear for her/his safety.

There seems to be some major differences between traditional bullying and cyberbullying. Traditional bullying is mainly physical and is traceable in the immediate environment. It may have negative effects on a person that may heal or be forgotten after the passage of time when the person is not present in that specific location and has freed her/himself of the bad memories of the events. However, cyberspace provides a permanent damage and the wound does not heal as the information spreads among other communities and even globally. This creates some sort of power differential between the cyberbully and the target, as the cyberbully has certain types of information (videos, personal messages, photos, document) that give them power to "hurt, shame, victimize, or harass the target" (Bhat, Chang, & Linscott, 2010, 37). Another important point is that "cyberbullying often has a component of sexual harassment (ibid.) and that may lead the target to "keeping silent out of embarrassment" (ibid.). In traditional societies, this damage to young girls' life cannot be healed very easily and some serious consequences (such as revenge, suicide, etc.) may occur.

Some empirical studies on cyberbullying show that cyberbullying is a universal problem and any society with connection to the Internet may experience it. A Microsoft study done in 2012 among twenty-five countries of the Asia Pacific region shows that China, Singapore, and India had the highest rates of online bullying (70 percent, 58 percent, 53 percent of surveyed children aged 8 to 17 years respectively) (Tan, Park, Patravanich, & Cheong,

2014, 2). Jaghoory, Björkqvist and Österman (2015) compared differences in frequencies of both victimization and perpetration of cyberbullying among adolescents from Iran and Finland. Their results showed that both victimization and perpetration of cyberbullying of all kinds were clearly more frequent in Iran.

Certain studies have also paid attention to the reasons why people are easily targeted and hunted by cyberbullies. Brighi et al. (2012) reported that traditional bullying has a correlation with cyberbullying and being either a direct or an indirect victim of traditional bullying was a very strong predictor for becoming also a victim of cyberbullying for both males and females.

Sourander et al. (2010) suggested that cyber victimization was related to psychiatric and psychosomatic problems such as family issues while cyberbullying was related to perceived difficulties, hyperactivity, conduct problems, frequent smoking, and drunkenness.

Depression (Yabbar, 2004), loneliness (Sahin, 2012), self-esteem (Brighi et al, 2012), bad relationship with parents, and gender (Olenikin-Shemesh et al., 2012) can be indications of being victims of cyberbullying or being cyberbullies.

Information Technology Policy of Iran

Iran is located in central Asia with a surface area of 1,628,750 square kilometers and a population of more than eighty million people. Based on United Nations data, the country's mobile-cellular subscriptions (per one hundred inhabitants) in 2014 was 93.4 percent and individual rate of Internet use was 44.1 percent. [3]

Based on Iran's 1404 Perspective Document (20 Year National Vision), Iran should be ranked first in the region by 2026 with respect to economy, science and technology.[4] As a result, the scientific and technological infrastructures of the country are being developed based on the agendas defined by the national development policies.

The strategic plan on IT of the country was adopted in 2007 to enable the country to reach the defined goals with respect to ICT use in five domains of technology, economy, society, politics, and culture. The strategic plan is supposed to be the main guideline that clarifies the role of the state-of-the-art technologies in the different aspects of Iranian lives at the personal and professional levels.

The value of this document considering the Constitution, the 1404 Perspective Document and the general IT policies of Iran is seen in several aspects:

- Protection of human integrity, legitimate freedom, and individual and social ethics;
- Spread of social justice and free sharing of information;
- Guarantee of social, political, and economic security of the country;
- Enhancement of Islamic-Iranian identity and the expansion of use of the Persian language in the cyberspace;
- Realization of a knowledge-based society, reliance on social capital; and
- Enhancement and fortification of religious democracy.

Therefore, the mission statement of ICT policy in Iran is

> Providing suitable access for people in all walks of life to IT and inclusive education of the society, educating professional human resources for applying IT in all aspects of life, and creating competitive atmosphere for organizing networked and smart society that leads to a change of pattern and process of national development from basic resources to basic knowledge; and educating responsible citizens in acquiring the values and filling the national digital gap with the global society (page 18).

The strategies of the country to expand the IT infrastructures in order to improve the people's sense of identity as Iranians are based on the following considerations:

1. Expansion of the use of the Persian language and promotion of Iranian-Islamic culture in the cyberspace (e.g., designing appropriate e-content);
2. Providing safe and equal IT opportunity for every citizen (e.g., protecting human rights in cyberspace);
3. Promoting social awareness and IT literacy; and
4. Ensuring a secure society for Iranian families while using the cyber services.

Sequentially, the country invested hugely on the expansion of the ICT infrastructure in the last decade. Based on a recent report by the International

Telecommunication Union (ITU) in 2016, Iran's ICT Development Index (IDI) is 4.99, 0.92 points above the average for developing countries. Iran is ranked 85 in 2016 and 81 in 2017 among 176 countries in IDI.[5] Iran was ranked 14th in IDI in the region of the Middle East. Considering the rank improvement, Iran was ranked second in the region, behind Jordan (techrasa.com).

Cyberbullying in Iran

Based on ITU's 2016 report, around 45 percent of Iranians used the Internet in 2016. However, Internet is mainly used for entertainment purposes in the country. Iranians show particular interest in using social media especially Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram. It is reported that the main online activities of Iranians include using social media, playing game and watching movies. However, online distance work, blogging, online classes and online consulting are not favorite uses of the Internet among Iranians (techrasa.com). What the report suggests is that the nation is just aware of one function of the cyberspace that is interaction and communication. Some academics believe that this type of communication is not suitable to the Iranian society as it creates problems for Iranian families when they ignore ancient customs such as visiting their elders and siblings. It has even been suggested that the use of cyberspace is related to low rate of marriage and birth in Iran in the recent decade.

In spite of the reports of bad effects of overuse of the Internet, the use of social media is very popular among Iranians. Telegram, in particular, has attracted the attention of Iranians and has become the most popular messaging app in Iran because of its groups, channels, games, and stores. Telegram has more than forty million users in Iran and is said to consume 40 percent of Iran's internet bandwidth. With this profound impact, different types of cybercrimes are inevitable in such an environment. According to an official report by Iran's Cyber Police, 66 percent of cybercrimes in Iran take place on Telegram, 20 percent on Instagram and less than 2 percent on WhatsApp. While authorities have repeatedly warned the nation to take wise and cautious actions while using the cyberspace, many Iranians are still unaware of the possible danger posed by cybercriminals. This actually explains why the rate of cybercrimes is slightly escalating in the country.

Cyber safety, rights, and wellness have become vital issues among the governments in the Asia-Pacific. The responses to these issues vary from strict regulations on ICT use (i.e., access restrictions like censorship and filters) and self-regulation programs (i.e., awareness campaigns and education programs) (Tan, Park, Patravanich, & Cheong, 2014, 12). Iran is not an exception in this regard. The country now is using intelligent filtering to filter inappropriate e-content such as general pornography, child pornography and gambling. The government also highly recommends the use of local social networking such as Soroosh instead of Telegram to safeguard the users' private information and prevent cyberbullying.

In spite of such prevention plans, cybercrimes are taking place in the country on a daily basis. Iranians do not embrace the local social networks, use VPN (Virtual Private Network) on desktops and cellphones to access the blocked content, and seem to be indifferent to warnings given by the authorities to safeguard their personal information. One of the most common cyberbullying cases in Iran is the hijacking of personal information and blackmailing the victims on the spread of their personal information to the public. Young girls and married women are among the top of the list of victims of cybercrimes in Iran. The cyberbully may ask for money to destroy or return the data, unethical behavior, or cooperation in illegal acts such as robbery or assistance in other cybercrimes. Defamation of users and spreading rumors both about famous (celebrities) and ordinary people are also common in the cyberspace. The key to preventing cyberbullying is in educating and making people become aware of the consequences of such unethical behavior. This is the missing chain of the IT policy in Iran.

Cyber Legislations in Iran

The Supreme Council of Cyberspace is the higher authority of the country to decide for the national IT policy. The head of the Supreme Council of Cyberspace is the President of Islamic Republic of Iran. There are higher commissions under the supervision of the Council:

- Higher Commission of Legislations;
- Higher Commission of Promoting E-content;
- Higher Commission of Security.

The Higher Commission of Legislations is responsible for policymaking and monitoring of the cyberspace including issuing rules and regulations related to security, content, accessing and pricing, types of service, infrastructures, cybercrimes, and user's cyber rights. The Higher Commission of Promoting E-content is responsible for supporting the cultural products and expanding e-commerce by both private and public sectors. The Higher Commission of Security is responsible for guaranteeing highly secured internet access for the country and availability of cyberspace specialists and protecting the national infrastructures from national/international cyber-attacks.

Based on existing legislation, authorities have taken different types of action to limit the occurrence of cybercrimes. In addition, in order to lower the destructive impact of cybercrimes, Iran's Cyber Police was established in 2011. The organization's aim is to prevent, investigate and combat cybercrime. The organization explains the aim of its establishment as follows:

> The purpose of establishing cyber police is to secure cyberspace, to protect national and religious identity, community values, legal liberty, national critical infrastructure against electronic attacks, to preserve interests and national authority in cyberspace and to assure people in all legal affairs such as economic, social and cultural activities in order to preserve national power and sovereignty. (cyber.police. ir)

Different types of cybercrimes have been listed by the Cyber Police such as

- Crimes with information network infringement (e.g., hacking, data leaking);
- Crimes involving the use of Information Network (gaming fraud, shopping mall fraud);
- Cyber copyright infringement;
- Crimes involving illegal contents (pornography, gambling);
- Cyber defamation (insult, cyber stalking).

There are strict rules in Iran to safeguard users' rights in the cyberspace in the following domains: e-commerce, cybercrimes, criminal contents, and the places that offer cyber services (Coffee-nets). The punishment for violating personal rights includes imprisonment and fine.

Remaining Issues

Although the Iranian authorities had initiated good measures to promote the use of IT, give suitable IT access to the people, and make the cyberspace secure for all users, there are still steps that should be taken especially with respect to cyber citizenship, identity and human rights.

1. Cyber identity and citizenship

In this era of IT, new identities are getting shaped. People of the 21st century have different perceptions of the world in comparison to their parents. The digital natives perceive the world via technologies and this perception can be essentially different from digital immigrants, their parents, teachers, and the authorities. Therefore, the citizens of this era should now behave responsibly and watch cyber ethics and "netiquette" while they are online. This is especially achieved by making them familiar with their new identities, rights and responsibilities; and making them aware of the possible threats and harms of the virtual world.

In Iran's national policy issuances, this identity is defined based on the agendas of the local culture and the values of Iranian society. Iranian cybercitizens, like any other user, are expected to utilize technology in an appropriate manner, taking care of their online safety, being responsible for their behavior, avoiding harming people, and respecting their own and others' cyber human rights.

2. Awareness programs

One observed weakness of IT policy in Iran is negligence of awareness programs for parents, teachers and young users. Any program on cyber human rights should include making people become aware of these rights and the way they can fight those who violate their rights. People should be aware of the way they can secure cyber use (such as creating strong passwords, attention to their own privacy and that of others, creating and sharing appropriate contents) and the way the government provides them with safe and secure connections.

3. Promoting the educational values of ICT

Iranians are reported to use the Internet mainly for entertainment purposes. More than half of the users are subscribers of just one mobile social

network. The frequency and variety of cybercrimes in this environment are abundant. Therefore, the educational and scientific values of ICT should be highlighted in schools and academic centers for young people.

4. Restricting cyberbullying

Cyberbullying has long emotional effect on people's personality, life and social relationship because of the deletion of the information that has been shared online takes a lot of time. Therefore, strict rules are required to prevent cyberbullying. What is expected from the authorities and policymakers is to take serious actions against cyberbullying to protect the wellness and security of the country. In this regard, young and female users are more vulnerable and thus need more attention.

5. Rehabilitation programs for offenders and victims

Another important aspect of cyber human rights is the way the authorities punish the offenders and help the victims recover from the adverse effects of cyberbullying. The country needs research and development programs to establish rehabilitation centers for cyberbullies and their victims. Why some people bully others online and why some are trapped and caught in the cunning plans should be researched in the Iranian context and treatment policies should be developed.

6. Cyber human rights declaration

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) were adopted to make the lives of people safer and more secure. Now in the digital era, people need an international Cyber Human Rights Declaration to be adopted by international organizations. This international declaration can help people become aware of the way they can freely share information without violating other people's privacy. This can be related to different domains such as:

- Online freedom of speech;
- Avoidance of gender and ethical biases;
- Respecting the rights of users;
- Accessing and sharing data; and
- Protecting one's privacy while sharing information.

Educational Initiatives

Educators should be well-informed of the dangers of cyberbullying. In this regard, while the Ministry of Education plays a key role in approving strict rules and regulations to avoid cyberbullying among students, the importance of its role in educating young users of the probable consequences of their actions is undeniable. Recently, the Ministry of Education has started offering courses for teachers and education officials that cover cybercrimes and how to avoid them. The courses are held both electronically and face-to-face and are required courses for teachers to be able to get tenure.

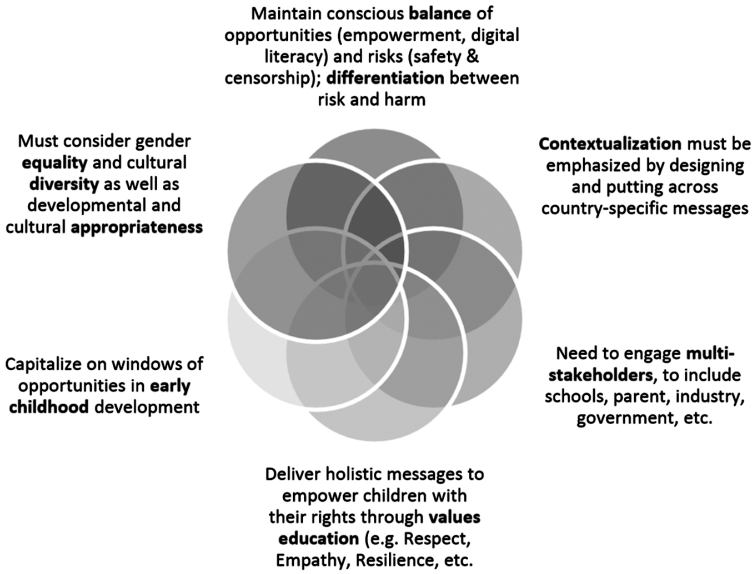
Some schools in Iran hold workshops for students and teach them about the opportunities and threats of the cyberspace. These courses are held especially for girls, as they seem to be among the targets of cyberbullies in Iran.

Meticulous planning on a number of measures regarding cyberbullying by Iranian educators covers the following:

1. Research on
    a. the status of cyberbullying in Iran in order to have a clear picture of the current situation
    b. the psychological, social, and economic reasons of cyberbullying among Iranians;
2. Promotion of cyber human rights and making people become aware of their rights;
3. Promotion of IT literacy of students and their parents to make them familiar with the state-of-the-art technologies; and
4. Education of young students and female users on the dangers of the cyberspace, how to handle the problems arising from it.

A number of key points suggested to be considered in the areas of research, policy, partnerships, and capability-building when developing programs are meant to build digital citizenship through safe and responsible use of ICT (Tan, Park, Patravanich, & Cheong, 2014, 44) as shown in Figure 1. Therefore, these issues should be considered seriously in dealing with the way young people are being prepared to use ICT.

Figure 1. Key points in program design and implementation on safe digital citizenship



Digital citizenship is considered a crucial competency for teachers and students of the 21st century and thus any educational initiative should consider certain standards in their movement as suggested by International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). These standards include: standards for students, educators, administrators, coaches, and Computer Science (CS) educators. The standards for teachers and students with respect to digital citizenship are summarized in Table 1.[6]

Table 1. ISTE standards for students and educators regarding digital citizenship

1. Standards for students	a. Students cultivate and manage their digital identity and reputation and are aware of the permanence of their actions in the digital world. b. Students engage in positive, safe, legal and ethical behavior when using technology, including social interactions online or when using networked devices. c. Students demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the rights and obligations of using and sharing intellectual property. d. Students manage their personal data to maintain digital privacy and security and are aware of data-collection technology used to track their navigation online.
2. Standards for educators	a. Create experiences for learners to make positive, socially responsible contributions and exhibit empathetic behavior online that build relationships and community. b. Establish a learning culture that promotes curiosity and critical examination of online resources and fosters digital literacy and media fluency. c. Mentor students in safe, legal and ethical practices with digital tools and the protection of intellectual rights and property. d. Model and promote management of personal data and digital identity and protect student data privacy.

Considering what has been mentioned, the components of a cyberbullying prevention course for Iranian students are suggested in the following section.

Cyberbullying Prevention Course for Iranian Students - A Proposal

The educational system of Iran needs to integrate regular courses on ICT use and digital citizenship into the primary and secondary school curriculums to promote cyber safety and cyber human rights. This would also guarantee a better return on the investments made in recent years regarding this important issue by both public and private sectors in Iran. This cyberbullying prevention course proposal is briefly discussed below. The components of the course are designed based on several frameworks including Iran's national policy documents, literature review, cyber citizenship standards, and UNESCO's guidelines on Education for International Understanding.

The proposed program would be implemented in the Iranian context to address the following issues with respect to safe ICT use:

- Cyber identity;
- Cyber health (physical/psychological);
- ICT literacy;
- Cyber delinquency;
- Information security management;
- Communication skills (in cyberspace);
- ICT entrepreneurship;
- Cyber netiquette; and
- Cyber citizenship rights (human rights).

The proposed program fills the gaps that exist in the Iranian educational system with respect to cyber identity, cyber human rights, cyber netiquette, democratic dialogue in cyberspace, and respecting diversity in virtual world.

It is designed and implemented with the hope of changing the attitudes of cyberspace offenders (those who victimize people through cyberbullying) and promote in them the sense of empathy, understanding and acceptance. The cyberspace offenders are also expected to become aware of the consequences of their acts on other students' lives.

It also aims at making students become aware of the ways cyberbullies may trap them and how they can arm themselves with necessary knowledge

(e.g., ICT literacy) to make safe use of cyberspace. Last but not least, the program aims to help the victims of cyberbullying show bravery to fight cyberbullies by guarding against mean people and recovering from the adverse effects of cyberbullying.

The goals of the proposed program are organized in three main categories including cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral. The aim of cognitive component is to make students become aware of the facts (e.g., rules), causes, and impacts of cyberbullying and strategies to prevent the crime and/or recover from its adverse effects. The aim of socio-emotional component is to provide students with identity awareness as cybercitizens, share values based on (cyber) human rights, develop empathy, solidarity and respect for the victims of cyberbullying, and feel responsible for cyber offence. The aim of behavioral component is to make people become aware of the ways they can avoid cyberbullying, help victims recover from pains of cyberbullying, educate peers about cyberbullying, and build a cyber-identity. A summary of the proposed program and its components are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. A cyberbullying prevention course for Iranian students

Content	Activities	Resources	Timeline
1. Concepts, Themes 2. Facts (statistics/true stories) 3. Laws and regulations 4. ICT literacy & Netiquettes	– Lectures – Reflections – Discussion – Interviews – Round table discussions – Talk show simulations – Self-assessment and needs analysis – Field trip to rehabilitation centers or (juvenile) prisons	Books, articles official reports, films, attendance of (relatives of) offenders/victims, United Nations human rights manuals, local legislations, handbooks, websites, mobile apps, software programs	- Two 90-minute sessions - Three 90-minute sessions - Five hours - Three 60-minute sessions

Concluding Statement

This paper addressed the concepts of cybercrimes and cyberbullying from a practical perspective considering a specific context, i.e., Iran. Iranian IT policy and cyber legislations were briefly reviewed and some suggestions

for the future to prevent cyberbullying and the safeguarding the cyber human rights were provided. Finally, some educational initiatives were discussed and a cyberbully prevention program was suggested for the Iranian situation.

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Endnotes

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3 See Country Profiles, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Environment and infrastructure indicators, UN Data, http://data.un.org/en/iso/ir.html.

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A Quantitative Study on Human Rights Education: United Kingdom and Malaysian Experiences

Zaimuariffudin Shukri Nordin and Mansoor Ahmed Channa

Human rights education is not only about political literacy but is very much linked to economic and social issues. Human rights education in schools should enable students to develop the skills and attributes of active citizenship, and make individuals become tolerant of those who are different. Students should be equipped with the capacity to transfer the knowledge and understanding gained in the school community to the wider world. The study of human rights and citizenship can help develop empathy and understanding of people from different cultures and societies. Hicks and Holden (1995, 2007) maintain that through human rights and citizenship education students learn about issues such as poverty and environment and are encouraged to participate in school activities and to positively engage with the local and international communities. As Ross (2007, 2) states with reference to the role of citizenship and human rights education:

> It is the relationship between the individual and society, between the self and others, and our curriculum must reflect this: it must help the individual understand both their own identity and the nature of society, and, most importantly, how to manage the complex relationship of rights and responsibilities that exist between the two.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2009) promotes human rights education that would contribute to the development of individuals who possess the skills to interact in society by providing students with the abilities to accompany and produce societal changes as a way to empower people, improve their quality of life by participating in processes that decide on social, cultural and economic policies.

Young people can learn the fundamental principles of human rights and citizenship in a subject in primary and secondary school system. Alderson argues that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

is "an ideal basis for citizenship education" and argues that "rights are central to concepts of citizenship and democracy in clarifying the standards which the citizens agree to share" (Kiwan, 2005, page 37).

Teaching about Human Rights: International Approaches

Human rights education started to develop after World War II, with initiatives taking place in different parts of the world. In Japan and Taiwan (in 1997) new curriculums were introduced in civic and moral education to teach about democracy and to encourage active citizenship. The 1980s saw proposals on the introduction of human rights education in many countries in Europe, North America and Latin America (Osler & Starkey, 2006). By late 1990s, these proposals became a reality in the United Kingdom with the introduction of the Citizenship curriculum, which included human rights education. In Hong Kong and China, with the "One Nation, Two Systems" (Law, 2004), citizenship education was introduced to focus on democratic citizenship after Hong Kong was handed over to China in 1997. In Korea, human rights education was introduced in 2000 (Lee) and in Singapore in 2001 (Boon Yee Sim & Print, 2005). Citizenship education was later extended to include teachers, policymakers and education officials to strengthen the understanding of this topic. Citizenship education, including elements of human rights education, was also introduced in Australia, Indonesia and Thailand.

Human Rights Education in the United Kingdom

During the early part of the 20th century, civics education attempted to instil a sense of belonging and create responsible citizens. Civics and later, citizenship education, predominantly concentrated on teaching about the Constitution, war and the monarchy and was designed to encourage patriotic loyal citizens. It grew out of the work of the League of Nations in 1918 which was created to protect the rights of nations, especially small nations, affirmed the duty of states to maintain fair and humane treatment of labor and to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of their territories (Wright, 1954, pages 46-47).

The League formed an education committee to "promote teaching about the League and international affairs generally" (Heater, 2001, 115). During this time, the term "education for world citizenship" was coined to indicate this approach to citizenship education (Heater, 2001, page 115). The last few decades have seen civics and citizenship education take many forms. An attempt to include citizenship education as a cross-curricular theme in the 1980s died as it was non-statutory and other National Curriculum subjects took precedence. Human rights education became associated with citizenship education in the 1990s when there was once again a call for education which helped prepare young people for a responsible and active role in society. The work of Bernard Crick was influential here. He was supported by the government of the time to find ways of redressing the political alienation of youth and the perceived lack of values among the young (Frazer, 2000; Kerry, 2003). The Crick Report of 1998[1] cited the low turn-out of the 18-24 age groups in the 1992 and 1997 elections as alarming (Advisory Group on Citizenship, 1998; Heater, 2001). Research carried out by Halpern at the same time demonstrated that citizenship education was needed in the school curriculum and that there would be support for its introduction (Halpern, John et al., 2002).

Meanwhile, in 1997, the Council of Europe embarked upon the Education for Democratic Citizenship project to focus on the meaning of participatory democracy and the status of citizens within Europe (Derricott, 2000). The movement in the United Kingdom (UK) was thus part of a wider European and international drive to ensure effective political and social education. In 2002, citizenship education was introduced into the National Curriculum in UK, with an explicit reference to understanding rights and responsibilities. Thus human rights education was firmly embedded in this new curriculum subject (Gearon, 2003). Starkey (2000) who had long worked in the field of human rights education welcomed this inclusion. He saw this as part of the government's attempt to create a multicultural society based on a "revitalized civic culture and to promote inclusiveness" (page 52) and to encourage and enable students to learn about and become engaged with political issues both locally and internationally.

While this research focuses specifically on human rights education, and the ways in which schools foster respect for these rights, it is located within

the broader framework of citizenship education as this is where it sits predominantly in the UK.

Curriculum and Practice

Citizenship and human rights education is now widely recognized in the UK as an essential part of education of all young people. As noted above, citizenship education has been a statutory National Curriculum subject in UK for all young people in key stages 3 and 4 (ages 11 to 16 years) since 2002 (Advisory Group on Citizenship, 1998). It is an important dimension of work in primary schools at key stages 1 and 2 (ages 5 to 10 years) where many schools choose to deliver it based on the non-statutory framework for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and citizenship (Flew, 2000, 18). It also features in post-16 education and training where citizenship development projects have provided a range of different experiences for young people throughout the country, backed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) which has designed guidance for post-16 citizenship (National Foundation of Educational Research). The Advisory Group for Citizenship (1998, 40-41) initially identified three strands to citizenship education:

- **Social and moral responsibility**
  Students learning from the very beginning about self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behavior both in and beyond the classroom, both towards those in authority and towards each other.

- **Community involvement**
  Students learning about and becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their communities, including learning through community involvement and service to the community.

- **Political literacy**
  Students' learning about and how to make themselves effective in public life can be achieved through knowledge, skills and values.

Discussions continued after the introduction of citizenship education about the teaching of diversity and identity, which were considered as ne-

glected key areas of the citizenship curriculum. (Ajegbo, Kiwan et al., 2007). As a result, the 2007 revision of the National Curriculum saw citizenship education revised to include democracy and justice, human rights and responsibilities, and identity and diversity as the three overarching concepts. Thus issues of diversity were foregrounded and human rights education continued to sit firmly at the center of citizenship education (Ajegbo, Kiwan et al., 2007). The current citizenship education curriculum introduces students to the concepts of democracy and justice, rights and responsibilities and informed social action. This includes discussion of the UK's varying national, regional, religious and ethnic identities so that students consider the multicultural nature of British society and what it means to be British.

The debate about whether or not the current curriculum for citizenship is appropriate for a multi-ethnic, multi-faith society continues. A report in the *Times Educational Supplement* on 13 July 2007 entitled "Secularist spoils citizenship" argued that the teaching of citizenship without a context of religion encourages terrorism and religious extremism. Part of the blame was laid at the feet of Bernard Crick, the "founder" of the 2002 curriculum, who was described as a hard core secularist (Hilbourne, 2007). This issue about the extent to which citizenship and human rights education should include reference to religion, and how it should be addressed in faith-based schools, is a key part of this thesis. This reflects current debates in the UK as a whole. As Amin (2002) notes in Flint (2007), "issues of ethnicity and religion are prominent in contemporary public discourses in the UK around immigration, residential segregation, religious and political extremism and conceptualisations of citizenship and national identity" (page 252).

The introduction of citizenship education has been tracked by Kerr (2005), among others. He notes the influence of personal, family, community and cultural factors on students' understanding of citizenship-related issues and indicates that these remain significant challenges to the successful implementation of this subject. Others have noted further obstacles, one of which relates to teachers being expected to cover too wide a ground in the time available (Mansell & Hilbourne, 2007). It is seen as a real challenge for classroom teachers to be able to cover the many areas of the citizenship curriculum, which includes human rights education. With regards to issues of identity and diversity, there is evidence that many teachers avoid issues related to religion because they lack the subject knowledge and skills to deal confidently with these areas (Holden, 2004).

Research by Holden (2004) reveals the lack of confidence of teachers to teach controversial issues central to citizenship education and human rights education and were concerned about the potential views of parents. They are concerned about their own role and the extent to which they are allowed to voice their own opinions. She concludes that better-trained teachers are needed, with the skills to facilitate debates and communicate with parents. While research by Chamberlaine (2003) indicates that pupils are not engaged in political processes, Kerr, investigating student participation in school activities and their attitudes towards civic concepts, finds citizenship education having a central role in young people's lives which can increase participation. He concluded that, "by age 14, they are already part of a political culture in society" (Kerr, Lines et al., 2002, page 166). There is thus a need for further research into the ability of citizenship and human rights education to increase student participation both in school and community contexts, and raise awareness of human rights and responsibilities in young people.

Human Rights Education in Malaysia

With the ratification by Malaysia of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on 17 February 1995, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia assumed the responsibility of developing a human rights education program and set up an Education Working Group in 2000 based on the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia Act 1999 (Act 597). The Commission was directly under the Prime Minister's Department and answerable to the Parliament. Following this, in 2002, a committee was set up by the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia which included academics, former judges and retired government officers. This group, named "Human Rights Education in School," was created to investigate the extent to which human rights were being practiced in schools and the extent to which students, teachers and administrators understood human rights issues. The committee's research findings served to inform the subsequent recommendations and planning for the delivery of human rights education in the school system.

This nationwide research was administered in 2002-2003 and involved forty secondary schools in urban and rural areas. Four types of schools participated - mixed, single sex, technical and faith-based schools. The re-

search focused on the participants' awareness of the existence of the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children's rights and responsibilities, human rights practices in schools and fundamental human rights as outlined in the Malaysian Constitution. The findings from the research indicated that many students and teachers did not have a good level of knowledge of human rights education. SUHAKAM submitted suggestions to the Ministry of Education on ensuring that teachers, administrators, school support staff and education officials had a good understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in order that these rights might be upheld (Human Rights Commission of Malaysia, 2006). This included holding more seminars, conferences, dialogues and training.

Curriculum in Theory and Practice

The National Curriculum for primary and secondary schools was introduced between 1983 and 1989 in Malaysia. One area of focus was the teaching of values. The principal objectives of the subject of moral education at primary school were:

- to enable pupils to be conscious of, and understand, the norms and values of the society;
- to appreciate these values and the use them as a basis for making decisions in everyday life;
- to practice moral habits and behavior in everyday life.

These objectives are meant to enable students to be rational in making decisions and taking action (Haris Md Jadi, 1997). However, at secondary schools students have:

- to strengthen and practice habits and behavior in accordance with the moral attitude and values acquired at the primary school;
- to be conscious of, understand and appreciate, the norms and values of Malaysian society;
- to develop rational thinking based on moral principles;
- to give reasonable justification based on moral consideration when making a decision;
- to use moral consideration based on moral principles as a guide in the practice of everyday life (Haris Md Jadi, 1997).

The principles underlying the teaching of morals and values in Malaysia are based on religion. The official religion in Malaysia is Islam and its philosophical approach implicitly underpins the system. The challenges and complexities of this situation come to the fore when human rights issues arise which involves Sharia or Islamic jurisprudence. While the theory of human rights can be learned at school, in practice the implementation of human rights can conflict with obligations associated with religion. For this reason, the government indicated reservation[2] on certain provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Child in signing the instrument.[3]

Although the National Curriculum included the teaching of values, the Education Bill of 1995 rejected the need for citizenship to be included in the curriculum as a separate subject; it was decided instead to embed it within the history curriculum. Thus, for a decade, priority was given to the teaching and learning of history, with citizenship education seen as of secondary importance (Haris Md Jadi, 1997). It was not until 2005 that civics and citizenship was separated from history subject and made a subject in its own right which allowed human rights education to have more exposure. There are key concepts which underpin the teaching of citizenship in Malaysia and which have distinct links to citizenship and human rights education elsewhere. These have been identified as:

- community (freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of information);
- nation-building (equality and equal opportunities between genders and races);
- topical and global issues (freedom of religion and culture).

(Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center, 2006).

Thus human rights education is located partly within moral education and partly within citizenship education. In both subjects, students learn about their rights and the responsibility to respect the rights of others, including those with different race and gender.

The main aim of this research is to compare and contrast the human rights education curriculums in UK and Malaysia. The main research question is: What curriculums relate to human rights education in UK and Malaysian school systems?

Research Contexts and Research Method

The research took place in four schools, two in UK and two in Malaysia: one secular secondary school and one faith-based secondary school in each country. Faith-based schools were included in this study because researchers wanted to examine whether the curriculum and practices of human rights education and students' understanding and behavior were influenced by the faith context. This sample was an opportunist sample (Wellington, 2000) using the connections of supervisors in UK and personal connections in Malaysia. However, within these parameters, the sample was carefully selected to meet the aims of this research. In Malaysia, the faith-based school was a fully religious, mostly Islamic school and the secular school had children from the majority Malay race who are also Muslims. In UK, the faith school was a Church of England/Catholic school and the secular school had on roll children from different faiths or with no particular religious affiliation. Questionnaire surveys were used to explore the views and experiences of two hundred forty one students in English and Malaysian schools. The questionnaire was structured using a Likert scale requiring students to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. Students could choose one of five different responses: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree and don't know. In all four schools, the questionnaires were administered at the beginning of the school day before lessons began.

Research Analysis and Findings

Analysis of the questionnaire was carried out by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency and cross-tabulations were produced. The questionnaire was distributed in two schools in UK and two schools in Malaysia. In each country, one secular and one faith-based school were chosen. The questionnaire was designed for students between 13 and 14 years old and was completed by Year 8 and 9 students in UK and Form 1 and 2 students in Malaysia.

Knowledge of human rights in UK

Table 1 below describes the knowledge of human rights displayed by the students in the two schools in UK. The rights referred to are those relating

to their understanding of the rights of children per se, the right to their own beliefs and religion, right to education, participation rights, right to play, rights of children with disabilities, freedom from abuse, and animal rights. As the table below shows, over four-fifths of the children completing this questionnaire know that children, not just adults, have human rights and have a right to their own values and beliefs; that everyone has the right to have a basic standard of living; that every child has the right to relax and play and that children with disabilities have a right to access special care.

Table 1: Knowledge of human rights in UK

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
1. Human rights include the rights of children	%	%	%	%	%
Secular School (n=47)	66	34	0	0	0
Faith-based School (n=52)	54	39	2	2	4
2. Everyone has the right to a basic standard of living					
Secular School	51	49	0	0	0
Faith-based School	64	35	0	0	2
3. Everyone has the right to her/his own beliefs and religion					
Secular School	62	34	0	2	2
Faith-based School	78	18	2	2	0
4. Every child has the right to primary school education					
Secular School	65	30	4	0	0
Faith-based School	79	19	0	0	2
5. Every child has the right to say what she/he wants					
Secular School	52	35	7	4	2
Faith-based School	39	44	4	4	10
6. Every child has the right to relax and play					
Secular School	74	26	0	0	0
Faith-based School	56	33	10	0	2
7. Children with disabilities have the right to special care					
Secular School	68	21	4	4	2
Faith-based School	81	19	0	0	0

8. Teachers have the right to hit children					
Secular School	0	2	11	79	9
Faith-based School	4	6	10	80	0
9. Parents have the right to hit children					
Secular School	4	7	24	52	13
Faith-based School	2	19	29	40	10
10. Human rights are more important than animal rights					
Secular School	15	11	37	22	15
Faith-based School	2	31	29	17	21

During the follow-up interviews, most students in both schools demonstrated that they had some understanding of the basic concepts of human rights. One student in the faith-based school commented that "it's not right to judge people by the colour of their skin." This same student went on to say "different people have different colored skins and some like to judge." Another student agreed that "everyone should be treated the same no matter what race they are and religion" while a third student explained that human rights meant "treating people with respect and not different."

Students interviewed in the secular school gave different interpretations of the meaning of human rights. For example, one student gave the answer "adults or teachers are not allowed to hit children in school or stuff like that." Another Year 9 student said "human rights are something that can protect you from like laws and stuff." A third explained that rights were "something that everyone's entitled to, that everyone has the right to do something, like play a sport or something."

These responses indicate that the students interviewed have a broad and varied knowledge and understanding of human rights issues and can make connections between the concepts in questions 1-3. It would be interesting to know whether the students are aware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child because the data would suggest that they are aware of Article 6 (the right to life) and Article 14 (right to practice own belief and religion).

However, when these students were interviewed they did not mention anything about freedom of belief or religion despite the majority of them agreeing with this statement in the questionnaire. This is particularly interesting in the faith-based school context. The right to one's own religion and beliefs (question 3) is fundamental in ensuring tolerance in society and the

implications of this will be discussed further. However, students from both types of school indicated that they were willing to accept new friends with different faiths. One of the students said "I think it is good to learn stuff about people like that" which indicates an awareness of the benefits of a diverse society.

Regarding the child's right to a primary education, the data collected in response to statement 5 indicates that 85 percent of secular school students and 98 percent of faith-based school students agreed with this statement. The figures are similar for the statement "every child has the right to say what [she/he] want[s]" with most students agreeing. The number of students disagreeing was small – 11 percent in the secular school and 8 percent in the faith-based school. One possible explanation for the high number of students agreeing with this statement is that both cohorts experience a high degree of freedom of expression in school and in the home. The higher figure for the secular school may also be a reflection of the differing school ethos concerning students' rights and responsibilities, school rules and belief systems that enable the students in the secular school to have more voice within the school.

The statement "Every child has the right to relax and play" elicited a high level of agreement from students in both schools. 100 percent of students in the secular school agreed with this statement and 90 percent in the faith-based school. One explanation for the high level of agreement with this statement may be that play and relaxation are at the core of most young people's lives and thus regarded as a fundamental right that all children should have.

Most students in both schools agreed with the statement "Children with disabilities have the right to special care." All students from the faith-based school agreed with this statement, while the vast majority in the secular school did so too. These findings indicate that students in both schools are aware of the right of children with disabilities to receive special care. Statements 9 and 10 relate to the right to freedom from abuse and sought to find out whether students believe that adults have the right to use corporal punishment. The data indicate that the majority of students in both schools are aware that teachers do not have the right to hit them. However, one in five students in the faith-based school believes it is acceptable for parents to do so. Interestingly, there are no responses in the "don't know" column regarding the right of teachers to hit children from the faith-based school

students; however 10 percent appear not to know if corporal punishment is allowed by parents.

The data indicate that students in the faith-based school are more likely to accept being hit by their parents than those from the secular school. This suggests that, although most students have a clear understanding of their human rights and are aware that hitting children is a violation of their rights, some are willing to accept this when it happens at home.

The statement "Human rights are more important than animal rights" produced a highly mixed response in both schools. In the secular school, the number of students who disagreed with the statement was more than double those who agreed. The number of students in the secular school answering "don't know" was also relatively high at 15 percent. The number of students in the faith-based school disagreeing with the statement was also higher than those agreeing but by a smaller margin of 13 percent. However, the number of students answering "don't know" (21 percent) was higher than in the secular school.

Domesticated animals are common in the UK with many families possessing dogs and/or cats and other small animals. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, in existence since 1824, regularly prosecutes perpetrators of abuse of animals and these cases frequently receive coverage in the local and/or national media. There is thus a high level of awareness concerning animal rights issues in UK. This prominence of animal rights in everyday life may partially explain why so many students in the English schools disagreed or were unsure whether human rights were more important than animal rights. In conclusion, the survey of students' knowledge of human rights indicates that there are few differences in the level of understanding between students in the secular and faith-based school. The main differences between students in the two schools occur in their attitudes and beliefs regarding corporal punishment by parents and teachers.

Knowledge of human rights in Malaysia

Table 2 describes the knowledge of human rights expressed by the students in the two schools in Malaysia. As before, the focus is on the rights deemed most relevant to human rights education and thus some questions considered not relevant have been omitted.

Table 2: Knowledge of Human Rights in Malaysia

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
1. Human rights include the rights of children	%	%	%	%	%
Secular School (n=35)	31	46	3	0	20
Faith School (n=67)	31	36	8	6	19
2. Everyone has the right to a basic standard of living					
Secular School	31	51	0	3	14
Faith-based School	34	45	3	0	18
3. Everyone has the right to [her/his] own beliefs and religion					
Secular School	65	24	0	6	6
Faith-based School	55	37	2	0	6
4. Every child has the right to primary school education					
Secular School	51	31	9	0	9
Faith-based School	58	30	8	2	3
5. Every child has the right to say what [she/he] want[s]					
Secular School	24	65	6	0	6
Faith-based School	22	49	10	6	12
6. Every child has the right to relax and play					
Secular School	54	40	0	0	6
Faith-based School	47	41	8	0	5
7. Children with disabilities have the right to special care					
Secular School	66	29	3	0	3
Faith-based School	58	30	8	0	5
8. Teachers have the right to hit children					
Secular School	9	57	26	6	3
Faith-based School	12	40	21	10	16
9. Parents have the right to hit children					
Secular School	26	60	6	3	6
Faith-based School	31	51	8	2	9
10. Human rights are more important than animal rights					
Secular School	13	37	13	7	29
Faith-based School	24	31	24	5	16

Analysis of the responses to the first statement "Human rights include the rights of children" is interesting because an average of 72 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed with this statement in both schools. However, nearly 20 percent of students in both schools responded "don't know" and a small number did not agree with the statement. This would suggest that not all students in Malaysia are aware of child rights and this may be an indication of the newness of the subject within the Malaysian education system.

The majority of students agreed with the statement "Everyone has the right to a basic standard of living" but there were also students who did not know if this was correct. This raises some concerns about how much knowledge some students have about basic human rights. However, the "don't know" responses might be due to the difficulty in understanding the concept of a basic standard of living for some students. Using the term "basic living standards" assumes an understanding of the disparity between living standards which some students may not have.

The data relating to the statement "Everyone has the right to [her/his] own beliefs and religion" indicates that 89 percent of students in the secular school and 92 percent of students in the faith-based school agreed with this statement. One explanation for this might be that these issues are fully addressed in the school curriculum in both schools. It is also important to note here that Malaysia is a multicultural society with three major religions and it is a societal expectation and norm that religious tolerance is exercised and upheld by its citizens. However, there are continuing racial tensions between ethnic groups and there are concerns about fundamentalist teaching in some faith-based schools. Thus, it is encouraging that the knowledge base of these students did not appear to reflect such tensions.

Statements 5, 6, 7 and 8 are related to children's rights to education, freedom of speech, relax and play and the rights of children with disabilities. The vast majority of students from both faith-based and secular schools agreed with these statements. However, a small percentage of students did not know if children have these rights. This response may be due to the students' lack of knowledge of child rights or their difficulty in fully understanding the statements. The percentage that disagreed with the statement is similar to that of the "don't know" responses. The reasons for these responses were explored further during student interviews.

The high percentage of students who agreed with the statements would seem to indicate that students in Malaysia are becoming more aware of child rights issues. The data illustrate that this is especially true for the rights of children with disabilities, where student opinion reflects that of Malaysian society in general where support for special educational provision for children with disabilities has become the norm. Statements 9 and 10 relate to the right to protection from abuse. The data show that more than 80 percent of students believed that parents had a right to hit their children. There was a mixed response regarding teachers hitting children. Half of the students in both schools believed that teachers have this right; however a sizeable minority (approximately 30 percent) disagreed. A considerable number of students from both schools responded that they did not know their rights with regard to this issue. The data suggest that, despite most students being aware of their right not to be physically abused, they are more willing to accept corporal punishment from parents.

It must be noted that in contrast to English schools, it is accepted practice that teachers in Malaysia have the right to use corporal punishment, though as a last resort, as part of school disciplinary policy. It is also common practice for corporal punishment to be part of disciplinary practices within the home and family.

50 percent of the secular school students agreed with the statement "Human rights are more important than animal rights." 20 percent disagreed and 29 percent said they did not know. In the faith-based school, 55 percent of students agreed with the statement, though a higher percentage than in the secular school 29 percent disagreed. There was also a high number of students who ticked "do not know." The number of students in Malaysia who prioritized human rights over animal rights was much greater than in the UK. The low profile of the animal rights issue in Malaysia may explain these responses. Currently this issue is not discussed in Malaysian society and is not on the political agenda. The rights of animals remain insignificant compared to the need to ensure full human rights in Malaysia and as such are unlikely to be considered by most students. It may be that once human rights are fully addressed Malay society will turn its attention to animal welfare and animal rights.

During the interviews with the students the interviewer found it difficult to obtain information from students about their understanding of human rights and their knowledge appeared limited in contrast to the ques-

tionnaire responses. One group of students, when asked about what they knew about human rights, said that they "didn't know." Another group gave only one or two-word answers to questions and when asked to explain their answers further declined to do so stating that they "didn't know very much." Students appeared unable or unwilling to elaborate on their ideas and gave short responses such as "freedom", "freedom from oppression" and "freedom from colonialism." In conclusion, students seemed more confident to demonstrate their understanding of human rights during completion of the questionnaire than in the subsequent interview sessions where they were reticent about discussing their views at any length. It may be that they lacked confidence to discuss the concepts during the interview session.

Discussion and Conclusion: Comparative knowledge of human rights in UK and Malaysia

This section highlights interesting findings (either similarities or differences) between schools in the two countries or between faith-based and secular schools. The discussion focuses on whether the influential factor is the faith or the country context. Upon comparing the research data from the two countries it can be seen that a large percentage of students in both countries understand that children have basic human rights. However, in the Malaysian survey there were approximately 20 percent of students who felt that they did not have the knowledge or information needed to answer the questions. When asked about the right to a basic standard of living and the right to freedom of belief and religion there were no real differences between the views of students in each country. However, in Malaysia between 14 percent and 18 percent of students answered "did not know" compared to a very small percentage on this question in the UK survey. This again may be a reflection of the relative newness of human rights education in Malaysia compared to the UK.

The statements regarding the right to education, freedom of expression and the right to play and relax elicited similar findings in both countries. Overall, majority of the students agreed with these statements. However, there was a significant percentage of students from faith-based schools in both countries who did not agree or did not know if children had a right to say what they want. This can probably be explained by the students' experience of having less freedom of expression at home and school because of

strict moral and religious practices, which limits their right to disagree and/or express opinions. Most students in UK believed that teachers and parents do not have the right to use corporal punishment, though this view was not so strongly held among the faith-based school students. In Malaysia, the picture is markedly different. One-third of students in both schools disagreed and two-thirds agreed or strongly agreed with the right of teachers to use corporal punishment. 80 percent of students from both schools also agreed or strongly agreed that it was acceptable for their parents to hit them which contrasted sharply with the view expressed by the English students.

These variances may be explained by the cultural differences between UK and Malaysia. In Malaysia, it is a norm for parents to physically chastise their children; whereas in UK this practice is becoming culturally unacceptable. As discussed earlier, it is also the norm for physical punishment to be part of the disciplinary process in Malaysian schools, whereas in UK this is illegal. UK students were much more concerned about animal rights than students in Malaysia. Only around a quarter of secular school students and a third of faith-based school students in UK agreed with the statement that "Human rights are more important than animal rights." In Malaysia, over half of the students surveyed in each school agreed with the statement. As previously discussed, the issue of animal rights does not really exist as such in Malaysian society and is therefore less likely to be of concern. Responses from the faith-based schools showed that 46 percent of the English students also disagreed with the statement as compared to 29 percent in Malaysia.

Concluding Statement

It can be observed that knowledge of human rights among students is greater in UK but students from the faith-based schools in both countries are less sure of their right to voice an opinion and to freedom from abuse. These findings are important because they suggest that teacher education and training need to address the practical realities of implementing the concept of inclusion of human rights education rather than just its theories and principles. Concerns about how new teachers are going to implement human rights education practices in situations with limited resources, large classes and high teaching loads would seem to be most effectively focused in preservice training. This is obviously a complex area, though overall the more

positive teachers are about including human rights education during initial training they tend to be more accepting and accommodating in practice.

Also, further research is needed on how the benefits of using human rights education as an instrument to focus on child rights generally and rights of children with disabilities particularly in order to safeguard their interest will lead to quality education.

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2 "A 'reservation' allows a State to disagree with a provision in a treaty. The State can still approve the treaty as a whole, with reservations serving as exceptions." See "CRC reservations," UNICEF Malaysia, www.unicef.org/malaysia/17982_crc-reservations-malaysia.html.

3 The government of Malaysia maintains reservation on the following provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- Article 2 on non-discrimination
- Article 7 on name and nationality
- Article 14 on freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Article 28(1)(a) on free and compulsory education at primary level
- Article 37 on torture and deprivation of liberty

"CRC reservations," UNICEF Malaysia, www.unicef.org/malaysia/17982_crc-reservations-malaysia.html.

Strengthening the Role of Teacher Training Programs in Human Rights Education: the Case of Japan*

Kazuhiko Hayashizaki, Kazuyo Matsushita and Kazuki Itayama

One of the fruits of the United Nations' Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) was that Japan's Diet passed the "Act for the Promotion of Human Rights Education and Awareness" (2000). Even with this law, however, human rights education has not been given proper support from the government. Given this sporadic promotion of human rights education nationwide, we argue that promoting human rights education in higher education, especially within teacher training courses, is crucial for its (human rights education) wider promotion in the Japanese school system.

Currently, it is difficult to assess how far the promotion of human rights education has progressed in Japan's higher education system due to lack of basic data. Therefore, the preliminary stages of our research required us to conduct a quantitative survey of the prevalence and nature of human rights education in Japan's higher education institutions.

We restricted our inquiry to teacher training courses, taught in Japanese universities and colleges. Specifically, we gathered data to show how many courses support human rights education, and the quality of the human rights education provided. We also examined how the teaching of human rights education in higher education institutions has developed, before looking at what best practice in teacher training courses would look like.

Human Rights Education in Japan

Japan's *Diet* (parliament) enacted the "Act for the Promotion of Human Rights Education and Awareness" in 2000 that defined the duties of both central and local governments to support human rights education inside and outside the school system.

* This article is based on the presentation made by the authors at the 8th International Conference on Human Rights Education, Montreal, 2 December 2017.

However, despite the passage of this law, human rights education has not been taught as a subject in Japan's official national school curriculum. Schools have no textbook on the official content on teaching human rights, nor allocated time within the curriculum for human rights education. There are also few specialists in human rights education. The phrase "Human Rights" appears only a few times in the guidelines of the curriculum *(Gakushu-shido-youryo)*.

The teaching of human rights in the Japanese school system happens mostly because schools and teachers voluntarily undertake the task. In these schools, human rights education is usually addressed within subjects such as social studies, moral education, and integrated studies (studies on specific topics).

In 2008, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) drew up guidelines for teaching human rights. The guidelines defined human rights education, its target and an outline on how to promote it in schools. They also stated that human rights education should be holistically incorporated into all aspects of education in schools.

Three recent important laws that also relate to human rights education have been enacted, namely:

- Disability Discrimination Act (2013, Act No. 65); [1]
- Act for the Measures Against Hate Speech Towards Immigrants (2016); [2]
- Act for the Measures Against Burakumin Discrimination (2016).[3]

These laws have provisions on raising awareness on the rights of the people concerned – people with disabilities, foreign immigrants and *Burakumin*.

The law against hate speech, for example, provides the following:[4]

> (Enhancement of Education, etc.)
> Article 6
> (1) The national government shall implement educational activities in order to eliminate unfair discriminatory speech and behavior against persons originating from outside Japan, and shall make the necessary efforts therefor.
> (2) The local governments shall implement educational activities in order to eliminate unfair discriminatory speech and behavior against persons originating from outside Japan in accordance with the actual situation of the region, taking into ac-

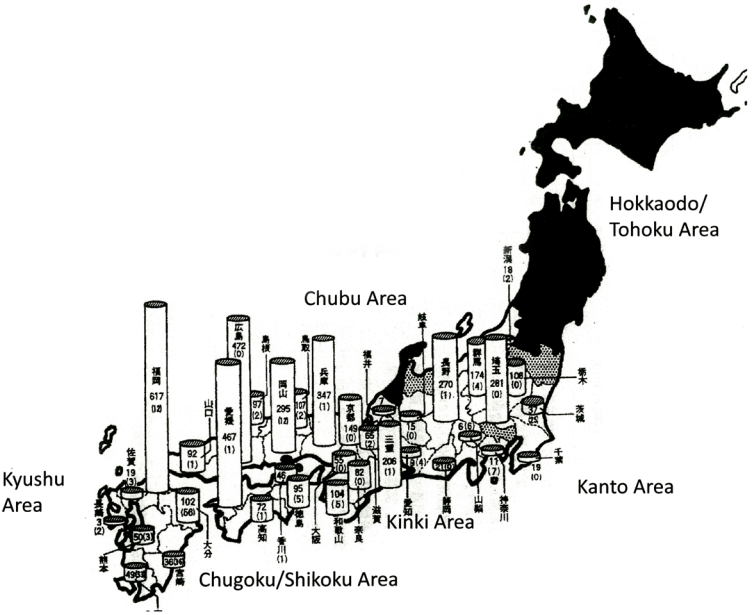
> count the sharing of appropriate roles with the national government, and shall endeavor to make the necessary efforts therefor.
>
> (Awareness-raising Activities, etc.)
>
> Article 7
>
> (1) The national government shall spread awareness among the general public about the need to eliminate unfair discriminatory speech and behavior against persons originating from outside Japan, and implement public relations activities for the purpose of furthering understanding thereof and other awareness-raising activities, and shall make the necessary efforts therefor.
>
> (2) The local governments shall spread awareness among the local residents about the need to eliminate unfair discriminatory speech and behavior against persons originating from outside Japan in accordance with the actual situation of the region, taking into account the sharing of appropriate roles with the national government, and implement public relations activities for the purpose of furthering understanding thereof and other awareness-raising activities, and shall make the necessary efforts therefor.

However, these laws have been criticized for lacking penalties for acts of discrimination.

Anti-discrimination Education

Regional and local government policies impacted human rights education practice, particularly in areas where minority rights have long been fought for by activists and grassroots movements (e.g., western Japan's Buraku Liberation Movement). These activists and movements promoted education against discrimination of Japanese who were identified as *Burakumin*. This anti-discrimination education, known as "Dowa Education," resulted from a teachers' movement to improve the education for *Burakumin*. This teachers' movement worked closely with the Buraku Liberation Movement.

Buraku means hamlet; at present these hamlets are sometimes called *Dowa* districts. The people living in these districts are known as Burakumin (People of the Hamlet). The *Burakumin* are one of Japan's major ethnic minorities. Thought of as outcasts during the Edo Era (1603-1868), they still suffer discrimination and higher rates of poverty till the present.



Number of Dowa districts (Buraku) by prefecture.

"Dowa Education" is considered to have made a positive impact on the promotion of human rights education.[5] Dowa Education is the result of a teachers' movement to improve the education for *Burakumin*.

Government Support

The Japanese government has repeatedly cut funding for national universities since 2005. In 2014, meanwhile, 45.8 percent of private universities also failed to recruit their targeted number of students (MEXT 2015). This situation is linked to the government's financial reforms and Japan's decreasing population.

The government has not required higher education institutions to teach human rights in teacher training courses. Human rights education classes are optional and voluntarily offered by the teacher-training institutions.

Also, with limited funding, higher education institutions reduced the number of teaching staff and their classes. Human rights education easily became a target for removal whenever restructuring in the university was on

the table. For example, the Fukuoka University of Education cut classes with "human rights education" in their name, from four to two classes.

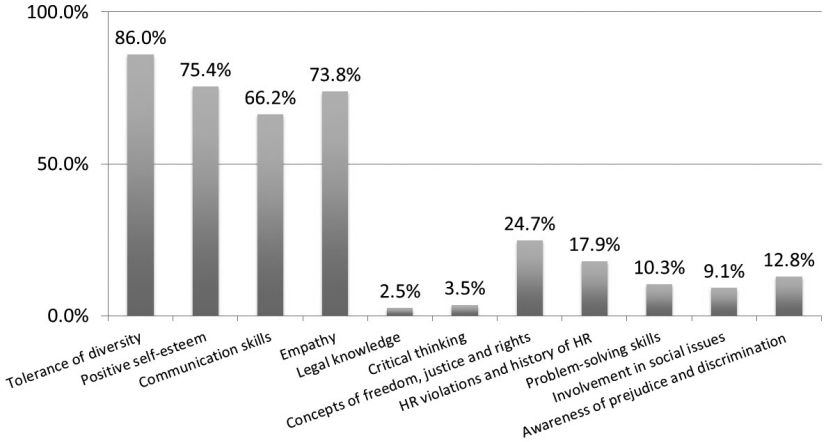
Survey on Human Rights Education

The MEXT did a survey of primary, secondary and special education needs (SEN) schools in 2013 to find out how widely human rights education was promoted among schools. Questionnaires were sent to, and collected by, all local boards of education in Japan's forty-seven prefectures and 1,785 cities and towns. In addition, 1,872 publicly-funded primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and SEN schools were chosen by random sampling.

The following are the key results of the survey:

- 89 percent of local boards of education had formulated promotional guidelines or plans for human rights education, and 87 percent had monitored the progress of human rights education in their respective areas;
- 84 percent of schools had introduced human rights education teacher trainings and 75 percent had formulated their own annual plans for human rights education;
- Schools complained of "few materials" and "little time" for human rights education;
- On contents of human rights education – majority of the respondents mentioned "tolerance of diversity," "positive self-esteem," "empathy," and "communication skills" as contents. See Graph 1 for other information.

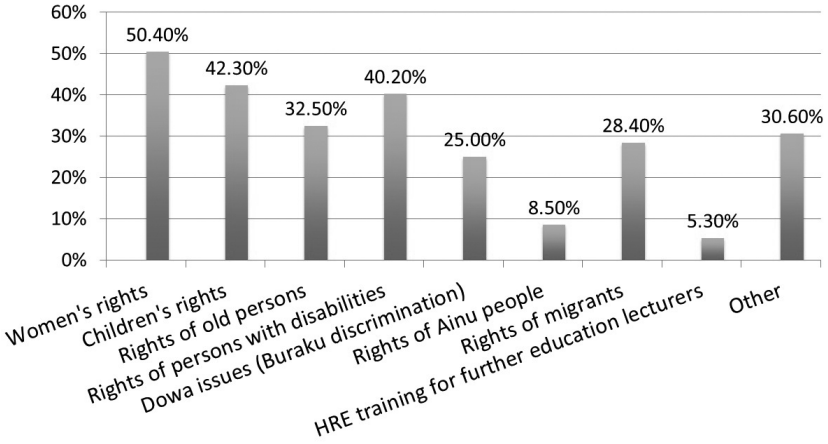
Graph 1. Which human rights education competencies and skills are taught in your school?



MEXT did a survey in 2012 on human rights education in universities' curricular reform. The survey inquired if universities offered subjects on specific human rights issues. Out of the seven hundred sixty-six Japanese universities that received the survey questionnaires,

- Five hundred thirty-five universities (71.9 percent) offered classes with human rights or human rights education component,
- Two hundred nineteen universities (29.4 percent) have at least one of these human rights/human rights education classes offered as a compulsory subject. See Graph 2 for more information on survey results.

Graph 2. Percentage of universities offering classes on specific human rights issues (pre-filled options)



From the MEXT research we find that many schools insisted on teaching human rights but they put more importance on behavior and attitude such as being tolerant, being confident, or being kind to others, and put little emphasis on skills and knowledge. Also, we find that universities focus most on women's rights. However, ethnic minorities' issues such as *Buraku, Ainu* and immigrants are taught in relatively fewer classes.

Research Purpose and Design

Considering the policy on human rights education in the Japanese school system as well as the current situation, the support of teacher training programs in this field necessitates an inquiry.

The research project on teacher training programs, started in 2015, is founded on the view that promoting human rights education in higher education institutions, especially within teacher training courses, is crucial for its (human rights education) wider promotion in schools.

Currently, there is a lack of basic data on institutions that have formally incorporated human rights education teaching into their curriculums.

The preliminary stages of the research required the conduct of a quantitative survey of the prevalence and nature of human rights education in Japan's higher education institutions.

The research was limited to teacher training courses taught in universities and colleges. Specifically, the research gathered data to show the number of courses that provide access to human rights education and the quality of human rights education provided.

It also inquired on how the best practice in human rights education in teacher training courses would look like, in order to formulate suggestions how it should be developed in other higher education institutions.

Research Methodology

The project employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative research started in 2015 and involved the following:

- Examination of MEXT data, specifically looking at human rights/human rights education in teacher training courses;
- Preliminary study involving distribution of questionnaires on classes concerning human rights and minority issues in the two hundred sixty-seven teacher training courses in Japan; and
- Examination of syllabuses (where publicly available) to know the content being offered in cases of failure of institutions to reply to the questionnaire.

Qualitative research was done during the 2016-2017 period by interviewing professors concerned with human rights education in their respec-

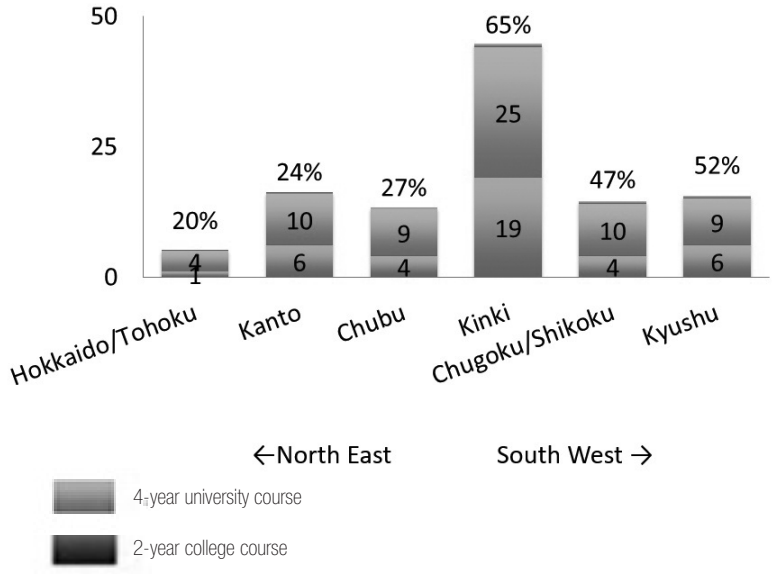
tive higher education institutions. The professors were chosen based on their general reputation on human rights education work. Professors from seven universities were interviewed. The programs of two visited universities are presented as case studies below.

Research Results: Content analysis of syllabuses

The analysis of syllabuses revealed the following findings:

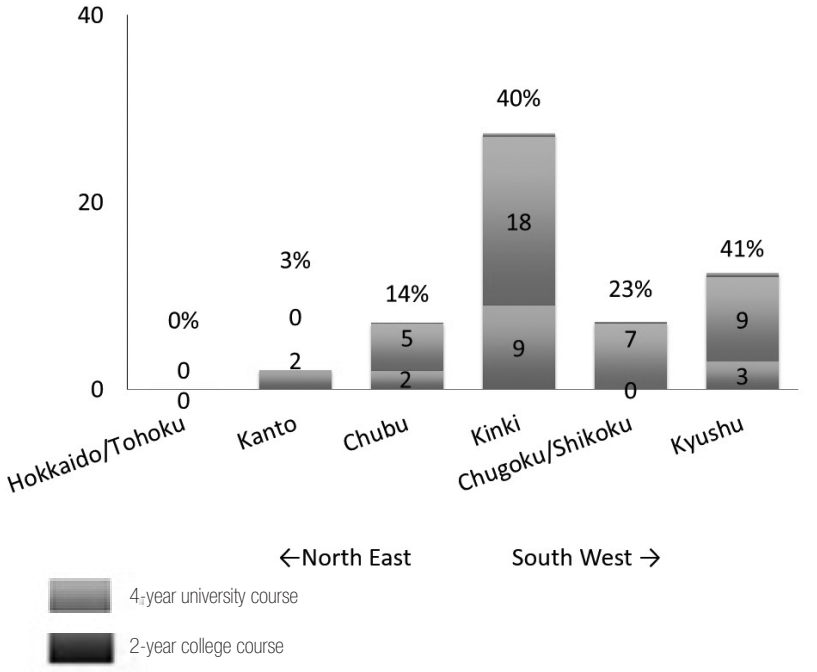
- One hundred seven out of two hundred sixty-seven (40 percent) teacher training courses offer subjects with titles containing the words "human rights(人権)" or "right(権利)".
- Offerings differed by region (see Graph 3 below).

Graph 3. Number of institutions offering subjects with titles containing the words "human rights"



The influence of the Buraku Liberation Movement is seen in the subjects offered in teacher training courses.

Graph 4. Number of institutions offering subjects with content on Dowa issues (Buraku discrimination) by region (n=267)



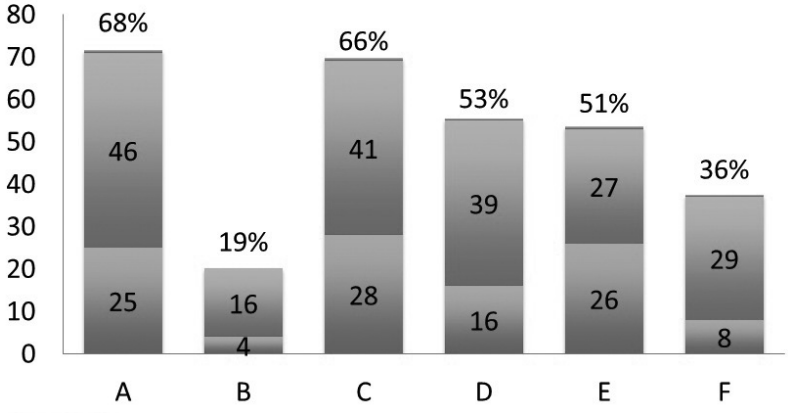
An analysis of one hundred four syllabuses of higher education providers (universities and colleges) revealed six categories of human rights/human rights education content, namely:

- Concepts of human rights;
- Human rights laws, conventions, documents, and knowledge and skill for protecting human rights;
- Respect for diversity and resolve to support anti-discrimination initiatives;
- Dowa Issues (*Buraku* discrimination);
- Realizing and teaching human rights in school; and
- Child rights.

The syllabus analysis revealed that most of the universities and colleges reviewed offered courses on "Concepts of human rights" and "Respect for diversity and resolve to support anti-discrimination initiatives." For universities, the "Dowa Issues (*Buraku* discrimination)" content was also offered more often.

Graph 5 provides information on the number of universities and colleges that offer the different categories of human rights/human rights education content.

Graph 5. Percentage of higher education providers offering human rights content, by content area (n=104)



Note: A - Concepts of human rights; B - Human rights laws, conventions, documents, and knowledge and skill for protecting human rights; C - Respect for diversity and resolve to support anti-discrimination initiatives; D - Dowa Issues (Buraku discrimination); E - Realizing and teaching human rights in school; and F - Child rights

Other Findings and Conclusions

The research project also found that

- Human rights subjects were compulsory in 26 percent of universities (four-year courses) and 41 percent of junior colleges (two-year courses).
- 60 percent of teaching staff in charge of subjects concerning human rights worked full-time in universities; while colleges have 65 percent of such staff worked full time.

Considering the research findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

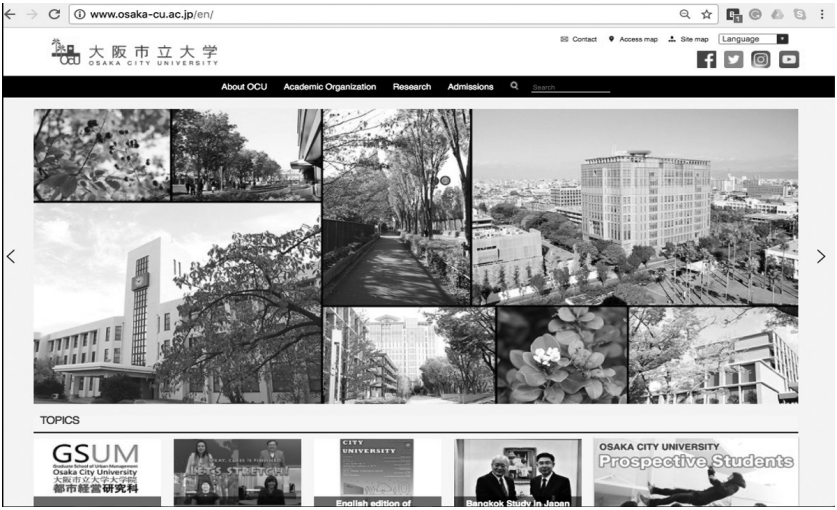
- Human rights education offerings in teacher training institutions were not significantly different from those offered by general universities;
- There are regional differences in higher education human rights education offerings;
- Approximately 40 percent of human rights teaching staff are employed on a part-time basis, which limits the ability of higher education institutions to take a holistic and organized approach to implementing human rights education program.

Research Results Part II

The research project included a search for best practices in human rights education in colleges and universities. Two universities were selected for having good practice: The Osaka City University and the Kyoto Seika University.

Case Study One: Osaka City University (OCU)

The Osaka City University (OCU) is located in Osaka city, the biggest city in west Japan with a long history as a commercial and industrial city, has the largest *Buraku* area (Dowa district) and a strong *Buraku* liberation movement.



OCU traces its origin to the Osaka Commercial Training Institute that was founded in 1880. In 1928, it became the first city-founded university in Japan. Two Noble Prize winners have worked at OCU: Professor Yoichiro Nambu (Physics, 2008)[6] and Professor Shinya Yamanaka (Medicine, 2012).[7] OCU has eight undergraduate faculties and ten graduate schools with more than 8,000 students and 2,000 staff. Its teacher training courses are optional add-ons in many faculties.

Good Practices in OCU

OCU has good human rights/human rights education practice for the following reasons:

- Many human rights classes are available to all students
  - Sixteen classes concerning human rights can be accessed by all students, plus an extra two compulsory classes for students in the teacher training course.
- Whole university approach to human rights
  - It has the Research Center for Human Rights (RCHR) that plays a central role in organizing many research projects, academic and educational events, and in the education of students and training of staff;[8]
  - It has a Human Rights Committee (with members from all faculties) that is responsible for discussing and managing human rights issues within the university;
  - In 2001, it adopted the Osaka City University Declaration of Human Rights 2001 which is publically accessible online.[9]
  - Support to minority students
  - The university provides easily accessible support to victims of human rights violations and students with disabilities.

The human rights classes in OCU (some of which are compulsory for students in the teacher training course) are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Human rights classes

Contemporary Buraku Issues	Media and Human Rights	Frontier of Buraku Liberation	History of Buraku Discrimination
Minorities in the World	Disability and Human Rights I	Disability and Human Rights II	Peace and Human Rights
Peacekeeping Studies	Gender and Society I	Gender and Society II	Ethnic Studies I
Ethnic Studies II	Corporations and Human Rights	Global Citizenship and Human Rights	Seminar on Human Rights and Diversity

These classes are taught by full-time tenured, full-time non-tenured and part-time teachers.

78 percent of all students in OCU completed at least one of the classes above (2008 OCU survey).

Students in the teacher training course must also complete the following courses:[10]

- Human Rights Education and Career Education I
- Human Rights Education and Career Education II.

These courses are meant to raise the minorities' (mainly *Burakumin,* Korean residents and the persons with disabilities, but other foreign residents are covered as well) educational achievements and ensure their career in the future after leaving school.

The Research Center for Human Rights (RCHR) has the following staff: one full-time tenured teacher, three full-time non-tenured teachers, fifteen teaching staff holding a post in other OCU faculty, six non-paid research assistants and three non-teaching staff.

RCHR organizes research projects and study tours for staff. It started a human rights education exchange program with Taipei Soochow University in 2016.

It organizes the "Salon de Human Rights" eight to nine times a year and the "Film de Human Rights" three times a year for staff, students and the general public.

"Salon de Human Rights" is a public lecture featuring a special guest, and has been held at least one hundred thirty times (as of February 2017).

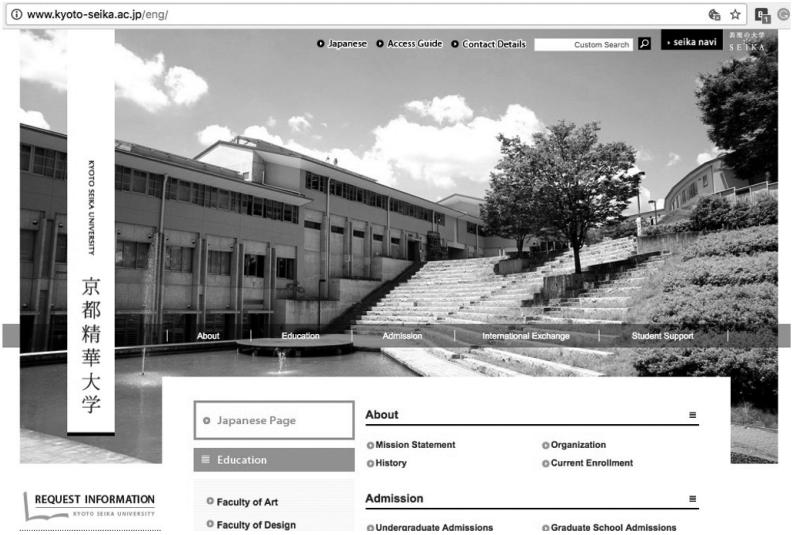
RCHR publishes an annual bulletin called *Human Rights Issue Study* since 2001. It replaced the *Dowa Issue Study* publication that was published during 1977-2001 period.

OCU's Human Rights Committee organizes:

- Orientation on Human Rights and Discrimination for all freshman students;
- Lectures and symposiums, during the annual Human Rights week;
- Publishes the newsletter *The Frontier of Human Rights* and distributes copies to all freshman students and new staff;
- Publishes the book *Human Rights Handbook* (five volumes so far) and distributes them to event attendees. The five volumes consist of the following themes: 1. Buraku Issue; 2. Gender; 3. Migrants; 4. Environment and Human Rights; and 5. Persons with Disabilities.

The Committee started its human rights education activities in the 1960s, when student movements protested against racist and discriminative incidents in the campus. The OCU officials attempted to address these concerns but the incidents continued in the 1970s, prompting OCU leadership to take further action including human rights education and other measures.

Case Study Two: Kyoto Seika University (Seika)



The Kyoto Seika University (Seika) is located in Kyoto city, the old capital city in west Japan. The city is host to many universities, and many politically liberal and highly educated people reside there.

Seika is a small private university and composed of five undergraduate faculties and four graduate schools. It has more than three thousand students and one hundred fifty-six teaching staff in the Humanities, Art, Design, Manga and Popular Culture Faculties.

It was founded in 1968 with the strong leadership and ideals of the first President, Okamoto Seichi, who imagined and created a progressive, liberal, and humanistic alternative to other universities existing at that time.

Some people unofficially called Seika a university of the "new left", particularly during the time of the student movement in the 1960s to 1970s.

Support for Minorities and Equality

Seika adopted the Declaration for the Promotion of Diversity in 2015 to promote support for minority students and to reduce discrimination against minorities such as LGBTQ students.[11]

It also has several initiatives to support minority students and staff such as the following:

- Employment benefits applying to same-sex couples (childcare leave, condolence payment, etc.);
- Plan for more universal toilets;
- Allowing the change of names and sexes in university registrations;
- Non-inclusion of sex in university-issued certificates;
- Introduction of *Halal* food in the lunch café;
- Support for related research projects with funds from the university President, such as "Career Support for Students with Developmental Disorders."

Research Results

The research project found several common features of good human rights education program in Japanese universities:

- Many of these universities developed human rights education programs during the 1960-1970 period in response to social movements prevailing at that time;
- They offer multiple opportunities for learning about human rights - not only in classes and university events, but also via other methods

such as during ceremonial occasions (for example, giving guidance on human rights during the enrollment ceremony);
- There is strong leadership by university presidents and executives that allow the human rights education programs to flourish;
- They employ the whole university approach, sometimes via a Human Rights Committee;
- They develop guidelines and adopt declarations on protecting and promoting human rights;
- They have dedicated organizations/centers for promoting human rights education, with specialist staff in human rights;
- They have many general teaching staff with strong understanding of human rights education.

Some Conclusions and Suggestions

The research project provided data on the state of human rights education in Japanese universities. The analysis of the gathered data supports an initial set of conclusions and suggestions regarding further research on human rights education in Japanese universities:

- There is limited research on human rights education in higher education institutions in Japan. This project constitutes the initial analysis of human rights education in these institutions in the country;
- Due to lack of access to older data, there can be no certainty on the human rights classes that existed and how they changed over time. However, current data show 40 percent of Japanese teacher training courses include human rights issues, which we think is inadequate. Further, legal knowledge and skills are rarely taught in teacher training courses;
- Human rights education in Japanese schools places more emphasis on attitudes, not on knowledge and skills;
- The inadequate number of university courses with human rights content means that learning about human rights education is dependent on on-the-job training, rather than in the formal education setting.

In recent years, right-wing voices have become increasingly powerful within Japan's political establishment. As in much of the Western world, human rights education in Japan is under threat, as we see racist, xenopho-

bic, exclusionist and pro-eugenics arguments go largely unchallenged in the mainstream media. In the current environment, it is not easy to encourage central and local governments or civil society to engage proactively with the promotion of human rights education. As a consequence, so far there has been little attempt made to monitor the prevalence of human rights education in higher education institutions or to evaluate its practice.

Our research takes a step towards resolving this, making clear what has been achieved in Japan during the second phase of the UN's World Programme for Human Rights Education and outlining what more needs to be done in the next phases in order to strengthen the role of teacher training courses in promoting human rights education to the wider society. Case studies of existing good practices can be used to guide institutions wishing to promote and expand their human rights education programs. The results of this research project will be disseminated as reference material for universities and colleges interested in improving their human rights education programs.

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Endnotes

1 For a presentation on the contents of the law see Chapter 1 - Basic Policy for Eliminating Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, www8.cao.go.jp/shougai/english/annualreport/2015/pdf/s1-1.pdf.

2 See full text of the anti-hate speech law at Ministry of Justice, www.moj.go.jp/content/001199550.pdf.

3 See HURIGHTS OSAKA, "Law Against Buraku Discrimination," FOCUS Asia-Pacific, Volume 87, March 2017, www.hurights.or.jp/archives/focus/section3/2017/03/law-against-buraku-discrimination.html.

4 Text from Ministry of Justice, www.moj.go.jp/content/001199550.pdf

5 For information on the Dowa education history and initiatives, read the following:

- Mori Minoru and Yasumasa Hirasawa, "DOWA Education and Human Rights," *Human Rights Education in Asian Schools,* Volume I, 1998, www.hurights.or.jp/archives/human_rights_education_in_asian_schools/section2/1998/03/dowa-education-and-human-rights.html.
- Ichiro Akashi, "Zendokyo and Other Groups: Teachers' Commitment to Dowa Education," *Human Rights Education in Asian Schools*, Volume II, 1999, www.hurights.or.jp/archives/human_rights_education_in_asian_schools/section2/1999/03/zendokyo-and-other-groups-teachers-commitment-to-dowa-education.html.
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6 The Nobel Prize in Physics 2008, Noble Prize, www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/physics/laureates/2008/.

7 The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2012, NoblePrize.org, www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/2012/.

8 See the profile of the Research Center for Human Rights (RCHR) at http://hurights.pbworks.com/w/page/11947509/Japan-Centers#ResearchCenterforHumanRightsRCHR.

9 This document is available at www.osaka-cu.ac.jp/en/about/declaration2001 and also at HURIGHTS OSAKA website: www.hurights.or.jp/archives/other_docu-

ments/section1/2001/12/osaka-city-university-declaration-of-human-rights-2001.html.

10 They generally refer to *Gakuryoku-hosho and Shinro-hosho* in Japanese.

11 See the text of the declaration in Japanese in www.kyoto-seika.ac.jp/info/info/univ/2016/04/29/36854/.

Annex A
Part II Research Results: Case Study Two
Introduction of some Seika teaching staff

President, Prof. TAKEMIYA Keiko	Manga artist. Her work is known to include one of the earliest sexual expressions of gay boys. Published the university's declaration of diversity in 2015 to support all minority students.
Prof. Oussouby SACKO	The first Black African university president in Japan by 2018. Specializes in architecture and community development.
Prof. NAKASHIMA Masazumi	Specialized in multiculturalism. Teaches classes such as "Human Rights", "Human Rights Education" and "Modern Racism and Discrimination."
Prof. SUMITOMO Tsuyoshi	Specialized in education and law. Oversees the teacher training course, teaches many classes including child rights. Supports children and victims of poverty and violence.
Prof. Rebecca JENNISON	Specialized in literary criticism. Teaches gender issues.
Prof. YAMADA Sohei	Specialized in urban sociology. Gay activist. Teaches LGBTQ issues.
Prof. HOSOKAWA Komei	Anthropologist. Studies Aboriginal Australians. Involved in the anti-nuclear movement.
Prof. SHIRAI Satoshi	Specialized in political philosophy. Studies post-war Japan, and Lenin.

From Pity to Compassion: The Ethics of Care and Human Rights Education

Yuka Kitayama and Yoriko Hashizaki

This paper explores learning approaches for human rights education focusing on the ethics of care. Human rights education is primarily aimed at understanding principles of human rights as a core to support democracy, and to provide a basis to societies that promote justice and peace in the world (Osler & Starkey, 1999). In human rights education, it is vital to understand human rights in the context of politics and everyday realities, that might be different from the ideals of human rights, and to explore human rights as a tool for change and transformation (Osler & Starkey, 2010). Hence, human rights education may involve not only an endorsement of human rights principles, but also emotional engagements such as imagination, empathy, and support to encourage students to commit to human rights issues.

With regard to emotional engagements, this paper argues that pity and compassion are different sentiments. Drawing on Nel Noddings' conception of the ethics of care, it discusses theories and practices of compassionate learning of human rights education which would provide more inclusive approaches for social justice than the liberal theories of justice (Okano, 2016). It examines a case study of human rights education at a junior secondary school in Japan which aims to promote caring attitude of students and encourage them to learn from others' struggles by taking their perspectives. It investigates the care approaches for human rights education which connect stories of particular individuals to the universality of human rights, and argue how they foster a sense of solidarity with common humanity.

Emotional Terrain of Human Rights Education

Human Rights Education in Japan

Human rights education in Japan has been influenced significantly by Dowa education, which has been implemented since the 1950s especially in western Japan. It has theories and practices that overlap with human

rights education and multicultural education, and has been one of the most influential educational initiatives for social justice in Japanese education (Hirasawa, 2009). It addresses the inequality issues faced by *Burakumin* children, who are believed to be descendants of former outcast communities, face and aims to empower them and combat discrimination against *Burakumin*. Dowa education tends to emphasize moral values, building the students' self-esteem, and tackling interpersonal discrimination. Consequently, relational and emotional dimensions such as "kindness" and "sympathy" have been placed in the center of learning. Since human rights education in Japan developed in close relationship with Dowa education, human rights education also tends to focus on interpersonal relationships and emphasizes emotional aspects rather than legal and political aspects of human rights (Ikuta, 2007). Nevertheless, Se and Karatsu (2004) argues that consideration of personal relationships and the fostering of empathy are commonly stressed both in school and family education, and human rights education can be implemented more effectively by focusing on the relational and emotional dimensions because such approaches are more familiar for pupils educated in Japanese society. Akuzawa (2002), however, criticizes this emotion-centered approach of human rights education as it often neglects concrete legal rights underpinned by the Constitution and/or international human rights instruments. Furthermore, Ikuta (2007) points out that Japanese human rights education is typically depoliticized by emphasizing the moral dimension, tends to overlook legal conceptions of rights and confuses equity with egalitarianism.

Empathy and Learning from Others' Perspectives

Feelings of concern about others are not constrained by borders. Empathy in human rights education therefore implies a cosmopolitan vision as its source (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Appiah (2005) stresses the importance of imagination and conversation in his arguments about cosmopolitanism because they bring "imaginative engagement" (page 85). This "conversation" does not only mean an exchange of languages, but indicates a "metaphor for engagement with the experience and the ideas of others" (ibid., 85) across boundaries, such as national or religious borders of people. He argues that cosmopolitanism can be realized not by sharing a whole set of values or reasoning of others, but by a capacity to imagine others who have different

ways of living, values and reasoning. He also notes that it does not require people to have a consensus particularly about their values.

Barton and Levstik (2004) define historical empathy as an act of care which involves emotions and a sense of civil and social justice. They suggest perspective-taking as a critical skill that promotes the students' understanding about historical facts from the minorities' viewpoints and helps them to imagine their experiences and feelings. In his study on human rights education though indigenous history at two Swedish secondary schools, Nygren (2016) illustrates that students described different historical perspectives through critical referencing and corroborating in their writing assignments, and connected such injustice in the past to the conceptions of human rights in the present. Students "care about the past, care that people were treated unjustly, care for people suffering and care to connect the past to the present and the future" in this learning process (Nygren 2016, 130).

In contrast, a study by Røthing and Svendsen (2011) about the Social Studies curriculum in Norway suggests how human rights education could fail to connect particularity and universality of human rights. It reveals that human rights issues, such as gender inequality, are commonly portrayed as problems in other countries that are typically developing countries, and it may generate radicalized stereotypes and exclusions. It indicates that learning about sufferings of distant others may end up having a sense of superiority and pity without taking the other's perspectives that could provide a connection between the particularity of their human rights struggles and universal conception of human rights. In addition, an empirical study by Keskin (2014) examines the different elements of empathy as stages of the empathetic learning process. By scrutinizing the data collected from activities focusing on empathy, he highlights elements such as perspective-taking, feeling, understanding, acting, meaning, which are often considered as substitutions for empathy, but are not independent from empathy and forms the stages of empathetic learning process.

Although there are criticisms against human rights education in Japan for its emotion-focus approaches and disregard of the legal and political aspects (Akuzawa, 2002; Ikuta, 2007), the pedagogical effects of emotional approaches of human rights education have not been investigated much. In order to examine it from a pedagogical perspective, we examine the learning of human rights and democratic citizenship focusing on Nodding's conception of the *Ethics of Care.*

Conceptual Framework

In order to conceptualize human rights education focusing on the ethics of care, we start by exploring different forms of empathy drawing from Hannah Arendt's discussion about pity and compassion. Then we scrutinize the conception of care as an approach for human rights education, followed by an examination of the Council of Europe's empathy model for a key competence for democratic culture.

Pity, Compassion and Solidarity

Arendt (1963) argues about empathy by distinguishing pity and compassion as sentiments that both occur with a sense of co-suffering with real-life struggles of others. She problematizes pity as a sentiment which generalizes suffering beings to an abstract image. In her analysis of the French Revolution, pity comes from compassion for the suffering masses rather than suffering individuals, and consequently it generalizes others' sufferings and eliminates its individuality and particularity. In contrast, compassion occurs in a face-to-face situation with particular individuals who are suffering. She notes that this particularity of individuals and the direct connection with them do not leave a space for generalization, and this co-suffering with struggles of particular individuals or groups brings a sense of solidarity to students despite the physical distance between them.

Compassion may help students understand the sufferings of others; however, Arendt warns that because of its nature compassion may abolish the psychological distance between oneself and a suffering individual, and this close relation in the private sphere would disconnect them from the public realm. In other words, an experience of co-suffering with a particular individual makes the experience and situation too special, and prevents the person from locating own suffering to a wider context. Instead, she emphasizes the importance of a sense of solidarity which is triggered by another's struggle. Mediated by concerns for the world, a sense of solidarity becomes a reality through common interests among people, not because of the life of a particular individual. Nevertheless, instead of rejecting the potential of compassion, a Japanese political philosopher Saito (2010) stresses the importance of exploring how compassion towards individuals can be connected to a shared interest which brings a sense of solidarity to the whole humankind.

The Ethics of Care

According to Noddings (2002) a concept of care is a moral attitude and a basic element in human life. She places human relationships in the center of the ethics of care because "human beings are born from and into relation; it is our original condition" (Noddings, 2010, 390). She emphasizes face-to-face encounter between the carer and the cared-for. If an act of care is given without substantial personal contact, the carer may only have an abstract knowledge about the cared-for and it would prevent them from recognizing the cared-for as unique individuals. She illustrates three elements in a caring encounter:

1. A cares for B – that is, A's consciousness is characterized by attention and motivational displacement,
2. A performs some act in accordance with (1), and
3. B recognizes that A cares for B.

(Noddings, 2002, 19)

In a caring relationship, a carer listens to the cared-for attentively. Noddings stresses that this attention is receptive, in other words, the carer puts aside her/his "own values and projects, and tries to understand the expressed needs of the cared-for" (Noddings, 2010, 391). Therefore, a carer does not judge or attempt to apply her/his own values on others, or accept their values as a whole. So, there is no "right" value in the ethics of care, and it does not reject or exclude people who have very different values that carers do not agree with. She also mentions the differences between rights and needs of the cared-for. Needs are claimed by particular individuals and therefore they are not necessarily applicable to other people, while rights have more universal nature.

She distinguishes between caring-for and caring-about. Caring-for indicates to a face-to face encounter between one person who cares directly another, while caring-about implies more general acts, such as being concerned about children in poverty in a developing country and wanting to do something, such as donation (Noddings, 1984). Although caring-for is considered as a preferred form, she argues that caring about others who are in a distant place may also provide the foundation for a sense of justice and functions as an instrument in establishing and enhancing conditions in which caring-for flourishes (Noddings, 2002). Hence, caring and justice are

not considered as a dichotomy, but as interconnecting each other; caring promotes a sense of justice, which is considered as more public conception.

In addition, Okano (2016) argues that the ethics of care is a more inclusive approach to social justice. From a feminist perspective, she notes that liberal theories of justice "have failed to see injustice in the exploitation of domestic workers, who constitute the image of economically independent male citizens that defines what kind of rights should be respected" (ibid., 93). In another words, it may have a connotation of the presupposed inequality based on asymmetric power relationship between the majority and the marginalized minority (Okano, 2012). The ethics of care pays attention to contexts and consequences of suffering people, rather than judicial and moral judgment. Therefore, it is more responsive to different dimensions of vulnerability and allows more sensitive approaches to learning from others' struggles and perspectives.

Pedagogical Applications: Three dimensions of empathy

With more concrete conceptions of empathy being applied in educational settings, the Council of Europe (2016) proposes a conceptual model of the competences for democratic culture which consists of four dimensions: values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge and critical understanding. Among them, empathy is considered as one of the key skills "to understand and relate to other people's thoughts, beliefs and feelings, and to see the world from other people's perspectives" (Council of Europe, 2016, 13). Empathy plays an important role in human rights education to decentralize one's own perspective and psychological framework and imagine "other people's cultural affiliations, world views, beliefs, interests, emotions, wishes and needs" (ibid., 47). This model proposes three different dimensions of empathy:

1. Cognitive perspective-taking – the ability to apprehend and understand the perceptions, thoughts and beliefs of other people;
2. Affective perspective-taking – the ability to apprehend and understand emotions, feelings and needs of other people;
3. Sympathy, sometimes called "compassionate empathy" or "empathic concern" – the ability to experience feelings of compassion and concern for other people based on the apprehension of their cognitive or affective state or condition, or their material situation or circumstances.

(Council of Europe 2016, 47)

As this model proposes, perspective-taking involves both cognitive and affective/emotional aspects of learning that are considered as important parts of critical learning. Also, re-imagining the world from another person's perspective may provide a counter-image for stereotypes and reduce prejudices (Galinsky, Moskowitz, & Insko, 2000; Todd, Bodenhausen, Richeson, Galinsky, & Simpson, 2011). While (1) cognitive perspective-taking and (2) affective perspective-taking are about *apprehending and understanding* of other's perceptions and emotions, (3) sympathy – or "compassionate empathy" or "empathic concern" - involves the emotion of students *based on* their apprehension of the cognitive or affective state or condition, or actual circumstances of the other people. Thus, "compassionate empathy" or" empathic concern" proposed in the third dimension does not stand alone, but it needs to be accompanied by cognitive perspective-taking or affective perspective-taking because otherwise it could be a mere sense of pity which lacks apprehension of the other's perspectives, feelings or needs.

In order to examine how the ethics of care connects the concept of empathy to practice, we discuss Arendt's concepts of pity and compassion, explore a form of human relationship based on the ethics of care approach, and examine how it can be applied to educational settings drawing from the conception of empathy by the Council of Europe. As Arendt points out, compassion is distinguished from pity which is based on generalized image of the other and fails to recognize individuality and particularity. In pedagogical context, the Council of Europe's model illustrates different dimensions of empathy and highlights how perspective-taking brings cognitive and affective learnings that connect to compassionate empathy. Human rights education based on ethics of care emphasizes the students' attentive listening and acceptance of others' sufferings from their (others) viewpoints, and understanding and responding to their needs. In a caring relationship, one does not judge them even if the values of a cared-for are too different to agree with. A carer is encouraged not to reject such different values, but continue a dialogue and a caring relationship with a cared-for, and search for a common project. Caring does not stand for an essentialist world view, instead it promotes questioning and reimagining the borders between a carer and a cared-for, such as boundaries made by culture, religion, ethnicity, politics or anything else. For example, in encountering people such as a working class Muslim girl with veil who wishes to keep her religious practice at her workplace or school, or a man from an oppressed ethnic group who

is involved in the resistance movement against the government in his country, or a refugee from a minority religious group who escaped to Europe with fake identification papers, an ethics of care approach helps students to realize the complexity of the situation and identity of individuals, and encourages them to understand how a particular situation is perceived by a particular individual and be concerned and compassionate to her/him. In the following section, we explore how this concept of empathetic learning with caring encounter can be implemented in an educational setting, particularly in a school.

Case study: Cross-curricular learning of human rights based on the ethics of care

The School and the Curriculum

In order to examine empathetic learning in human rights education, this paper scrutinizes a case study from a junior secondary school in Japan. It analyzes the Moral Education curriculum which is implemented as education for human rights and democratic citizenship. It also examines materials and students' worksheets, observed lessons, and conducted a semi-structured interview with the homeroom teacher. All students and teachers mentioned in this paper are given pseudonyms to respect and maintain their privacy.

The school is a state-funded junior secondary school in Nara, in the Kansai region of western Japan. Based on the school's principle of building "a culture of peace in the mind of students," human rights education and Peace Education are embedded in a whole school curriculum and are learned in different places and contexts. For example, Peace Education is connected to the school trip to Okinawa where one fourth of local population perished in the Battle of Okinawa in 1945 and currently hosts more than half of the US military bases in Japan.

The school has an experimental school status which allows teachers to more flexibly introduce special initiatives alongside the national Course of Study, the national teaching guidelines for primary and junior secondary schools. We present a case study of Moral Education developed as a cross-curricular scheme by a teacher, Mr Ogawa (not his real name). He mainly teaches Social Studies, which covers History, Geography and Civics, but also in charge of planning the overarching three-year curriculum in which

Moral Education is placed at its center. He developed curriculums that effectively connect Moral Education, Social Education and other extra-curricular activities and school trips (see Table 1). For instance, students explore conceptions of identities in their studies of holocaust in History and reading of The Diary of Anne Frank in Moral Education with the care approach, and these learnings are also reflected on the student-organized annual art festival (Kitayama, Osler, & Hashizaki, 2017).

Table 1. Overview of the three-year teaching plan

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Theme	What are the **borders** that separate me and others? What is common humanity?	'Who I am? What are the important elements that make up my own or others' **identity**? How can people relate to each other as human beings?	How can people relate to each other as human beings? What can I do to **make a better society** with others?
Moral Education	1. Basic learning: meeting with students with special education needs (SEN) 2. Project work in groups 3. Reflection	1. Basic learning: identity of family 2. Project work in groups 3. Reflection	1. Basic learning: identity of Amerasians 2. Project work in groups 3. Reflection
Extra-curricular activities	1. Short school trip 2. School art festival 3. Peace meeting	1. Short school trip 2. School art festival 3. Peace meeting	1. School trip to Okinawa 2. School art festival 3. Peace meeting
Social Studies	[Geography] Holocaust, Anne Frank and Chiune Sugihara/ Okinawans' identity and border of Japan/ Overseas Chinese	[History] Nation-states in ancient and present times/ expansion of Yamato state/ Frontier and indigenous group (Yezo).	[Civics] Okinawa and US military bases/ Multicultural policy in Okinawa/ Identity of Amerasian/ Civil revolutions/ Japan's colonialism/ Contemporary issues on citizenship

The Moral Education curriculum of Year 1 (12-13 years old) has the main goal of examining the boundaries between "them" and "others" and explore the nature of the human being in the culturally diverse society. Two main questions are posed: What are the borders that separate me and others? What is common humanity? The curriculum consists of three parts: 1) Basic learning; 2) Project work in groups; and 3) Reflection.

Basic Learning: Critical examination of the construction of difference

In the beginning of the academic calendar, learning activities focus on building good relationships and a sense of trust among students in the classroom and the school. Mr Ogawa started the Moral Education class by asking the students if they knew about students in a class for special education needs (SEN), a class for students with cognitive disabilities. Then he posed a question: What is the difference between you and them? He arranged a meeting with a SEN student named Takuya. After the meeting, the students continued communicating with Takuya by exchanging letters about each other's everyday life. They also explored about the meaning of disabilities with the SEN class teacher, and discussed the theme 'What is disability?' Here are some extracts from students' comments on this basic learning unit:

> I was glad that he (Takuya) told me about their [students with education needs] struggles.
>
> I realized that he actually has a lot of thoughts, but he is just not good in expressing them (…) like me, I am a very shy person.

These students' remarks from the session suggest that the encounter with Takuya and their learning about disability also provided them an opportunity for self-reflection.

Also, this unit encouraged students to carefully examine differences existing in their school and to realize a constructive nature of the boundary between them and Takuya, and helped them to become more critical about perceived differences in their classroom as well as in the wider society, where some differences are more recognized and often problematized, while some others are unnoticed or ignored.

Project Work in Groups: Face to face caring encounter

After they started to critically examine the borders, the students undertook a group project on different topics under the common theme of "What are the borders that separate me and others?" A group focused on a theme inspired by the meeting with Takuya, and other groups went out of the school and interviewed people who are engaged in caring for others in the community. In order to create an opportunity for students to have a face to face encounter which would prevent them from having generalized image of these people, Mr Ogawa assisted the students in finding people who fought for equality and social justice and also who did not fit into a

stereotype. For example, Mr Ogawa introduced a deaf person in a local community who helped other people with disabilities. This encounter challenged the students' sense of pity towards a generalized image of "people with disabilities." Other groups had meetings with students in Fukushima, a priest who grew "roses of Anne Frank" that were given by Anne's father Otto Frank, and a group of students who visited Okinawa. When Nara students interviewed them, they were encouraged to understand the interviewees' situation, thoughts, beliefs and feelings as well as how they responded to others' needs.

A group of students (consisting of three senior secondary school students and a university student who were graduates of the Nara junior secondary school) visited Fukushima as part of the Moral Education curriculum on a weekend in August 2015. The district was in the area affected by the earthquake and the nuclear disaster in 2011. Although the district was outside the evacuation zone, the reputation of its tourist, agricultural and fishing industries suffered serious damage regarding radioactive contamination despite the enormous clean-up efforts and the implementation of a food monitoring program. The students interviewed people who were actively involved in the reconstruction of the community such as people from local non-profit organizations (NPOs) and local markets. They also met six local students (ages 15-18) who were involved in volunteer work in the community tourism reconstruction projects. Having similar age, the Nara students became emotionally affected in meeting the Fukushima students. The Nara students asked them about their situation when the disaster occurred, the reasons for their continued stay in Fukushima and the motivation for their reconstruction projects. The visiting group shared their experience on the visit with the Year-1 students at the Nara school.

The Fukushima students told their stories and feelings to the Nara students:

- I remained in Fukushima only because I wanted to keep being connected to my family, my friends and my school;
- It hurts when people outside Fukushima have pity on me. They asked me questions like "Are you worried?," "Will it be possible for you to have a child?;"
- There is a complex feeling about the nuclear plant. Many of our parents have worked for the nuclear industry and lost their jobs;

- It was a natural disaster and no one should be blamed. It's everyone's responsibility to reconstruct Fukushima.

Through the meeting, the Nara students emotionally reacted which indicates a sense of co-suffering for the real-life struggles of Fukushima students. Some of them replied that they were shocked in knowing that Fukushima students have such a strong sense of responsibility to their community while they have not thought about their own community as seriously as Fukushima students did. A student shed tears and asked the Fukushima students if there was anything that they could do back home. Toward the end of the meeting, the Fukushima students told the Nara students that they were so glad to have an opportunity to share their experience and feelings with them, and asked them to tell their friends about the situation in Fukushima.

Reflections: Critical examination of borders and awareness of common humanity

Reflection session followed the group projects and student presentations. This activity aimed to help the students a) explore commonalities and connections among the findings of the different groups, b) critically examine the conceptions of borders, and c) be aware about common humanity. It started with the students talking about what they thought were the most impressive words of Anne Frank. A student chose a quote of Anne; "I want to be useful or bring enjoyment to all people, even those I've never met." Mr Ogawa followed up the student's response by asking questions to the whole class: "So, how could we become a person like this (a kind person who is useful or bring enjoyment to all people)? How could we make our society be like this?"

Keeping this question in mind, students from each group presented what they learned and found through their project. A student from the Fukushima project commented that despite the tragedy and hardships, the Fukushima students have been working hard to reconstruct their community. Also, she thought that their feeling of loss and pain could not be understood by others easily. Her comments imply that even though they realized that they were not be able to fully understand the Fukushima students' feelings, she still tried to accept them as they were.

A student who met Takuya, a student from SEN class, gave a critical reflection about boundaries. He identified positive and negative borders: "There are negative borders which created discrimination. But I found there were also positive borders, for example, streaming the class to fit individual attainment to promote equity." Then Mr Ogawa asked a question: "What kind of border is between Takuya and us?" A student replied: "I can't draw a border between Takuya and me if I empathized with him." His comment suggests that he realized a border as something constructed.

During the students' reflection session, Mr Ogawa wrote on the whiteboard some words expressed by the students particularly those reflecting compassionate empathy. At the concluding part of the class, Mr Ogawa asked the students whether or not they agreed with the quote of Anne Frank, "In spite of everything, I still believe that people are truly good at heart," and asked if they have understood the essential human nature. Students discussed the questions drawing from what they learned from the encounters with people in their group project, and identified three essential elements: To support each other; to respond to somebody's needs; and to try to know the others' situation more deeply.

Discussion

Before the exchange with the Fukushima students, the Nara students did not understand why the young people in Fukushima stayed in their hometown despite the dire situation, based on their assumption that everyone would want to escape from a place that was damaged by an earthquake and radioactive contamination. Through the exchange meeting, they learned how the Fukushima students cared for their family and friends, and how they decided to reconstruct their community and to challenge a number of difficulties and struggles. Also, listening to their stories gave the Nara students the motivation to take action in the future.

In order to avoid generalization and making judgment during the reflection session, Mr Ogawa tried to avoid the Nara students from discussing the Fukushima students' circumstances based on their own viewpoints as outsiders. Instead, he asked questions that encouraged the students to carefully reflect on the ways of thinking, experiences and emotions of the Fukushima students as unique individuals. He employed the ethics of care approach to his teaching to overcome a pitfall of emotionally-engaged learning, such as

having a mere sense of pity to a group of people with an abstract image, by taking their perspectives which promotes compassionate empathy.

Mr Ogawa realized that a number of exchange meetings in Moral Education class provided learning beyond what they understand about these individuals themselves. Students commented,

> I used to believe that a person with a disability is different from myself. I don't know why, but I started to believe that we are the same human being after I learned about Anne Frank and a Bosnian student.
>
> I realized that a border, which I myself drew, started to dissolve.

Mr Ogawa said:

> At the end of the first year, their study about the border still left some questions: "Who draws a border and for what reasons? Who would take advantage of it?" So, I plan the second-year curriculum about identity to develop their understandings about self and others, and borders.

This Moral Education curriculum also suggests an approach to promote compassionate learnings in human rights education. The ethics of care approach helps students understand a complexity of unique individuals with various vulnerabilities and particular needs, not simply as anonymous "disabled," "refugees" or "sufferers from a disaster" who are simply entitled to universal rights.

Concluding Remarks

This paper has argued about the potential use of the ethics of care approach on human rights education by focusing on learning from the others' struggles, listening to the others' voices, and understanding their perspectives as unique individuals. Based on a notion of vulnerable human beings, the ethics of care approach enables students to understand the situation of others and the decisions they make in a relative manner, which leaves a space to be more sensitive to social justice for people with various dimensions of vulnerability than the liberal theory of justice. The case study of Year 1 students

in this paper shows compassionate emotional engagement of the students, and how it helps them to explore connections between the particularity of others and common humanity. As this is planned as three-year-curriculum, the development of the students' learning will be observed by paying attention to how this awareness of common humanity will promote a sense of solidarity, a foundation for social justice.

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