

THE FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF FACILITATORS' TOOLKIT

Exercises, case studies and tools
to help trainers, facilitators and educators
promote freedom of religion or belief for all.



“Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.”

Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
Article 18



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The FORB facilitators' toolkit

This toolkit is a treasure trove for everyone working to raise awareness of the right to freedom of religion or belief (FORB). It contains over 70 carefully selected participatory learning exercises, an accompanying collection of case studies, scenarios and quiz questions and a set of practical tools and guidance to help you plan and deliver trainings on FORB. Whether you are looking for ways to introduce the topic in your community, planning a thematic workshop for diplomats and religious leaders, or developing a week-long training for a civil society organisation, we hope you will find the tools you need.

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Who is behind the toolkit?

This toolkit has been commissioned by the FoRB Leadership Network and developed by the Freedom of Religion or Belief (FORB) Learning Platform.

The FORB Learning Platform provides learning resources, courses and networking opportunities to help individuals, communities and decision-makers learn about, reflect upon and promote freedom of religion or belief. It is a project of the Nordic Ecumenical Network on Freedom of Religion or Belief (NORFORB), in dialogue and collaboration with a wide range of faith and belief communities, human rights and development organisations, and academic institutions from across the world.

The FoRB Leadership Network (FoRBLN) is a network of parliamentarians and belief leaders from 8 countries across Africa and South Asia who are dedicated to promoting freedom of religion or belief in their national and local communities. FoRBLN exists to address the legislative barriers to freedom of religion or belief and the social mores that support societal hostility towards groups and individuals on account of their religion or belief.

FIND OUT MORE
on our website:
forb-learning.org

FIND OUT MORE on
the FORB Leadership
Network website:
forbln.net

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Who is the toolkit for?

This toolkit is designed for facilitators and educators who run interactive trainings and workshops on human rights broadly, freedom of religion or belief (FORB) specifically, and on topics related to the right – for example peacebuilding, conflict sensitivity, interfaith dialogue or rights-based approaches to development.

It offers a wide range of participatory learning exercises to choose from, along with a collection of case studies, scenarios and quizzes to accompany the exercises. The exercises cover a range of themes relating to FORB, with exercises to suit different audiences and knowledge levels. You'll also find a set of practical tools and tips to help you plan and deliver trainings that are useful for new and experienced facilitators alike. For example '[Sample learning objectives for FORB trainings](#)' and tips for '[Responding to tricky questions](#)'.

Many of the exercises in this toolkit assume that the facilitator has prior knowledge and understanding of the right to freedom of religion or belief. For many facilitators FORB is a new topic and, in many contexts, it is a sensitive one. A great way to increase your confidence and ability as a facilitator is to learn about the right. We recommend that you watch our set of eight films on FORB and/or take 'FORB for all', our online on-demand course introducing FORB as part of your preparations for delivering trainings on the topic. (www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb and www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-for-all)

You may also be interested in taking our FORB training of the trainers' course, which will equip you with both facilitation skills and knowledge about freedom of religion or belief. This online facilitated course runs over 10-12 weeks in spring and autumn, with diverse groups of around 20 participants from all over the world. (www.forb-learning.org/tot)

If you are new to facilitation and unsure of how to construct a programme for a training on FORB, we warmly recommend the Local Changemakers Course (www.forb-learning.org/changemakers). This comprehensive set of course materials forms a ready-made package including everything needed to run a series of nine 2-hour workshops on FORB with grassroots-level audiences: session plans, presentation scripts, PowerPoints and handouts. It is available in several languages.

Find the **FILMS** [here](#) and the **FORB FOR ALL COURSE** [here](#).

Find information on the **TOT COURSE** [here](#).

Find the **LOCAL CHANGEMAKERS COURSE** [here](#) in several languages.

How to use the toolkit

This toolkit contains a careful selection of our favourite participatory learning exercises and case studies. It is a treasure trove for you to pick and choose from, adapting exercises to your target audience and context. Whether you are looking for one or two exercises to introduce freedom of religion or belief or plan to create a week-long training programme, we hope that you will find practical tools to help in this toolkit.

Part One: Exercises

Part one of the toolkit contains over 70 exercises in nine different categories:

- Ice breakers and energisers
- Exploring human rights
- Exploring freedom of religion or belief (FORB)
- Recognising and analysing violations
- FORB and gender
- FORB, other rights and development
- Understanding FORB in context
- Action planning for FORB promotion
- Evaluation and follow up

METHODS USED IN THE EXERCISES

All of the exercises use participatory learning methodologies, which work best with small to medium-sized groups (10-30 people). The exercises use a range of methods from games, role-plays and drawing, to mapping, case study analysis and reflection. Beside each exercise you will find a 'petal' icon like the following indicating the method used. When planning your programme try to include exercises with a variety of methods, as participants will have different learning styles.

TIP! We all have a tendency to choose exercises that suit our own learning style – watch out for this as you design your programmes and make sure to use a variety!



USING THE EXERCISES

Each exercise provides you with information about the following:

- **SUGGESTED TARGET AUDIENCE**

Some exercises are particularly well-suited to faith and other groups at the grassroots level, some to trainings for civil society organisations, while others are more suitable for use in formal training settings, such as with government officials or academics. However, exercises developed for one type of audience may work well with another in your context, so don't let this limit you! As a facilitator, you know your target audience best and can choose the exercises to meet their needs most effectively.

TIP! Learn more about tailoring your training to your target audience on [page 278 – 279](#).

- **PURPOSE**

Exercises have different purposes that relate to the overall objectives of your training. Does the exercise build knowledge and critical thinking, transform attitudes, develop skills or help people practice taking action? These are all important building blocks of human rights training. Try to choose a selection of exercises that cover all four building blocks.

TIP! Learn more about the building blocks on [page 277](#).



- **DESCRIPTION**

A brief description of the exercise including information about any prior knowledge of the topic needed by participants and whether the exercise should come before or after a knowledge input session. Where relevant, this includes links to information resources and even ready-made knowledge inputs that could accompany the exercise.

- **RESOURCES REQUIRED**

If you need any resources such as post-it notes, PowerPoint or a ball of wool you'll find it listed here.

- **ADVANCE PREPARATION**

Here you'll find information about any preparations the facilitator needs to make in advance of the session.

- **HOW TO INTRODUCE, RUN AND CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE**

A detailed description is provided to help make the exercise clear and easy to run.

When choosing exercises, it is helpful to remember that different exercises suit different points in a training session. Often training sessions have four stages:

- Exercises that introduce the topic and explore existing knowledge and attitudes.
- An input providing knowledge, inspiration or training in skills.
- Exercises enabling deeper reflection based on the input provided or an opportunity to practice using new skills.
- Sum up/evaluation - discussions or exercises that help to conclude a session.

Part Two: Case studies, scenarios and quizzes

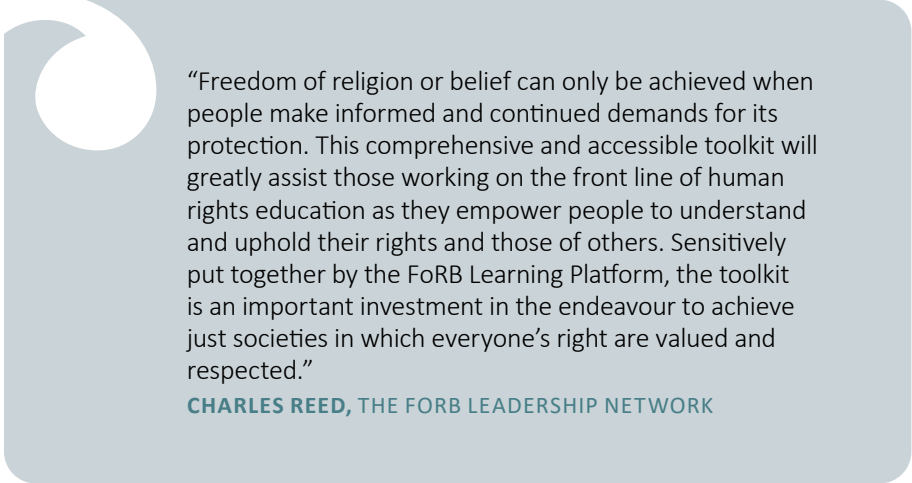
This is a collection of case studies, scenarios, quiz questions and answers and statements used in the exercises in Part One. Use them together with the exercises suggested, or as illustrative examples in presentations or discussions, or let them inspire you to create your own reflection and discussion exercises.



Part Three: Guidance and tools

This section is packed with practical tools and tips to help you develop and deliver trainings on FORB. These include ‘Sample learning objectives for FORB trainings’, tips for ‘Responding to tricky questions’, links to help you ‘Find ready-made knowledge inputs’ on FORB and a set of ‘50 messages for FORB presentations’ to help you think about what key messages are relevant for you to include.

We hope these practical tools will both inspire and help you as you develop your own bespoke training programmes on FORB.



“Freedom of religion or belief can only be achieved when people make informed and continued demands for its protection. This comprehensive and accessible toolkit will greatly assist those working on the front line of human rights education as they empower people to understand and uphold their rights and those of others. Sensitively put together by the FoRB Learning Platform, the toolkit is an important investment in the endeavour to achieve just societies in which everyone’s rights are valued and respected.”

CHARLES REED, THE FORB LEADERSHIP NETWORK

PART 1



Participatory learning exercises

- Icebreakers and energisers
- Exploring human rights
- Exploring freedom of religion or belief (FORB)
- Recognising and analysing violations
- FORB and gender
- FORB, other rights and development
- Understanding FORB in context
- Action planning for FORB promotion
- Evaluation and follow up
- Index of exercises



Ice-breakers and energisers

This collection of exercises is designed to help you create and maintain a safe, respectful and supportive space for learning. This is particularly important when dealing with sensitive topics like freedom of religion or belief. For most target audiences, it is essential to devote time to introductory exercises that build trust, prepare the group for the core contents of the training, and create space to have fun together.



Exercise overview

The first four exercises in the chapter are ideal for the first session of a training. They help people to feel welcome, learn more about each other and get comfortable expressing themselves in the group. They also set the tone by introducing participatory and peer-to-peer learning and establishing ground rules.

- **WATER PITCHER** Good for groups unfamiliar with participatory learning styles or with strong internal hierarchies. A simple but effective exercise that highlights the importance of enabling all participants to share their thoughts and experiences.
- **PASS THE BASKET** A simple ground-rules exercise in which participants can anonymously suggest ground rules.
- **PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS** A ‘getting to know you’ exercise that helps participants to find things they have in common.
- **SELF-PORTRAITS** A creative self-introduction exercise in which participants share the things that are important to them.

The next two exercises are ideal opening exercises for later sessions in a training.

- **POT LUCK** A fun warm up game that helps participants think about the different starting points people have in life and the benefits of solidarity.
- **TELL ALL!** A fun game that enables participants to share something they learnt or felt during a previous session.

The next two exercises are energisers that can be used at any point in a training. They are designed to raise energy levels and lighten the mood. They are especially useful in sessions that are ‘heavy’ with knowledge inputs or with longer exercises requiring concentration.

- **FIST FIGHT/PUSH AND PULL** Particularly suitable for sessions focused on conflict, this exercise illustrates the need for creative thinking in resolving conflicts.
- **WALK AND STOP** A great energy raiser, this physical game in which people try to do the opposite of what they are told.

The final energiser is best used towards the end of a session/training as it helps participants express their feelings about what they have learnt.

- **EMOTICONS** Participants use their bodies and faces to create an ‘emoticon’ illustrating how they feel about what they have learnt.



Water pitcher 15 min

ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

ICEBREAKER
PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any audience.

PURPOSE

To introduce participatory learning methods and help participants understand that through sharing their own experiences and knowledge with the group, they can each make an important contribution to the quality of the training.

DESCRIPTION

A simple but effective exercise that introduces participatory learning methods and helps to set the tone. It is particularly useful in contexts where target audiences have strong internal hierarchies and in settings where participants may not be used to participatory, experiential learning due to rote-learning education systems.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- A water pitcher filled with water.
- A water glass for each participant.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Make sure that the training room is set up in a way that allows the group to move about easily.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Make sure each participant has a drinking glass and that you have a pitcher filled with water. Start filling the participants' glasses with water as you chat with all of them. Tell them NOT to drink the water in their glasses yet. When the final glass of water is filled, ask the participants to silently reflect on how it felt to get their glass filled with water from the pitcher held by you as a facilitator.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Explain that there is another part to the exercise. In this second part of the exercise, it is up to the participants to share the water they have received. They are free to move around the room while doing so.

After doing this for a little while, ask the participants to stop where they are and silently reflect on how this second part of the exercise felt.

After a short time, ask them to silently compare how they felt during the first and the second part of the exercise. After allowing participants to reflect on this for a while, ask them to be seated.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Ask the participants whether they want to share any of their thoughts. Allow a couple of comments before asking the group this question:

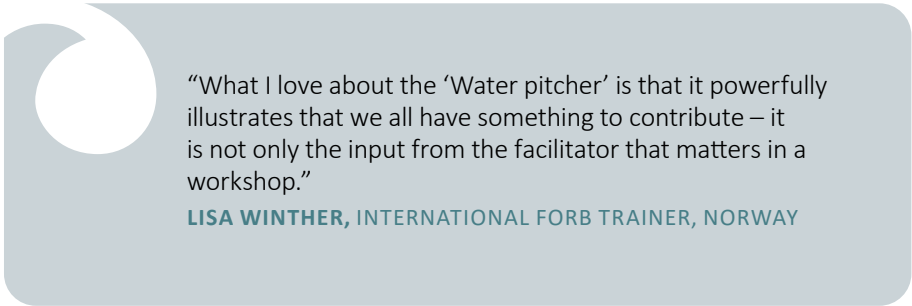
- What do they think this exercise might have to do with education?

Depending on how participants reply, conclude the exercise by making the following points:

- Often, we are trained by school and society to see quality education as being equal to a teacher lecturing us on a specific topic, pouring his or her knowledge into our more or less empty containers. But we are not empty containers – we all have knowledge and experiences.
- During our time together we are going to allow space for what happened in the second part of this exercise. We use a training methodology that builds on your knowledge and experiences – the water that each of you already have in your glasses.
- This exercise is our way of inviting you all to share your water, your knowledge with us all.

Source

Adapted from George Lakey, *Facilitating Group Learning* p. 109



“What I love about the ‘Water pitcher’ is that it powerfully illustrates that we all have something to contribute – it is not only the input from the facilitator that matters in a workshop.”

LISA WINTHER, INTERNATIONAL FORB TRAINER, NORWAY

Pass the basket 15 min



ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

GROUND RULES
PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any audience willing to engage in participatory learning processes, e.g., grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders. An alternative methodology for more formal or academic training settings is provided.

PURPOSE

To establish ground rules for the training. These are important to create a safe space with common expectations about how participants will talk and listen to one another.

DESCRIPTION

A simple participatory exercise allowing participants to contribute ground rules anonymously. This is particularly well-suited to groups who don't know each other or have significant power dynamics, for example due to gender, minority-majority status or the participation of leadership figures such as religious leaders or managers.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- A basket.
- Small slips of paper.
- A pen for each participant.
- Flipchart sheets and marker pens.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Explain the following:

During this training, we want everyone to feel safe and respected – to have an opportunity to speak and to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences on an equal footing. To help create that environment, it is useful to have some ground rules that we all agree on and can hold each other to. These ground rules can be practical (like come on time, phones on silent, laptops closed) or be about how we relate to each other (like listen respectfully or give everyone a chance to speak).

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Put a basket in the middle of the circle. Give everyone a slip of paper and pen. Ask each person to write two ground rules that they think the group should have on their paper and put it in the basket. Read out all the ideas from the basket and write them up on a flipchart sheet. If need be, add any important missing points at the end, saying 'What about...?' 'What if...?'.

For example:

- Listen actively – respect others when they are talking.
- Value differences.
- Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing (say “I” instead of “they,” “we,” and “you”).
- Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions but refrain from personal attacks – focus on ideas.

And where appropriate:

- Confidentiality – what is said in the room stays in the room (Chatham House rules).

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Ask if everyone agrees to the ground rules as they are or would like to change or clarify anything. Seek consensus before finalising the list. Keep the ground rules displayed for the duration of the training and refer to them when needed. If participants have some prior knowledge of the human rights framework, conclude the exercise by drawing links between the basic human rights principle of accountability and the ground rules.



ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY

In more formal settings, run this as an open brainstorm session instead of using a basket. Ask for participants’ help to get the right formulation as you write up the ground rules on the flipchart sheet. Try to involve as many participants as possible.

TIP! Allow for silence if the participants need time to think. Resist the temptation to jump in!



Penny for your thoughts 15 min

ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

ICEBREAKER
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To help participants connect by illustrating the many things they have in common.

DESCRIPTION

A simple and effective 'getting to know you' exercise, which focuses on what participants have in common rather than their differences.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- 10 stones, or coins, or scraps of paper for EACH participant.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Divide into groups of 4-6 participants. Give everyone 10 pennies/small stones/scraps of paper, etc. Tell the group that they are going to do a short 'getting to know you' exercise.

Explain how the exercise works:

Going around the circle, the first person should state something s/he likes (e.g., reading). Everyone else who likes the same thing puts one 'penny' in the middle of the circle. Then the second person states something they like and everyone else who likes this puts another penny in the centre. Continue until one person runs out of pennies.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Tell the groups to start and wander between groups listening to what is happening.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Ask the participants to come back to the plenary. Invite 2-3 participants to briefly share their reflections on the exercise.

- What did they notice?
- Was anything surprising?

Thank participants for sharing.

Source

Adapted from the 'Me too' exercise, in [Facilitating group introductions](#), Lions Club International.



Self-portraits 30-50 min

ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

DRAW AND DISCUSS

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To enable participants to introduce themselves in a fun and thoughtful way.

DESCRIPTION

A drawing exercise in which participants introduce themselves by creating a self-portrait showing their head, heart, and hands. Words are added to help depict the values and beliefs, people and community, work and other activities they take part in that are most meaningful to them.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets and marker pens for each participant.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Draw your own self-portrait on flipchart paper to help explain the task to participants and set a fun tone for the exercise. Make sure to include your heart and your hands, leaving space to add words later. Write your name on your self-portrait in large letters. Don't make your self-portrait too good – participants need to know that it is ok to be bad at drawing!
- Think about the words you will write on your own self-portrait as you demonstrate the exercise in front of the group.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Give each participant a flipchart sheet and marker pens. Explain that we are going to introduce ourselves by drawing a self-portrait. This self-portrait is going to be a bit different as it will show not just what we think we look like, but also what is important to us.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 25-45 MIN

- **DRAWING TIME** (5 MIN)
Show your own self-portrait and say participants will start by drawing something similar that includes their head, heart, and hands. Tell participants to leave some space around the head, heart, and hands areas so that they can add more detail at the next stage of the exercise. There are no other 'rules' for the self-portrait – drawings can be as fun, quirky or simple as they like! Remind participants to add their name, making it clearly visible to others.
- **THINKING TIME** (5-10 MIN)
The next step is to add the things that are important to them to their own self-portrait. Demonstrate the exercise by writing three words that represent

values and beliefs that are important to you around the head on your own self-portrait. For example, 'equality', 'Islam', 'justice', 'respect', or 'kindness'.

Around the heart, write words that represent people who are important to you. Demonstrate by writing three words on your own self-portrait. Ask participants to think beyond their immediate families to include their wider community as well. Ask, 'Who has been an important influence in your life?'

Around the hands, write words that represent the things you do in life that are most meaningful for you. Demonstrate by writing three words on your own self-portrait. For example, 'facilitating trainings', 'baking for friends', 'volunteering', 'gardening'. Ask, 'Apart from your day-to-day work, what do you do that gives meaning to your life?'

Tell participants they can add as many words as they have time for.

• **PRESENT IN THE ROUND** (15-30 MIN)

Tell participants they are now going to use their self-portrait to introduce themselves to the rest of the group. Tell them they will have just one minute each, so they won't have time to explain their self-portrait in detail. Ask, 'What would you most like other participants to know about you?' Tell them to choose one or two things to focus on. Model this for participants by holding up your own self-portrait and introducing yourself in one minute or less! Invite each participant to do the same one by one.

TIP! If you have a very large group, you could do the presentation round in groups of 6-10.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Conclude the exercise by thanking everyone for introducing themselves. Make the point that we are all unique and creative in our own ways! Each of us brings different values, skills, and experiences to the training. Tell participants that their self-portraits will be displayed on the wall throughout the training. Encourage them to take a closer look at other participants' self-portraits and ask questions to learn more about each other.

Source
Rachel Fleming



'Self-portraits'

Pot luck 20 min



ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities.

PURPOSE

To help participants to think about the different starting points people have in life and the benefits of solidarity.

DESCRIPTION

In this fun exercise, participants have 1 minute to cut or tear out an image but very few participants have scissors. It works especially well as an ice-breaker in trainings that include the ‘[The soup of life – human rights gallery](#)’ exercise on page 29, as it uses the same imagery of a soup pot to represent human rights.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Two copies of the soup pot [handout](#) per participant.
- One pair of scissors for every eight participants.

Find the handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/pot-luck-handout. This exercise and the accompanying handout are available in multiple languages in the course materials for Session 3 of the Local Changemakers Course. Check if your language is available at: www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Give each participant a copy of the soup pot handout. Give very few people (e.g., one in eight) a pair of scissors. Explain the task to participants without explaining the purpose of the exercise, for example as follows:

“When I say the word ‘GO!’, your task is to get the soup pot out of the paper within 1 minute in any way possible. Use your imagination and be creative to find a way. A very few of you are lucky and have a pair of scissors.”

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 15 MIN

• ROUND ONE (10 MIN)

Say ‘Go’ and set a timer for 1 minute. When the timer rings tell everyone to stop and hold up their soup pots so everyone can see how they managed.

Praise everyone for their effort and ask them:

- How did you solve the task?
- How did it feel not to have scissors?
- How did it feel to be the one with the scissors?
- Did anyone think of borrowing or lending the scissors? Why/why not?

Explain the following:

The exercise illustrates that people around the world and in our community are born with very different starting points in life. Many factors determine how our lives will be – not least the social and economic status of our parents. Some people are lucky to be born with different kinds of privilege, with ‘scissors’. Many people are not.

Sometimes people who lack privileges think they have to accept the role and place they are given, without trying to borrow a pair of scissors or change things. And privileged people don’t always think of allowing others access to the “scissors”.

Human rights are about a life of dignity. Being more aware about human rights can help us to think differently. We don’t have to accept injustice and be defeated by the fact that we don’t have the scissors. We can ask for the ‘scissors’! Human rights can also help people with privileges to be inspired to stand up for the rights of those who are not privileged.



• **ROUND TWO (OPTIONAL)** (5 MIN)

Explain that they have a second chance to try the exercise again. This time they can spend 1 minute discussing how to collaborate before spending 1 minute doing it again. Say ‘Go’ and set a timer for 1 minute. When the timer rings tell everyone to stop discussing and get ready to play. Set the timer for another minute.

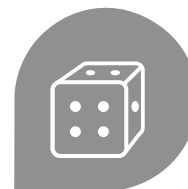
Praise everyone for their collaboration and ask: How did it feel to work together this time?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Conclude by saying that by being open to working together we can create second chances for our society and ourselves. This training provides an opportunity to do that, so thank you to everyone for being here!

Source

The Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers. Adapted from the Star exercise: George Lakey, Facilitating Group Learning, P.109.



Tell all! 10 min

ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To help the group remember what they learned, felt and thought during the previous session of your training, and to share what they remember with one another.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise provides a fun, interactive start to a session. Participants throw a ball to each other, saying something they remember from the previous session before throwing the ball to another participant.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- A soft ball.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Welcome everyone and explain that this session is going to begin with a quick look back at the previous session. Ask the group to stand in a ring, reasonably spaced out.

Explain that they are going to throw the ball to each other randomly. The person who receives the ball should say one sentence, sharing one thing they remember from the last session. This could be a story, something they learned, or a feeling or thought they had. After sharing, they should throw the ball randomly to another participant, making sure everyone gets a chance to speak. Anyone who was not present at the previous session shouts 'Tell all' when they catch the ball and then throws it onwards.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 8 MIN

Start the exercise off yourself by saying one thing you remember from the previous session and throwing the ball to a participant. Say encouraging words like 'thanks' and 'great' in response to participants' contributions! Keep the exercise going until each person has caught the ball once.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Congratulate the group on how much they remember and very briefly add any key points they missed.

Source

The Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform www.forb-learning.org/changemakers



Fistfight/push and pull 10 min

ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

ENERGISER

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To emphasise learning points on problem-solving and/or conflict resolution in a fun, experiential way.

DESCRIPTION

A fun physical game. There are two ways to run the game. In pairs, participants either try to open the other person's fist using any means they can think of, or they try to pull their partner across an imaginary line into their own space.



Instructions

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Explain that the group is going to play a quick physical game.

EITHER: Ask participants to stand up and get into pairs facing each other. Ask one person in each pair to close his/her hand tight in a fist.

OR: Have the pairs stand facing each other clasping each other's hands and with their right feet touching toe to toe.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 7 MIN

EITHER: Ask the other person to try to open their partner's fist using any means they can think of. After a short while ask them to change roles. After another short while tell them to stop and ask the whole group whether anyone succeeded in opening the other persons' fist. If they did, ask them to explain how. Ask if anyone tried asking 'Would you kindly open your hand please?'

OR: Tell the group to imagine a line between their touching feet and that when the trainer says, Go, everyone's goal is to get their partner across that line into their own space. When you say go almost everyone will forcefully attempt to pull their partner across the line. Watch for any pairs that do something different. Stop the pulling at any time by saying, 'Stop!' Usually just a few seconds will do. Do not let it get out of hand – there should be no risk that someone might get hurt!

Ask the group what happened. Generally, the bigger or faster person won. If any pairs came up with a solution other than trying to pull each other across, have them describe and demonstrate it. If not, take a random participant and get in the starting stance. Now, say to this participant, 'Let's swap places', and with hands still clasped slowly rotate until you have switched places.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

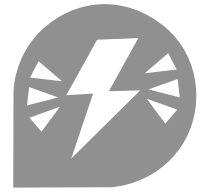
Conclude by making the following points:

- Using physical force in a situation of conflict is something we habitually do, often without even thinking about it. Many conflicts could be avoided if we simply thought about the measures we use, and how we choose to use them.
- Nonviolence is about creative solutions without losers.
- Nonviolent solutions save the usual 'winners' energy and resources too.
- Do not limit yourself to following rules that don't exist!
- If you are less powerful, your only option is to be smarter.

Source

The Danish Institute of Human Rights, [The Human Rights Education Toolbox](#) (2012) and the FORB Learning Platform's online [training of the trainers'](#) course.

Walk and stop 10 min



ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

ENERGISER

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To raise energy levels and lighten the mood in sessions focused on identifying, analysing and solving problems.

DESCRIPTION

A fun, physical exercise in which people do the opposite of what they are told.



Instructions

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Ensure there is enough space in the training room for participants to walk around freely. Ask participants to move tables and chairs if necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Announce that it's time to take a break and do something completely different! Ask the group to spread out around the room.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 8 MIN

Go through the following steps:

- Instruct participants to walk when you say “WALK” and to stop walking when you say “STOP.” Issue a series of these commands, in any order, for 20 to 30 seconds.
- Announce that the meaning of the commands has been swapped, so “WALK” means stop, and “STOP” means walk. Issue a series of commands for another 30 seconds.
- Announce two new commands: When they hear “NAME” everyone should say their own name out loud; and when they hear “CLAP” everyone should clap once. They should continue to either stop or walk while they do this.
- Practice these two new commands together with “WALK” and “STOP” (which still have the meanings reversed).
- Finally, announce that the meaning of the last two commands has been swapped – when you call “NAME” everyone should clap and vice versa.
- Continue playing until five minutes is up.

TIP! A video tutorial for this exercise is available [here](#).

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank the group for their willingness to play. Say something along the following lines: Life can be very serious sometimes, especially when we are thinking about problems and how to solve them! It's good to take a break and have fun once in a while.

Source

Mark Collard, Playmeo www.playmeo.com

Emoticons 20 min



ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS

ENERGISER

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To give participants an opportunity to explore how they feel about what they have learned.

DESCRIPTION

A physical energiser in which participants create emoticons/sculptures with their faces and bodies to represent how they feel about what they have learnt in a session.



Instructions

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Explain that it is time to do something a bit different! Ask everyone to stand up and form a ring. Ask them to think of one word that describes how they feel about what they have learnt from the session/exercise/knowledge input.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Ask them to make their face and body into an emoticon or sculpture that represents that feeling.

When everyone has made their emoticon, go around the ring asking people to say the word they were thinking of.

When everyone has spoken, affirm both positive and negative feelings (for example, feelings of being overwhelmed by new information or daunted by the task of working to promote freedom of religion or belief).

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 9 MIN

Reassure participants that this is a safe space to express their feelings and ask questions. Ask:

- Would anyone like to share more about how they are feeling at this point?
- Does anyone have any questions they would like to ask?

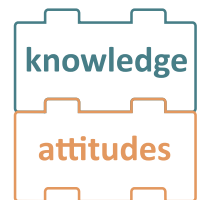
If participants express confusion, information overload or frustration with a focus on theory then point to times in the remainder of your training programme where they will have the opportunity to reflect, explore issues further or practice skills.

Source

The Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers

Exploring human rights

This collection of exercises is designed to cover the basics of human rights (or offer a refresher) before you move on to focus on the right to freedom of religion or belief. The exercises focus on developing knowledge and building positive attitudes to human rights. Depending on the existing knowledge levels and needs of your target audience, consider including one or two exercises from this section in your training.



GET PREPARED!

Why not review the '[Responding to tricky questions](#)' section on page 286 as you prepare to lead sessions on human rights? This is especially useful if your audience might have objections to human rights. If you would like to learn more about human rights yourself, why not take the FORB Learning Platform's free short e-course 'FORB for all', which includes an introductory module on human rights. Available at www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-for-all.

You may also like to watch four short but information-packed videos from Edeos Digital Education: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSOknOL7CeZMWQVegNFRyigaoGg2RTCQ>.

Exercise overview

The first three exercises in the chapter help participants connect the concepts of human needs and human rights. This approach can be used to demystify a complex topic for a variety of audiences, building positive attitudes and knowledge by connecting the human rights framework to the life experiences of each participant. The exercises have different methodologies and target audiences.

- **[SOUP OF LIFE – HUMAN RIGHTS GALLERY](#)** A plenary exercise ideal for grassroots level groups with little or no prior knowledge of the issues.
- **[PARADISE ISLAND](#)** A groupwork exercise ideal for both grassroots and a much wider audience, especially when combined with ‘The clifftop’ exercise.
- **[HUMAN NEEDS – HUMAN RIGHTS](#)** A more theoretical version of ‘Paradise island’, primarily useful in more formal training settings where participants may be less willing to engage in interactive learning methodologies.

The fourth exercise takes reflections one step further, exploring the relationship between human rights and human responsibilities by helping participants to consider the roles of legal and moral duty bearers.

- **[THE CLIFFTOP](#)** When combined with the ‘Paradise island’ exercise (or ‘Human needs – human rights’) this exercise creates a thought-provoking process ideal for any non-expert audience willing to engage in participatory learning.

The final two exercises in the collection offer an opportunity for participants to share their existing knowledge about human rights and learn from one another. These are useful for groups of participants who are already somewhat familiar with the topic.

- **[HUMAN RIGHTS SQUARES](#)** A good opening exercise for a session on human rights.
- **[HUMAN RIGHTS TIMELINE](#)** Especially useful for audiences for whom a more detailed knowledge of the legal framework at national, regional and international level is important. The exercise also introduces FORB as part of that framework.



'The soup of life'

“The ‘Soup of life’ and ‘Human rights gallery’ exercises were an eye opener. Some participants realized for the first time that human rights mean something in their everyday lives. They discovered human rights they never knew they had.”

UKOHA NGWOBA, FACILITATOR, NIGERIA

The soup of life

– human rights gallery 60 min



EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS

REFLECT AND SHARE

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

This exercise is aimed at groups with very little (if any) prior knowledge of human rights, for example grassroots-level groups, faith communities and civil society organisations new to human rights issues. Not suitable for formal or academic training settings.

PURPOSE

To help participants discover how human rights relate to their daily lives, reflecting needs they themselves identify, rather than being foreign or distant.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise uses the imagery of ingredients in a pot of soup to help participants explore the needs that they (and all human beings) have. Using pre-prepared 'human needs cards' and their own ideas, participants choose the ingredients that need to be included in the 'soup of life' in order for their lives to be dignified. Participants then walk around the room matching the 'human needs cards' they have chosen to human rights posters that illustrate the human rights recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- A traditional soup cooking pot or big saucepan, with a label saying 'soup of life' stuck on the side.
- The 'human needs cards', printed out and cut up.
- The 30 'human rights gallery' posters printed out and stuck up around the walls. If necessary, edit the posters first, replacing the English text with a translation into the participants' language. Read the posters and think about if any of the rights described are violated in your context. Thinking this through in advance will help you lead the conversation.
- A few pens.

Find the cards and posters at:

www.forb-learning.org/exercises/soup-of-life&human-rights-gallery.

This exercise is available in multiple languages as part of Session 1 of the Local Changemakers Course. www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Put the soup pot in the middle of the room and spread the 'human needs cards' out on the floor around the pot along with a few pens. Ask everyone to stand in a circle around the cards.

Explain the following:

- Life is a bit like a pot of soup with lots of ingredients in it – just like soup, life needs lots of different ingredients to give it a great flavour.
- Some ingredients in life, like (mention a culturally relevant luxury item), make life taste even better. But there are other ingredients, like a home, food or healthcare, that we really need. If those ingredients are missing life is bad, and we suffer physically, psychologically, socially or spiritually. We lose our dignity.
- In this exercise, we are going to think about what the essential ingredients in our lives are. We are going to cook the soup of life – more particularly a dignified life!
- Each of the cards on the floor around the soup pot represents something that might be important for a dignified life. There are also some blank cards, so that we can write or draw our own ideas of what we need for a dignified life.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 55 MIN

• **MAKE THE SOUP** (10 MIN)

Tell the group that they have 2 minutes to look at the cards and think about which ones are most important to them. Then, going around the ring, ask each person to pick up one card that represents something that they think is important for a dignified life, say one sentence (only) about why it is important and then put the card in the cooking pot.

Keep going around the ring until people feel that there are no cards left that are important to them. They can also pick up a blank card, say what it is and add it to the pot. People should not comment on each other's choices at this time.

• **DISCUSSION** (20 MIN)

Once all the cards that people want to add have been added to the pot, tell the group that we have now made our 'soup of life'. Ask them to discuss the following questions:

- Are any of the ingredients we added non-essential for a dignified life?
- Did we leave any of the ingredients (cards) out and leave them on the ground. Why?
- What impact does it have on us when 'essential ingredients' are missing in our lives? Share thoughts.
- If a group in another part of the world did this exercise, do you think they would have very different needs or are some human needs universal – so basic that all human beings share them?

Conclude the discussion by saying that human beings all over the world have much in common simply because we are human and share the same needs.

• **GALLERY WALK** (15 MIN)

Ask participants if they have heard of human rights. Tell the participants that the posters on the walls introduce the human rights that every man, woman and child on earth has, according to international human rights agreements that almost all the governments of the world have signed up to.

Take all the 'human needs cards' from the previous exercise and hand them out to participants. Take a 'gallery walk' around the room visiting each poster. As you come to each poster, read out the poster text, ask if anyone has a 'human needs card' that relates to that human right and ask anyone who says yes to say what that need is. (Matching posters and cards have the same icon on them, so this should be easy!). Move on immediately to the next poster without discussion - you need to match two posters per minute!

TIP! Be strict on timekeeping here – you need to save time for the discussion that follows!

Don't worry if no one suggests a card for a particular poster, keep going round the posters and when you come to the end match up any remaining cards people haven't mentioned, using the icons as a guide.

- **DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

After you have read out all the posters and matched them to the needs cards, discuss:

- Do these rights reflect the needs you have for dignity in your life – in other words are they relevant to our lives?
- Which of the rights are respected and protected in our country/ community and which are not? If the group finds this hard, mention some human rights you know of that are denied in law or in practice.

TIP! If you are able to have a longer session, you could add discussion time to this exercise.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Conclude the discussion by saying that this exercise has helped us to explore the needs we have, what human rights are and how our needs relate to human rights. We can perhaps sum up the message of the exercise by saying that human rights are closely related to the human needs that we and all human beings have and to the kind of society we want to live in.

Follow this exercise with a knowledge input on human rights. Develop your own or use the ready-made presentation designed to follow this exercise from Session 1 of the Local Changemakers Course on 'Human needs – human rights – human responsibilities'. All Local Changemakers Course resources are available in several languages at www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

Find the **PRESENTATION SCRIPT** [here](#) and accompanying **POWERPOINT** [here](#).



ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY

If you are short on time, shorten the gallery walk by asking each person to take the human needs card that they chose from the soup pot and then stand next to a human rights poster that relates to their need. When participants have done this, you can move straight to the discussion questions. (The point that human rights are based on human needs will still be made, but participants will have less opportunity to familiarise themselves with all of their rights.)

Source

The Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform www.forb-learning.org/changemakers



Paradise island 1 h 40 min

EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS

DRAW AND DISCUSS

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to civil society organisations and human rights defenders (especially when combined with 'The clifftop' exercise), but also works well with grassroots groups, faith communities and faith leaders.

Could be used with decisionmakers/officials in multi-day trainings. Alternatively use '[Human needs – human rights](#)' on page 35 for these target groups instead.

PURPOSE

- To help participants reflect on how human rights correspond with fundamental human needs.
- To illustrate that human rights are relevant for us all (universality) and that one human right cannot be fully enjoyed without the others (indivisibility and interdependence).

DESCRIPTION

A creative and inspiring exercise that combines groupwork and plenary discussion to help participants connect their human needs and their human rights under international law. '[The clifftop](#)' exercise works well as a follow-up to this exercise, adding the dimension of human responsibilities and duty bearers.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Flipchart paper for each group and marker pens in different colours.
- A table for each group to work at or enough floor space to comfortably work together.
- Sticky tack/tape to stick up the drawings on the walls after they have been presented (and space on the walls to do so).
- Guiding questions (see below) written up and displayed on a flipchart/ PowerPoint.
- [Handouts](#) of a simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) for each participant.
- Prepare a presentation on the basics of human rights using PowerPoint or another medium. Create your own presentation or adapt the ready-made [presentation](#) and [PowerPoint](#) on 'Human needs – human rights – human responsibilities' from Session 1 of the Local Changemakers Course.

Find a simplified UDHR handout and the ready-made presentation at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/paradise-island. The presentation (script and PowerPoint) is available in several languages at www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Divide the participants into groups (no more than four groups, with a maximum of eight per group).

Explain the following:

Imagine that you are part of a large group of people washed up on a deserted island after your ship sank. All communications with the outside world have been lost and there seems to be no hope of rescue. You need to build a new society. Point to the guiding questions (displayed on a flipchart or PowerPoint) and ask:

- What things do you need and want to live a healthy and happy life?
- What things are important for your survival and growth as a group of human beings living together?

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 35 MIN

- **CREATIVE GROUPWORK** (20 MIN)

Ask the groups to draw their islands on a flipchart sheet, drawing and writing down all the things they think of in answer to the two questions. In your group, agree on a name for your island and choose one person to present their island to the whole group.

- **PRESENTATIONS** (15 MIN – ALLOW 3 MIN PER GROUP)

Ask each group to present their island, giving each group a round of applause after their presentation.

- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

Lead the discussion with the following questions:

- How did it feel to design your dream society?
- What do you think when you see the other island societies? What similarities and differences do you see?
- Would you like to add something to your island society that you didn't think of when you drew it? Why didn't you think of this? Why is it important? (Some tips might be e.g., a legal system and police service, a system of governance, work, leisure, communications, infrastructure etc.)
- How do you think people from other countries would draw their imaginary island? Do you think people around the world need the same things?
- Is there a difference between what we really need (basic needs) and what we want – things that are nice to have but not necessary?

- **KNOWLEDGE INPUT** (5-10 MIN)

Continue with a short presentation of the basics of human rights. Points to include are, for example, that they are based on people's inherent dignity, worth and equality and that they are universal, inalienable, interdependent/interconnected, and a brief background to their historical development.

- **GROUP DISCUSSION** (20 MIN)

Give each participant a copy of a simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Ask the groups to revisit their islands, comparing the articles of the declaration with what they drew/wrote. Next to each thing they drew/wrote on the island, ask them to write the number of the article that most closely links to that thing.

After about 10 minutes (or before if the groups seem to have completed the task) ask the groups to:

TIP! Participants usually enjoy the creative process! Give them a 5-minute warning to finish up their drawings. Save plenty of time for the later parts of the exercise!

TIP! Why not adapt the ready-made [presentation](#) and [PowerPoint](#) in Session 1 of the Local Changemakers Course?

- Choose eight rights identified on their drawing which they think are most important.
 - Discuss which rights from the declaration were missed out of their drawing and why.
- **PRESENTATIONS** (15 MIN)
Ask each group to present their island again, listing the rights they think are most important and sharing their reflections on why some rights didn't come up in their drawing, (3 min per group).
On a flipchart, make a 'master list' of the rights the groups list as being most important. Some rights will be mentioned several times. Write them on the master list once and tick them each time they are repeated.
Give each group a round of applause after they present their island and put the islands up on display on the wall.
 - **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)
Lead the discussion with help of the following questions:
 - Do human rights correspond with basic human needs? In what ways?
 - What do you think about the rights you didn't think of when you drew your island? Do you agree that we need them? Are they important for everyone?
 - What do you think of the master list?
 - Was it difficult to choose the most important rights?
 - Did your idea of what is important change during the exercise?
 - What would life be like without the other 'less important' rights?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Conclude the discussion by making the following points:

- Thank you for creating these beautiful and inspiring island societies! They demonstrate that human rights are closely related to our human needs and to the kind of society we want to live in.
- We can also clearly see that human rights are based on human dignity. By virtue of being born, we have human rights (inalienable). They are relevant for us all in every corner of the world (universal).
- We have also explored the idea that one human right is difficult to separate from another – they are interlinked with each other – and we need a range of rights to live a dignified life (indivisibility and interdependence).

Source

Adapted from Equality Myanmar and First Steps part 4, Human Rights Education Associates.

Human needs – human rights 60 min



EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS

REFLECT AND DISCUSS

MULTI-FORMAT EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

This is a more theoretical version of '[Paradise island](#)' on page 32 and is best suited to more formal training settings, for example with government officials, academics or faith leaders. It also works well with civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

- To help participants make the connection between human needs and human rights.
- To help participants overcome any prejudices they might have about human rights being a 'Western concept'.

DESCRIPTION

An exercise that combines group and pair work with plenary discussion to help participants connect their human needs with their human rights under international law. It works well in contexts where there is some scepticism about human rights. '[The clifftop](#)' exercise on page 37 is a good follow-up to this exercise.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Cards or post-it notes (at least 12 per participant) and pens.
- Flipchart paper.
- Copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in a language that the participants understand well.



BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE

If you anticipate some resistance to human rights from your target audience, build your confidence as a facilitator by reviewing our '[Tips for facilitators](#)' section on page 282 and '[Responding to tricky questions](#)' on page 286.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Explain that the group will now take part in a reflection and discussion exercise that will help us think about whether human rights matter to us as individuals and as a society (or not).

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 57 MIN

- **INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION** (4 MIN)
Ask each participant to reflect for a few minutes on the things they need and want in order to lead a healthy, happy, dignified life and to write these needs down on a piece of paper.
- **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)
Divide the participants into small groups. Instruct them to share their lists of needs with each other and then make a joint list of needs. Once the group has

a joint list, encourage them to imagine a society where all their needs are met and discuss the following question, adding any additional needs to the list.

- What would this society need in terms of laws, infrastructure, public services, and so on?

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK & INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION** (10 MIN)

Bring everyone back together. Harvest the needs that the different groups have listed by writing them in a column on the left of a flipchart.

Give each participant at least 12 post-it notes or writing cards and ask them to identify which 12 needs from the common list are most important to them, writing each one on a separate card/post-it note.

- **PAIR WORK** (15 MIN)

Divide the participants into pairs and give each pair a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Instruct the pairs to look through the UDHR and work together to try to find rights that correspond to the needs they identified as important to them.

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK & DISCUSSION** (13 MIN)

Bring everyone back together and harvest the pairs' conclusions. Return to the joint list of needs and write down which human right the participants have connected to each need. Use the article number and refer to the UDHR as you do so.

Lead the discussion with the help of following questions:

- Did you find a right to match to every need you had prioritised, or do some needs not have a corresponding right?
- Do we need all of the rights listed in the UDHR or do some of them feel unnecessary? Is it possible to have a society that respects human dignity without them?
- Have different participants arrived at different conclusions? If so, why?
- Does the group agree that for every basic need there is a corresponding human right?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Conclude the exercise by reflecting on how the exercise and the discussion has illustrated the close relationship between human dignity, human needs and human rights. Human rights are our way of protecting human dignity by respecting people's basic needs. Thank everyone for their enthusiastic engagement in the discussion. If some people haven't been won over, then emphasise that it is ok to disagree – that's a human right too!

Source

Adapted from an exercise by the Human Rights Educators' Network of Amnesty International, USA.



The clifftop 1 h 5 min

EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS

DRAW AND DISCUSS

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any audience willing to engage in participatory learning processes. Can be used in both informal and more formal trainings at any level.

PURPOSE

- To help participants link human rights with human responsibilities.
- To enable participants to reflect on the role of legal and moral duty bearers, and how different actors within civil society (including religious actors) can complement each other in protecting and promoting human rights.

DESCRIPTION

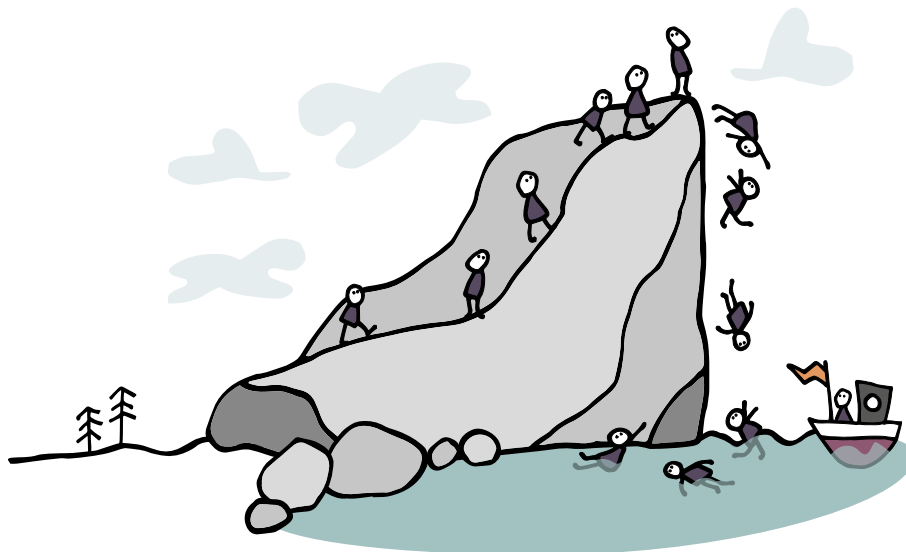
An intriguing and thought-provoking problem-solving exercise that combines groupwork and plenary discussion with a knowledge input on legal and moral duty bearers. The exercise helps participants think about the many different actors that can contribute to making human rights a reality. This exercise follows on very well from the [‘Paradise island’](#) exercise on page 32, but you can run it without connecting the two. It forms a good precursor to context analysis and action planning exercises.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Flipchart sheets and marker pens for each group.
- One simple pre-prepared drawing of a clifftop on flipchart paper for each group.



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Explain that the group is now going to do a fun exercise that helps us explore who is responsible for making human rights a reality.

Read out the story of the clifftop:

Imagine you live in a diverse community (e.g., your paradise island) and all has been well and happy. But suddenly people start disappearing. It seems that people are falling off a cliff into the sea.

Rumours have started circulating about why this is happening, and people are afraid.

Is the path by the cliff just slippery, or are people being pushed off the cliff? And why is it that all the people who have disappeared come from the largest religious group? What has happened to the people who have fallen off – are they alive and clinging to the rocks at the bottom or are they dead? Fear and tensions are rising in the community.

The question is: what could and should be done and by whom in this situation? Who can help?

TIP! If you have strong drawing skills, why not illustrate the story as you tell it?

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 55 MIN

Divide the participants into four groups of 4-8 people. Give each group one of the pre-prepared flipchart sheets as well as markers.

- **GROUP DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)

Ask each group to discuss what measures should be taken:

- to find out what the problem is.
- to prevent people from falling off the clifftop.
- to take care of the people who have fallen (dead or alive).
- to deal with any guilty parties.
- And who should be responsible for taking what measures?

Tell the groups to draw or write what should be done by who on the flipchart and ask them to appoint a spokesperson who will present a summary of their findings back to the plenary.

TIP! If the discussion is slow to start, ask questions – giving different ideas to different groups. What could the town council, religious leaders, the school, the radio station, local fishermen or health care services do?

- **PRESENTATIONS, COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION** (40 MIN)

Each group spokesperson presents a summary of their findings to the plenary (5 min per group).

After all groups have presented, spend 10 minutes drawing out the common themes related to legal and moral duty bearers. Highlight the many different actors that can play a role in solving the 'clifftop problem', making the following points:

- According to international human rights law, any State that signs and ratifies a human rights treaty has a legal duty to respect, protect and promote the rights laid out in that treaty. States and those working on behalf of the State (State actors) are legal duty bearers, responsible for securing the human rights of the people living in their territories – the rights holders. So, the local authority or public health services have an important role to play.
- However, when we reflect on the purpose of human rights – to protect human dignity and protect people from the abuse of power – then it is quite evident that States alone can't make human rights happen.
- All kinds of different people and organisations have power and influence over people's lives – employers, parents and religious leaders, for example. With that power comes a moral duty to respect and protect human rights in the exercise of power. These are moral duty bearers.

- In addition, many groups can play a role in holding the state and other powerholders to account and in building a ‘culture of human rights’ – for example, civil society organisations, religious leaders and the media. Creating a culture of human rights (in which human rights are respected as normal and right) is especially important where the State is weak or doesn't respect rights.

Allow 10 minutes for questions from participants and dialogue.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Thank the participants for their questions and reflections and conclude by saying something along the following lines:

Human rights are, to a great extent, about human relationships. It is in the small, ordinary spaces of daily life that people's rights are realised. In school, the workplace, the marketplace and in the faith community. Building a culture of human rights is not just about laws and government, it also needs to be built from the bottom up in the everyday roles we play in life.

Source

SMC Faith in Development with inspiration from Ed Brown www.smc.global/en

“I love how ‘The clifftop’ exercise reveals to participants how the whole of society is responsible for creating a culture of human rights. It can be a turning point for trainees in their understanding of and commitment to human rights.”

RACHEL FLEMING, INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS
TRAINER, UK

“The thing I like about ‘The clifftop’ exercise is how it helps participants engage, interact and talk about real life, serious issues, yet in fun, practical and inspiring ways.”

FRED NYABERA, INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINER,
KENYA

Human rights squares 35 min



EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS

WALK AND TALK

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any audience willing to engage in participatory learning processes. Can be used in more formal and informal trainings so long as participants have some prior knowledge of human rights.

PURPOSE

- To enable peer-to-peer learning, build connection and trust between participants, and draw out participants' pre-existing knowledge about human rights.
- To help participants reflect on the state of human rights in their community/society.

DESCRIPTION

An interactive exercise where participants ask each other questions on human rights and share their knowledge.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- One copy of the 'Human rights squares' [handout](#) and a pen for each participant.

Find the handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/human-rights-squares-handout.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Prepare your own ideas for each human rights square in advance, to aid you in the plenary discussion.

Ensure there is enough space in the training room for participants to walk around freely. Ask participants to move tables and chairs if necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Explain that the group is going to use each other as sources of information to learn about human rights together. Distribute one 'human rights square' handout and a pen to each participant.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 30 MIN

• WALK AND TALK (15 MIN)

Instruct participants to mingle in the room, asking other members of the group for examples of as many of the statements on the handout as possible and writing their answers in the appropriate squares. Each answer must come from a different person, who has to write their initials in that square.

Call time after around 10-15 min and ask them to stop.

TIP! Find a balance between allowing enough time for participants to collect plenty of answers and keeping the exercise short and energising, with time left for discussion.

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)

Ask participants to put up their hands if they were able to fill in more than five squares. And to keep them up if they got more than ten... more than 15... until you have a top scorer. Give everyone a round of applause.

Lead the discussion by asking participants open questions such as:

- Share something new that you learned from another participant.
- Which squares did you find easy?
- Which squares did you find difficult?
- What answers do you have for the squares about our society/country?
- What do you think those answers say about the state of human rights in our society?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Congratulate the group on their collective knowledge about human rights. Thank them for sharing their reflections about the state of human rights in their country/context.

Source

Adapted from [The Human Rights Education Toolbox \(2012\)](#), Danish Institute of Human Rights.



Human rights timeline 60 min

EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS

BRAINSTORM
PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

This exercise is best suited to audiences for whom knowledge of a range of human rights documents is important – for example, civil society or decisionmakers. It is less suited to grassroots groups and unsuitable for groups that have little or no prior knowledge of human rights.

PURPOSE

- To enable peer-to-peer learning and draw out participants’ pre-existing knowledge about human rights.
- To introduce knowledge about the right to freedom of religion or belief (FORB).

DESCRIPTION

Participants contribute individually to creating a joint human rights timeline that shows key events on three different levels: national, regional and global.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets and sticky tack or tape to stick them up.
- Marker pens.
- Post-it notes in four different colours.
- Optional – a copy of the FORB Learning Platform’s ‘Compendium of key international human rights agreements on FORB’ for each participant.

Find the compendium at www.forb-learning.org/compendium.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Make a frame for the timeline on several sheets of flipchart paper stuck together and display it in the training room:

TIMELINE	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
NATIONAL									
REGIONAL									
INTERNATIONAL									

- Review the FORB Learning Platform’s ‘Compendium of key international human rights agreements concerning freedom of religion or belief’ to compile your own list of key events in the development of the right both internationally and regionally.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Explain to participants that the group is going to create a timeline of human rights events, with each participant adding events to the timeline. A human rights event could be a new international human rights agreement at the global or regional level, new legislation at the national level (good or bad), or a significant violation of human rights.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 57 MIN

- **CREATE THE TIMELINE** (7 MIN)

Give each participant three post-it notes, with each note having a different colour. Allocate a colour for each of the following categories:

- National
- Regional
- Global

Ask participants to write ONE human rights event on each post-it note (one for each category). Ask them to place these events on the timeline, according to the category and the decade the event took place.

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION** (40 MIN)

When everyone has placed their events on the timeline, go through the events one by one. Start with the global, then regional, then national. Ask participants to elaborate and explain the events, noting any similar ones. Ask if any important national, regional or global events are missing and invite participants to add them to the timeline.

Make sure that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) are added, as well as any relevant regional human rights declarations and/or treaties mentioning FORB.

Begin to introduce FORB by asking the following questions:

- Does anyone know when and where the right to freedom of religion or belief first appeared?
- Does anyone know the number of the article that refers to FORB?
- Which other international and regional agreements refer to it?

Add the following to your timeline, giving a very brief explanation of each article/instrument:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Art. 18
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Art. 18 & 27
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989) Art. 14
- Any relevant articles of regional instruments.
- Declaration on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination on the basis of religion or belief (1981)
- General Comment 22 of the Human Rights Committee (1993)

Mention that:

- Art. 6 of the 1981 Declaration provides a helpful list of examples of the right to manifest religion or belief e.g., to observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays in accordance with one's religion or belief, and to teach a religion or belief in places suitable for these purposes.
- General Comments of the Human Rights Committee provide guidance about how rights should be interpreted.
- Although declarations of the General Assembly and general comments of the Human Rights Committee are not legally binding, they are used

to interpret the meaning of the right and have helped to clarify what it means in practice. For example, the 1981 Declaration predated and influenced the wording of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (see Art. 5 of the Declaration).

- Ask participants if any national or regional level FORB events (good or bad) should be added to the timeline.

- **SHARING** (10 MIN)

Ask participants to share their reflections on the timeline.

- Does anything on the national, regional, or international parts of the timeline we've created together surprise you?
- Does looking at the events we have added to the timeline evoke any reflections or feelings you would like to share? (Emphasise that all sharing is voluntary.)

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank everyone for sharing their knowledge and reflections. Say that we will spend the rest of the training learning more about the right to FORB together. If relevant to your group distribute copies of the FORB Learning Platform's ['Compendium of key international agreements on FORB'](#).

Source

Adapted from [The Human Rights Education Toolbox](#) (2012), Danish Institute of Human Rights.

Exploring freedom of religion or belief

This collection of exercises is designed to help participants explore the topic of freedom of religion or belief (FORB). These exercises typically form central elements in a participatory training on FORB. The collection includes exercises that build knowledge and critical reasoning skills along with exercises that help participants to explore their attitudes and feelings towards the topic and towards 'the other'.



GET PREPARED!

Develop your own knowledge with 'FORB for all' – the FORB Learning Platform's free online on-demand short course exploring the right to FORB, www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-for-all, as well as the eight short explainer films on FORB, www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb.

A limited number of places each year are available on our free 10-12 week facilitated FORB Training of the Trainers' online course, which strengthens skills for FORB facilitators and provides an opportunity to meet other FORB facilitators from around the world. www.forb-learning.org/courses/tot



Exercise overview

The first exercise in this chapter is a useful warm-up game for sessions exploring FORB.

- **THE DOTS** Creates reflection on inclusion and exclusion. Useful for any non-formal audience.

The next two exercises introduce the topic of FORB and help participants explore their ideas and attitudes towards it, contributing primarily to the ‘attitudes’ building block. These exercises are useful precursors to a knowledge input introducing the right.

- **ONCE UPON A TIME** Ideal for grassroots audiences and adaptable for use with children, this exercise uses a storytale to help participants think about whether they value the rights FORB protects.
- **THE BAROMETER** Easily tailored to different audiences, this game helps the facilitator identify participants' existing ideas and attitudes about FORB and tailor their training accordingly.

The fourth and fifth exercises are suitable for a wide range of audiences and provide interactive formats for knowledge inputs, incorporating discussion in ways that help to build critical reasoning.

- **THE TRAFFIC LIGHTS** A twist on the barometer game, this exercise is useful for informal, formal and small to very large audiences.
- **DIMENSIONS OF FORB** This exercise combines short explainer films on FORB with reflection and discussion.

The following two exercises help participants process and consolidate learning on the basics of FORB and are useful following a knowledge input.

- **THE HEART OF FORB** A simple way to check participants have understood and reinforce key learning points.
- **FORB IN MY DAY** Suitable for any audience willing to talk personally, this exercise helps participants identify how they use their right to FORB in daily life.

The final two exercises in the chapter help participants connect what they have learnt to the realities of community life.

- **ONE STEP FORWARDS** A simple role-play exercise that illustrates the advantages and disadvantages people face based on religious and other identities.
- **OUR SOCIAL IDENTITIES** A think-pair-share exercise that helps participants reflect on their own identities and problematise concepts of ‘them’ and ‘us’.

The dots 20 min



About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Less suitable in formal training settings.

PURPOSE

To give participants an insight into how, through our body language, we tacitly communicate our identity within groups we belong to, while simultaneously rejecting groups we do not belong to. Allows participants to explore attitudes on how groups often treat 'the other'.



DESCRIPTION

A simple, effective non-verbal game. Requires no previous knowledge of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) among participants. A good opener for a session on FORB for all, before any knowledge input on the right.

Instructions

RESOURCES

- Small stickers in different colours.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Ensure there is enough space in the training room for participants to walk around freely. Ask participants to move tables and chairs if necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Explain that the group is going to play a short and simple game.

- Ask everyone in the group to close their eyes.
- Tell participants that they may not express themselves verbally from the time they close their eyes and until you say they may start speaking again.
- Tell the group you will walk around the room and place a sticker on each participant's forehead.
- Depending on the group's size, choose one to three people who each get a sticker in a colour that no one else in the room has. The remaining people in the room should receive the same colour as one to four other people. Up to five persons may have the same colour and you can vary the size of the colour groups – for example, two green, four red, five blue etc.

TIP! Be mindful when selecting which participants will receive a sticker in a colour no-one else has. Avoid choosing those from a minority background or shy participants who may feel deeply uncomfortable being singled out.

NOTE

If a participant has done this exercise before, assign them another role such as helping you to distribute stickers. Their previous experience may change the dynamic of the exercise. Invite them to share their reflections as an observer after the other participants have expressed their feelings.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 15 MIN

- Once you have given every participant a sticker, tell the participants to open their eyes and ask them to form groups without talking. This is the only instruction to give participants. (Participants may help each other to find their group, but they are not allowed to speak.)
- Once most people have found their group, only the ‘chosen ones’ (with different coloured dots) are left still looking for their group. As soon as these participants understand that they don’t belong to a group, say STOP.
- Tell the participants they may speak again. Let everyone stay in his or her group. Ask:
 - How did it feel to be part of a group?
 - How did it feel to not belong to a group?
- Point out that the only instruction was to form groups without talking – it was never said that it was not allowed to let anyone join the group! Ask:
 - Did it occur to anyone to invite the ‘different’ persons into their group?
 - Or did anyone feel like breaking out of their own group and forming a new one with a person that was ‘different’?
 - Does anyone recognize these feelings from real-life experiences of being part of or outside a group?
- Invite participants to share any reflections about what this exercise teaches us about how society as a whole tends to treat the ‘other’ or add your own reflection.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Conclude the discussion by saying that the way in which the ‘other’ is treated in society can also negatively affect the enjoyment of the right to FORB for different groups. Explain that for the rest of this session, the group is going to look more closely at the right to FORB for all.

Source

Adapted from www.educationforpeace.com



'Once upon a time'

"The participants loved the story-tale – it was the best part of the session. The characters, the illustrations, the themes – it spoke to them."

HIDAYA DUDE, FACILITATOR, TANZANIA

"The 'Once upon a time exercise' led to lots of deep discussions. It opened many windows in people's minds. They started to reflect on their own communities – on everything from gender norms to if it's ok to break with the status quo."

HAMMAM HADDAD, FACILITATOR, JORDAN



Once upon a time 45 min

EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

STORYTELLING
PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

A story-based exercise best suited to grassroots-level communities/faith groups including youth groups. Works particularly well in communities with strong oral traditions. By adapting the reflection questions, the story can be used with younger children.

PURPOSE

To help participants reflect on whether they value the things freedom of religion or belief (FORB) protects, and if/how these things are valued in their traditions and cultures.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise is based around the story 'The songs of the flute and the drum'. The story illustrates seven key words that relate to the rights protected by FORB: Think, Believe, Belong, Practice, Question, Change and Refuse. The exercise has four parts: storytelling – plenary discussion – group discussion – feedback/conclusion. Follow this exercise with a knowledge input to introduce FORB.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Script of the [story](#): 'The songs of the flute and the drum'.
- Slides 3-23 of the Local Changemakers Course Session 2 [PowerPoint](#), which illustrate the story, OR a printout of the [posters](#) with the same illustrations. (It is possible to do the exercise without these if necessary.)
- [Handouts](#) of the 'Once upon a time' groupwork questions (one per 3-4 participants) OR a pre-prepared flipchart sheet with the groupwork questions on.
- Optional: a ready-made [knowledge input](#) to follow the exercise (also illustrated in the PowerPoint referenced above).

Find all resources connected to this exercise at

www.forb-learning.org/flute-and-drum.

This exercise and the accompanying resources are available in multiple languages as part of Session 2 of the Local Changemakers Course:

www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Practice reading out the story or retelling it in your own words, so that you can be an engaging storyteller and feel confident about which PowerPoint slide or poster to show when. If you are using the posters, consider putting them up in sequence on a wall in advance. This will make it easier to point to the right poster at the appropriate moment.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Explain that the group is going to listen to a story and reflect on what it means for us.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 35 MIN

- **STORYTELLING** (15 MIN)

Tell the story and show the PowerPoint slides/posters. Try to read with lots of feeling!

- **QUICK PLENARY DISCUSSION** (5 MIN)

Ask people to put their hands up to answer the following questions – only take one or two responses to each question.

- What do you think are the messages or morals of the story?
- Was there anything you appreciated in the way the characters behaved? (If people find it hard to relate to the idea of drums and flutes being important, explain that they represent the villagers' belief system and religious practices.)

- **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)

Divide participants into groups of 3-4, giving each group a copy of the groupwork questions. Show PowerPoint slide 24 with the seven key words on, or a flipchart sheet with the words listed. Explain that all of these words relate to the story in some way.

(Key words: Think, Believe, Belong, Practice, Question, Change and Refuse.)

Ask the groups to discuss the following questions:

- How do these words relate to what happened in the story and to things you appreciate or dislike about the characters?
- Can you think of stories from your culture or faith tradition that say positive things about people thinking, believing, belonging, practicing, changing, questioning or refusing?
- Does the community benefit when people are allowed to do these things or is it a threat to the community? Or both?
- Is positive change possible without people who do these things?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 9 MIN

Ask each group to share one thing that they found inspiring, important or difficult in their discussion.

Conclude by saying something along the following lines:

We have been reflecting on this story as a way of beginning to explore the values and rights connected to the human right to freedom of religion or belief.

- These values and rights are not simple or uncontroversial. They may make us feel a bit concerned. For example, you might be wondering:
 - If people are free to think for themselves and choose how they live their lives, won't our culture, traditions and beliefs be threatened?
 - What guarantee do we have that people will use these freedoms for good? There are people who have bad ideas or bad intentions. Not everyone is like Ziana who wanted life to be better for her friends. Sometimes people use their beliefs to justify acting in ways that harm other people – like the tea stallholder who harassed Ono and organised a gang to rip down the 'everyone welcome' signs.

TIP! Be careful of time management to ensure there is enough time for small group discussion.

- These are important questions which we are going to keep exploring! On the other hand, positive change cannot happen unless people are allowed to think and believe and to question things that they think are bad – like discrimination in the marketplace.
- So, what rights should people have and when should the government be able to limit those rights? We are now going to learn about what international human rights law has to say about this.

Follow the exercise with a knowledge input on FORB. A ready-made input designed to follow the story is available (and illustrated in the same PowerPoint as the story) in the accompanying materials to Session 2 of the Local Changemakers Course. Find all the resources at www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-course-materials.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers



Illustration from the storytale 'The Songs of the flute and the drum'.



The barometer 25-30 min

EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any group willing to engage in participatory learning. Suitable for all levels of knowledge.

PURPOSE

- To enable the facilitator to assess participants' knowledge of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and tailor subsequent input sessions accordingly.
- Allows participants to explore their views and ideas about FORB in relation to their own values.
- To gradually ease participants into deeper discussions of FORB in their local context.



DESCRIPTION

An interactive game in which participants place themselves along an imaginary line between 'totally agree' and 'totally disagree' in relation to statements on FORB and discuss their thoughts. A good opener for a session on FORB for all, before any knowledge input on the right.

Instructions

RESOURCES

- Contextualized statements – choose from the statements below and/or create your own.
- An indoor or outdoor open space large enough for participants to walk around freely and position themselves along an imaginary or actual line on the floor between two corners of the room. Ask participants to move tables and chairs if necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Ask everyone to stand in the middle of the room. Explain that the group is going to do an exercise to explore what we know and think about FORB.

Assign opposite corners of the room as 'agree' and 'disagree' corners. Explain that you will make a statement and ask participants to stand in one of the corners, according to whether they agree or disagree with the statement.

Use two of the following test examples to help participants grasp the idea of the game:

- Pizza is tastier than pasta.
- I love football.
- Watching TV is more enjoyable than reading.
- Money is essential to happiness.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 15-20 MIN

- Begin the game by introducing two simpler statements on FORB for participants to ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’ with. Choose two of the following, or create your own:
 - Freedom of religion or belief is a human right all people should have.
 - In our community there is full freedom of religion or belief.
 - Freedom of religion or belief can be limited in some situations.
 - Freedom of religion or belief only protects followers of the major world religions.
- Tell participants that for the next set of statements, they can position themselves anywhere along an imaginary line between the two corners. This is a ‘barometer’ scale ranging from totally agree in one corner, through partly agree to undecided or indifferent in the middle, followed by partly disagree to totally disagree in the opposite corner.
- Choose a few of the following statements to read out or create your own. After each statement has been read, ask one or two participants to explain why they positioned themselves where they did on the scale.
 - Freedom of religion or belief allows believers from different religions to share their faith and promote their beliefs.
 - Freedom of religion or belief is a Western idea that doesn’t work in our context.
 - People should be allowed to leave their religion without seeking permission or facing consequences.
 - Freedom of religion or belief is only for adults, not for children.
 - Freedom of religion or belief means that you should show religion respect – you are not allowed to criticize religions.
 - Freedom of religion gives religious leaders the right to control the beliefs of their followers/members.
 - All religious groups should be allowed to build places of worship – the same rules regarding buildings should apply to all.
 - Religion should be removed from ID cards.
 - I think interreligious marriages should be allowed.
 - I think that religious education in school should give all religions the same attention.
 - Governments have the right to restrict the religious freedom of groups that they don’t like.
 - I think it is natural that xxx (the majority religious group) in our country have privileges that religious minorities don’t have.
 - Atheists should not be allowed to spread information freely.
- Remember, your role as facilitator is to enable participants to freely share their own thoughts and reflections without fear or guilt about making a mistake. Refrain from making judgements on the opinions and ideas participants express and limit discussions of what is right or wrong between different participants during this exercise. Note any serious misconceptions about FORB to address when you conclude the exercise (or in knowledge inputs or sessions that follow).

TIP! Include statements that will challenge people’s ideas but are not so controversial as to create an atmosphere of conflict.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Conclude the exercise by thanking participants for exploring their own views and ideas about FORB. Address any serious misconceptions about FORB. Explain that the rest of the session will explore the contents of FORB as set out in international human rights law.

Source

Adapted from www.educationforpeace.com



The traffic lights 30-60 min

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any audience. Works well with small to very large, auditorium-sized groups and in formal or informal settings. Suitable for all levels of knowledge.

PURPOSE

To help participants explore their attitudes towards, and/or understanding of, the right to freedom of religion or belief (FORB).

DESCRIPTION

A twist on the classic ‘agree-disagree’ style exercise. This exercise can be used as an interactive way to provide knowledge input or reflect on attitudes. Depending on the statements chosen it can be used for groups with little or no previous knowledge of FORB, or with groups that already have a strong understanding of the right, for example to explore how it intersects with other rights such as freedom of expression or women’s rights.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Post-it sized squares of yellow, green and red paper (the traffic lights) for each participant.
- One or two roving microphones for large groups.
- Statements to read out.

Find a list of [sample statements](#) to read out on page 216 or at <http://www.forb-learning.org/exercises/traffic-lights-statements>.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Choose statements to use from the list available. When choosing statements, think about your context and target audience. What potential misunderstandings, knowledge gaps or problematic attitudes could be approached through the statements you choose? Allow 5-15 minutes per question depending on the degree of controversy or complexity involved.
- Prepare one or more brief points or reflections to make in response to participants’ reflections on each statement. Many of the statements connect to the FORB Learning Platform’s eight short [explainer films](#) on FORB. Watching these may help you prepare your responses. Find the films at www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb.



OPTIONAL EXTRA: BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE

It can be challenging to facilitate this and other ‘agree-disagree’ style exercises with statements, especially if you choose statements to help explore attitudes. Build your confidence as a facilitator by reviewing our [‘Tips for facilitators’](#) section on page 282 and [‘Responding to tricky questions’](#) on page 286.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Give each participant a square of yellow, green and red paper. (For large groups, save time by placing these on each seat before participants enter the room.)

Explain that you are going to read out a series of statements. After hearing each statement, participants should hold up one of their pieces of paper – green if they agree with the statement, red if they disagree, and yellow if they are undecided or conflicted (for example, if they agree on the one hand but disagree on the other.)

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 23-53 MIN

- Read out a statement and ask all participants to hold up one of their pieces of paper – green, red or yellow.
- Ask three participants who are holding up different colours to explain why they agreed or disagreed with the statement or are undecided/conflicted.
- Sum up the different opinions shared and reflect upon them briefly, sharing relevant information about what FORB actually means according to international human rights law. (Use this as an opportunity to hold an interactive input based on participants attitudes, knowledge levels and questions.)
- Repeat with as many statements as you have time for, allowing plenty of time for more complex or controversial statements. Remember to invite different participants to share their opinions each time.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Thank the participants for expressing their honest opinions and for being open and willing to reflect on and learn about the right to FORB. Ask if there are any outstanding questions, and either address them or explain when they will be covered in the training.

Source

SMC Faith in Development, <https://www.smc.global/en/>

Dimensions of FORB 30-75 min



EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

WATCH AND DISCUSS

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any audience, but less suitable for grassroots-level audiences for whom other exercises (e.g., Once upon a time) can be more creatively used.

PURPOSE

To help participants think through the contents of the FORB Learning Platform's explainer films on freedom of religion or belief (FORB), reflecting on how the right relates to their values, opinions and/or context.

DESCRIPTION

After watching one or more of the FORB Learning Platform's explainer films on FORB, small groups discuss the contents of the film(s) and how the issues raised relate to their context and organisation/role.

Eight films (5-20 minutes long) are available on the following topics:

1. An introduction to freedom of religion or belief
2. The right to have or change your religion or belief
3. The right to manifest (practice) religion or belief
4. Protection from coercion
5. Protection from discrimination
6. Rights for parents and children
7. Conscientious objection
8. Limitations to freedom of religion or belief

NOTE

Films 1-3 cover the heart of the right and require no previous knowledge among participants. The other films explore more specific dimensions of FORB and are best suited to groups that already have a general understanding of human rights and a basic knowledge of FORB.

Film 8 on limitations is particularly useful for politicians and officials responsible for implementing law and public policy.



TIP! For an overview of the dimensions, check out the '[Quick guide to religious freedom](#).'

Instructions

RESOURCES

- The FORB Learning Platform's short [films on FORB](#) (available to download or to stream in over 20 languages).
- A laptop, projector and screen or other devices for showing films. (Alternatively ask participants to use their smart phones and headphones and watch the films individually.)
- Flipchart paper and pens.

Find the films at www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Choose which FORB Learning Platform film(s) you will show.
- Test the equipment you will use to screen the film(s) in the training room ahead of time.
- Write up the group discussion questions you will use on flipchart paper.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5-20 MIN

Explain that you are going to watch the short film(s) together as a whole group, before breaking into smaller groups to discuss the film(s). Show the relevant film(s).

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 20-50 MIN

- **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

Divide the participants into small groups of 2-3 and display the questions below. Hand out flipchart paper and pens to each group and ask the groups to record their most important thoughts and any questions they have.

- Did you learn anything new from the film?
- Was there anything you were pleased to hear about?
- Was there anything you find challenging, or hard to accept?
- Was there anything you didn't fully understand or want to know more about? Write questions down and we will try to answer them together/ later in the session!

- **QUICK PLENARY DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

In plenary, invite brief feedback from each group and try to answer questions that come up, noting any that will be addressed in later sessions of the training.



- **(OPTIONAL) SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** (20-30 MIN)

Ask the participants to return to the same small groups. Display the following context focused questions and repeat the group discussion and plenary feedback process.

In your context, what are the biggest problems relating to the dimension(s) of freedom of religion or belief we just learned about in the film(s)?

- Do these problems relate to/impact upon your organisation/institution and its work in any way?
- Are these problems something that your organisation could try to tackle? Or could you work to strengthen the resilience of your community to these problems?
- What challenges might you encounter if you try to tackle these problems?

TIP! Create your own context questions, tailored to the needs of your target audience!

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Thank the group for their attention to the film(s) and for sharing their reflections. Make sure you have either answered all the participants' questions or clarified when they will be addressed during the training.

Source

SMC Faith in Development, <https://www.smc.global/en/>

The heart of FORB 15 min



EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

BRAINSTORM

BUZZ GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any. Easily adapted to different audiences.

PURPOSE

To check participants' understanding of the core knowledge on freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and reinforce key learning points.

DESCRIPTION

A quick buzz group exercise that helps the facilitator to gauge a group's level of understanding prior to or following an input, adds energy to a knowledge input and encourages peer-to-peer learning.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheet/whiteboard and markers in two different colours.
- A timer, phone, or other device with an alarm function.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Explain that the group is going to do a quick brainstorm exercise to think about what FORB means. Ask participants to get into pairs or threes (depending on the number of participants) with the people sitting closest to them.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Tell participants that they have just three minutes to answer one important question. Ask: What are the three main things that freedom of religion or belief protects? Shout GO and start the timer for 3 minutes.

When the time is up, ask one group to share their three answers. Write answers on the whiteboard/flipchart putting things related to inner freedom (the right to have, adopt and change a belief) in one colour to the left and things related to the outer freedom (practice and expression of one's religion) on the right in a different colour.

Ask the other groups if they have anything to add. Write up their suggestions under the inner/outer freedom lists.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Review the suggestions with the group and correct any misunderstandings of the right. Restate the following points.

Freedom of religion or belief gives us the right to:

- Have a religion or belief of any kind including traditional, non-traditional, new or old religions, major religions or smaller and new religions or a worldview or belief system with no deity, such as atheism (inner freedom).

TIP! Creating time pressure with an alarm or buzzer makes the exercise more fun and helps participants to focus their attention on the task at hand.

- To change religion or belief. If one day I want to change religion, or if people around me want to change religion, they are fully entitled to do so, even if that saddens us. It also gives us the right to stop having a religion altogether (inner freedom).
- To manifest or express one's religion or belief through worship, teaching, observance, and practice – both privately and in public, alone and together with others (outer freedom).

**ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY**

Extend this exercise by returning to buzz groups to discuss the follow-up questions below. This can be a useful way for participants to learn more about each other and to build trust within the group. Allow an additional 10 min for this.

- How important are the rights to have, to change and to manifest for you personally?
- Do you know anyone who converted or changed beliefs/stopped being religious?
- What kind of reaction did that person face from those around them or the State?

Source

Stefanus Alliance International, <https://www.stefanus.no/english/>



FORB in my day 30-45 min

EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

THINK-PAIR-SHARE

MULTI-FORMAT EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to faith-based/grassroots communities and civil society organisations/ human rights defenders and faith leaders. More formal audiences (e.g., decisionmakers and officials) may or may not find the exercise too personal.

PURPOSE

To help participants recognise that we all use our right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief (FORB) in our daily lives. This helps to illustrate that the right is important to us in reality, not just in theory.

DESCRIPTION

A think-pair-share exercise in which participants reflect on how they think, believe, belong, practice, question, question and refuse in their daily lives, whilst looking at photographs of people using their right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief in different ways. This exercise works well as a follow-up to '[Once upon a time](#)' on page 50.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Slides 48-60 of the [Session 2 PowerPoint](#) from the Local Changemakers Course (or printouts of these slides stuck on a wall in advance of the session).
- (Optional: If you prefer, you can replace the photographs in the PowerPoint with photographs from your own context that illustrate similar things.)
- One copy of the [handout](#) with groupwork questions per 3-4 participants OR a pre-prepared flipchart sheet with the groupwork questions on.

Find the PowerPoint and handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/forb-in-my-day.

This exercise and the accompanying resources are available in multiple languages as part of Session 2 of the Local Changemakers Course: www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Ask everyone to spread out in pairs. Explain the following:

We are now going to reflect on what freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief means for us in our daily lives. First, each person will think silently. Then we will share some thoughts in our pairs, before coming back together to discuss our thoughts.

Read out the following text (or say something similar). Flick through PowerPoint slides 48-60 or point to the printouts of the slides while you read it out.

“Think about a typical day in your life. When and how do you express your thoughts, beliefs, questions, and your sense of religious or non-religious belonging or identity? It could be:

- in the things you eat or don’t eat,
- in what you wear or don’t wear,
- in prayers or rituals or celebrations of key moments in life,
- in what you read,
- in conversations you have with your family, friends or colleagues and in how you bring your kids up or
- in how you serve the community or engage with issues that concern you in society.”

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 25-35 MIN

- **THINK** (2 MIN)

Ask everyone to spend 2 minutes thinking silently about a typical day. When and how do they express their thoughts, beliefs, questions and religious or non-religious identity/belonging in the course of an ordinary day?

- **PAIR** (8-13 MIN)

Ask participants to share their thoughts in their pairs and to discuss whichever of the following questions they feel comfortable talking about:

- Share a story of a time when you shared your ideas or questioned something. What happened and how did it feel?
- Share a story of a time when you couldn’t share your ideas, question something you felt was wrong or couldn’t be open with your identity. How did it feel?
- Is it important to you to be able to express your ideas and your identity in your daily life? Is it important to be able to question ideas or practices that you believe are wrong?
- How would it feel to be forced to live on the basis of what other people think and believe instead of your own beliefs?

- **SHARE** (15-20 MIN)

Ask people to come back to the plenary. The questions we have been reflecting on in our pairs all relate to the following questions:

- Are the rights protected by freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief important to us?
- How does it feel when we don’t have them?

Ask if anyone would like to share thoughts, feelings or experiences relating to this, based on the discussions they had in pairs. All sharing should be voluntary! After a while, ask the group if our shared human nature means that everyone has similar human needs in relation to the rights to think – believe – belong – practice – question – change and refuse? Are these rights important for people of any religion or belief?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Conclude the exercise by thanking everyone for sharing their thoughts and their engagement in the discussion.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers

TIP! Be ready to provide some reflections about FORB in your own life in case the conversation is slow to start.



'One step forwards'

“One step forwards is the perfect exercise! It really showed how people get left behind and how labelling and stigmatizing affects people’s lives. We needed lots of time for discussion afterwards.”

HAMMAM HADDAD, FACILITATOR, JORDAN

“The one step forwards exercise really helped participants understand why some people get left behind – even though they are equally intelligent, capable and hardworking. The growing gap was a concrete illustration of how society is structured to benefit privileged groups and gender, though everyone is born equal.”

IRFAN ENGINEER, FACILITATOR, INDIA



One step forwards 45 min

EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

ROLE-PLAY

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any group willing to engage in participatory learning.

PURPOSE

- To help participants appreciate the importance of human rights/freedom of religion or belief (FORB) for people of all faiths and none, by putting themselves in the shoes of people from other backgrounds.
- To increase awareness of the challenges that people of other religions or beliefs meet in daily life.
- To illustrate how religion/belief and other identities such as gender and class intersect, with the result that some people face multiple disadvantages.



DESCRIPTION

In this simple role-play exercise, participants put themselves in the shoes of characters they are given and take a step forward if their character would agree with a statement read out by the facilitator. As the physical gap between participants widens, the advantages and disadvantages facing different groups in society become apparent.

Instructions

RESOURCES

- A space/room big enough for participants to stand next to each other in a line along one wall and take about 15 small steps forwards towards the other side of the room.
- Photocopied [character cards](#) to hand out.
- A list of [statements](#) to read out.

Find several versions of the statements and character cards adapted to particular countries and regions at www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-onestepforwards.

This exercise and the accompanying resources are available in multiple languages as part of Session 3 of the Local Changemakers Course: www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Prepare character cards and statements as follows:

- Choose a standardised set of character cards and statements as a starting point. Standardised sets of characters and statements tailored to a range of regional/country contexts are available on the link above. Choose the set that best relates to your geographic and cultural context.

Then:

- Choose which characters to use. In each standardised set you will find around 30 character cards to edit and print. You need one character card per participant. Select characters to use based on greatest relevance and diversity of characters. Fuller guidance on how to select and adapt characters can be found in the documents.
- Choose which statements you will use. You need 12-15 statements to read out. Select statements from the standardised list based on relevance to your country context.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 8 MIN

If necessary, ask participants to help you move tables and chairs out of the way before starting the exercise.

- Explain that we are now going to think about who has advantages and disadvantages in our communities and how that impacts upon their lives.
- Explain that the group is going to do a simple role-play exercise in plenary. Everyone will be given a character. They need to line up with their backs to one side of the room. The only thing they have to do is to take a step forward if they think their character would agree with a statement that you are going to read out.
- Distribute characters randomly asking people to keep their character secret. It doesn't matter if a man gets a woman's character or vice versa.
- Spend a few minutes helping people to get into character by asking them to reflect briefly on the following questions.

Imagine that you are the character on your card:

- What was your childhood like?
- What is your everyday life like – what do you do in a typical day, who do you socialise with, what is your income and lifestyle?
- What are you afraid of and what do you hope for?

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 35 MIN

• **ROLE-PLAY** (15 MIN)

Ask the participants to stand next to one another in a straight line on one side of the room. Tell them that you will read out a number of statements. If they think their role/character would be able to agree with a statement, they should take one step forwards. If their character would disagree, then they should stand still.

Emphasise that the point of the game is NOT to take steps forwards but to be as true to the reality of the life of your character as possible. Participants are not allowed to talk during the exercise.

Read the statements out loud, one at a time. After each statement, pause to allow participants time to think about if their character can move forward. After you have read all statements, give participants a moment to note their positions in the room compared to other people, without saying who they were.

• **DISCUSSION IN PLENARY** (20 MIN)

Ask the participants open questions such as the following. (Take one or two answers to each question, to ensure you have time for the final two questions.)

- What happened during the exercise?
- How did you feel stepping forwards or not being able to step forwards?
- How did it feel to see the growing gaps between people?

- Was it easy or difficult to play your role – to put yourself in that person’s shoes?
- Were there moments when you felt your character’s basic human rights were ignored, including their freedom of religion or belief? When?

Ask everybody to say what their character was.

- Do our respective positions in the room reflect the realities of inequality in our society in any ways? Who is being left behind – women, minorities, poor people?
- What consequences does this have for people’s lives?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Conclude by saying that human rights conventions say that we are born equal in rights and dignity – that we start on the same line. But denials of our equality based, for example, on our religious or belief identity, our social status or if we are a man or a woman, have a huge impact on our lives from the moment we are born. Many people get left behind.

Source

Adapted from the EU Commission’s Compass manual and Education for Peace training materials for the Local Changemakers Course. www.educationforpeace.com
www.forb-learning.org/changemakers



Our social identities 40 min

EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

THINK-PAIR-SHARE

MULTI-FORMAT EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any group willing to engage in participatory learning and more personal discussions.

PURPOSE

To help participants see commonalities with people who have other religious/belief identities and think about how identities are connected to vulnerabilities.

DESCRIPTION

A think-pair-share exercise in which participants reflect on the different aspects of their identity and problematise concepts of 'them' and 'us'.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheet listing 10 'identities'.
- Flipchart sheet listing the discussion questions.

This exercise is available in multiple languages as part of Session 3 of the Local Changemakers Course (see the facilitators guide): www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

• CHOOSE TEN IDENTITIES AND PREPARE A FLIPCHART SHEET LISTING THEM

The following list includes 15 'identities' that we may have. Choose 10 of these for your participants to discuss, based on what is most relevant and important for the group to reflect on. Be sure to include some 'fun' identities like sport and music in your selection to lighten up the discussion and provide 'safe' alternatives for people to talk about if they find the discussion questions too sensitive. Do not include any identities that will derail the process, resulting in heated debates – debating issues is not the point of this exercise.

IDENTITIES

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| – Religion or belief | – Educational level |
| – Gender | – Hobby |
| – Football or other sport club you support | – Class/economic status |
| – Race/ethnicity | – Caste |
| – Nationality | – Age |
| – Music taste | – First language |
| – Family situation | – Sexual orientation |
| | – Ability/disability |

- **PREPARE YOUR VISUAL AIDS**

Write the 10 identities you chose on a flipchart sheet.

Write the following discussion questions on another flipchart sheet.

- What parts of your identity have the strongest effect on how you perceive yourself?
- What parts of your identity have the greatest effect on how others perceive you?
- For what part of your identity do you feel you most often face disadvantage or receive privilege?

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Explain that the group is going to take part in an exercise in which we explore the many different aspects of who we are.

- Ask people to get into pairs and move a little apart from neighbouring pairs. It is helpful if they can sit down, but not essential.
- Introduce the exercise by explaining the following:
Often, we focus on things that separate us. For example, when we think about religion, we tend to think about ‘them’ – the people from other religions, and ‘us’ – the people who share my beliefs and traditions. Religious identities can be very strong. But each of us has many identities that make up who we are – for example being a (local language) speaker, being from (province) or being an avid fan of (football club)! We are now going to do an exercise to help us think about our different identities and how they relate to other people’s identities.
- Read out the ten identities and the discussion questions from the flipchart sheets.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 35 MIN

- **THINK** (5 MIN)
Ask everyone to spend 5 minutes thinking individually about their identities and how they would answer the questions.
- **PAIR** (10 MIN)
Ask people to discuss the questions in pairs for 10 minutes. Emphasise that no one needs to say anything that feels too private – they should share only what they feel comfortable sharing.
- **SHARE** (20 MIN)
Bring everyone back to the plenary. Invite people to share their thoughts with the group. All sharing is voluntary! Be sure to lead by example and listen carefully and respectfully to these personal stories.

NOTE

Sometimes participants can relate strongly to another person’s story and might interrupt or interject with ‘Me too!’ or a similar comment. Whilst it is ok for participants to respond to someone else’s story by sharing their own feelings or experiences, don’t let anyone interrupt another person’s story or critique their experiences. Gently say, ‘Could you hold that thought until (participant A) has finished sharing. Thank you.’ If it seems appropriate, come back to them after the first participant has finished sharing.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank everyone for sharing and say you hope the exercise helped them to think about the many different facets of their identity!

Source

Adapted from The Social Identity Wheel, University of Michigan inclusive teaching programme <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/social-identity-wheel/>

Recognising and analysing violations

This collection of exercises is designed to help participants develop skills in recognising and analysing both government and societal violations and in assessing whether government limitations to the right to freedom of religion or belief (FORB) are legitimate or not. These skills are fundamental to enabling people to promote, claim, and defend the right. The exercises help participants process learning from inputs and help the facilitator to identify knowledge areas in need of further clarification. Depending on the needs of your target audience, include at least one exercise from this section in your training.



GET PREPARED!

Develop your own ability to analyse limitations and recognise violations with 'FORB for all' – the FORB Learning Platform's free online on-demand short course, which includes a module on violations, www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-for-all. Or why not watch our eight short explainer films on FORB, in particular 'Film 8: Limitations to FORB', www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb.

A limited number of places each year are available on our free 10-12 week facilitated FORB Training of the Trainers' online course, which strengthens skills for FORB facilitators and provides an opportunity to meet other FORB facilitators from around the world. www.forb-learning.org/courses/tot.



Exercise overview

The first three exercises involve building basic skills for analysing violations:

- **TWO-MINUTE FORB MINI-DRAMAS** A forum-theatre inspired exercise particularly well-suited to grassroots communities.
- **FORB AROUND THE WORD** Helps participants recognize that people from all kinds of religious and belief communities are affected by violations and that people and governments subscribing to many different traditions commit violations.
- **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS** A fast-paced quiz in which participants guess if scenarios illustrate violations or not, providing the facilitator with the basis for an interactive input on limitations.

In most contexts the exercise that follows is more challenging as participants' attitudes to the implementation of FORB for all become apparent.

- **THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISORS** Using learning from a knowledge input, participants provide recommendations on how the state should respond to FORB complaints in their context.

The five exercises that follow are more in-depth. In the first three, participants use a tool for analysis to assess limitations to the right, while the last two exercises focus on thematic issues. The exercises require participants to have varying levels of prior knowledge of the right.

- **A CLOSER LOOK AT LIMITATIONS** A plenary discussion exercise in which participants analyse four examples of limitations set down in law.
- **RIGHTS AND REGULATIONS** A tougher team quiz in which participants assess government proposals to regulate religious activities/communities.
- **COVID-19: LEGITIMATE LIMITATIONS?** A case study exercise in which participants assess government and societal responses to the pandemic.
- **PERSUASION OR COERCION?** Participants explore the circumstances in which religious persuasion moves from being a protected manifestation of religion to being coercion.
- **CHILDREN AND FORB – RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES** A scenario-based role-play discussion helps participants develop their skills in analysing the implications of the right to FORB for parents and children and for faith-based institutions.

Additional exercises exploring violations are included in the '[FORB and gender](#)' and the '[FORB, other rights and development](#)' chapters of this toolkit. In the latter you will find exercises exploring freedom of expression, hate speech and blasphemy.

NOTE

Most of the exercises in this chapter are intended to follow a knowledge input on understanding violations of FORB. You can find a ready-made knowledge input (PowerPoint and script) on understanding violations in Session 4 of the Local Change-makers Course (www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-course-materials). Or why not use 'Film 8: Limitations to freedom of religion or belief' as an input – this option is very useful in trainings for decisionmakers and officials. (www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb)

Two-minute FORB mini-dramas 1 h 30 min



RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

DRAMA

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To transform theoretical learning on violations of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) into practical skills in identifying such violations, and to enable reflection on violations in the participants' context.

DESCRIPTION

In this exercise, groups create and rehearse 2-minute dramas based on simple scenarios that they are provided with. These scenarios illustrate situations where different kinds of FORB violations are taking place. The dramas are then presented and discussed in plenary with participants identifying FORB violations in the scenario. This exercise is designed to follow a knowledge input on understanding violations of FORB.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Read the [annotated facilitator's version](#) of the scenarios on page 219.
- Decide how many groups you will have: 2-3 groups of 6-10 people is ideal, as most scenarios need a minimum of six characters. The timing of the exercise is based on a maximum of three groups (containing max 30 participants). Do not add additional groups unless you can make the session longer!
- Choose which of the five drama scenarios to use, based on the relevance of the scenarios and the number of groups you will have. Each group should have a different scenario.
- Print out two copies of the chosen [scenario handout](#) for each scenario you chose.
- Prepare a flipchart sheet with key words relating to violations of FORB written up. Use key words that link back to your knowledge input on understanding violations and that relate to the scenarios chosen. Suggested key words: Government restrictions, government failures to protect, government violations, discrimination, social hostilities, violence, State, non-State actor.
- Choose a positive story of people making change that is relevant to your context and target audience. Think up your own or choose from the changemaker stories' on the following webpage, www.forb-learning.org/work-for-change/tactics.

Find the drama scenario handouts at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/mini-drama-handout. This exercise (and a ready-made presentation on understanding violations designed to precede it) is available in multiple languages as part of Session 4 of the Local Changemakers Course www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.



'Two-minute FORB mini-dramas'

“Two-minute FORB mini-dramas is a great exercise that helped us explore the social hostilities members of Afro-Brazilian religions are facing in Brazil. The exercise works brilliantly with Brazilian culture - participants got really engaged in creating the dramas and for some there were ‘lightbulb’ moments when they recognised their own complicity in speaking hate about others.”

GRAHAM MCGEOCH, FORB TRAINER, BRAZIL

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Explain as follows:

- We are going to do a drama-based exercise to help us identify FORB violations we might encounter.
- We are going to divide into groups. Each group will receive a scenario – a simple sequence of events taking place between a few characters. Your task is to act it out in no more than 2 minutes!
- You will have 15 minutes to create and practice your drama. That is not much time, so divide the roles very quickly and then improvise!
- After 15 minutes, you will perform your drama in front of the rest of the group.
- If you would like to add details to the story, please do – but the drama should not last longer than 2 minutes.
- Don't worry! We are looking for spontaneous performances – not polished acting. As long as the story comes across your performance is a success!

Divide into groups and hand out the scenarios.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 80 MIN

• **PRACTICE THE DRAMAS** (15 MIN)

Tell the groups to start practising! Move between groups helping them to get started.

NOTE

Timekeeping is very important in this exercise! Do not allow the practice time to go over 15 minutes as this cuts time from the important performance/discussion part of the exercise. It is also important to manage time during the performance/discussion section, so that the first groups to perform don't end up using the later groups' time.

• **PERFORMANCE AND DISCUSSION** (50 MIN)

Timing: 15 min per group for presentation plus 5 minutes flexibility.

Each group presents their 2-minute drama twice. The first time they present it without interruption. The second time, the audience should call out 'Stop!' whenever they see a FORB violation happening. The drama should then pause (characters should stay in place). Point to the key words written on the flipchart sheet and ask the person/people who said 'Stop!' to briefly answer the following questions:

- What happened and why was it a violation of freedom of religion or belief?
- What type of violation is this an example of and who is committing the violation (e.g., social hostilities in the form of discrimination or violence, government restrictions or government failure to protect people)?

Continue the drama until the next person calls stop and repeat the above questions. There are three violations per drama. You can see what these are in the [facilitator's version](#) of the drama scenarios.

If there is time after the group has presented twice, start a broader discussion using the following questions:

- What should be different in this scenario? Which institutions or individuals should act differently or what laws or rules should be different?
- Who could intervene in a positive way to change things? Could a member of the community, activist, organisation or decisionmaker make a difference?

Allow 15 minutes per group for the performance/discussion process and be very strict on time-keeping! (If you only have two groups you can increase this.) Apologise for cutting groups off mid-flow but explain that everyone needs a chance to perform. Remember to give each group a round of applause at the end of their 15 minutes!

• **PLENARY SHARING TIME** (15 MIN)

When all the groups have presented and discussed their scenario, congratulate everyone on their performances again. Then start a broader conversation, based on the following questions:

- Do violations similar to the ones we saw in the dramas sometimes happen in our community?
- What impact does this have on people and on society as a whole?

Encourage people to share stories or experiences if they are comfortable doing so. As participants share personal stories, try to ask generalising questions – what do experiences like this mean for the community as a whole? Try to draw out the point that violations harm everyone in the end because they create tensions and risks for the whole of society.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Conclude by saying something along the following lines:

- When we share stories about the problems people face in our community it can be easy to lose heart.
- Making change is a slow but incredibly important process. It begins when we become aware of the situation for freedom of religion or belief not just for ourselves, but for everyone in our country and community.
- But change is possible! Share a positive story of change from your own local context – this is very inspiring for participants.

TIP! If you can't think of a story from your local context, share inspiration from the changemakers stories available [here](#).

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform www.forb-learning.org/changemakers



FORB around the world 1 h 5 min

RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

CASE STUDY
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any.

PURPOSE

- To open participants' eyes to the state of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) in other parts of the world. In contexts of persecution, the exercise enables participants to recognise that their experience of persecution is shared by many others around the world, that other faith communities also experience persecution and that members of their own faith community may, in other contexts, be persecutors.
- To help participants develop the skills of identifying and/or analysing violations of FORB after a knowledge input on the topic.



DESCRIPTION

A group discussion exercise based on case studies, designed to follow a knowledge input on understanding violations of FORB. Discussion questions can be adapted to different knowledge levels enabling the exercise to be used for beginners and more knowledgeable groups.

NOTE

A ready-made presentation (script and PowerPoint) on understanding violations is available in multiple languages as part of Session 4 of the Local Changemakers Course. If using, remember to remove any examples to be used in the case study exercise from the presentation! www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Select enough [case studies](#) for each small group of 3-4 participants to have a different case. Pick a variety of cases that illustrate the situation for different faith communities in various parts of the world. Print four copies of each case study chosen.
- Select 4-5 discussion questions from the list below that best match the knowledge level and needs of your target audience and write them on a flipchart sheet or PowerPoint slide.
- Flipchart sheets and markers for each small group to record their discussions.

Find the [case studies](#) on page 222 and at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/around-the-world-cases.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Choose 4-5 questions from the list below in accordance with the knowledge level of the group and the method used to introduce the topic/the terminology they are familiar with.

1. Who are the victims of the violations?
2. In what way is their right to freedom of religion or belief being violated?
AND/OR
3. What type of violation can you see in this case – discrimination, restrictions or violence? AND/OR
4. What dimensions of their right to freedom of religion or belief are being violated?
5. What other rights are being violated? List as many as you can.
6. Who is committing these violations? OR
7. Would you characterise these violations as government violations and/or social hostilities and/or government failures? OR
8. Who is responsible for these violations – for committing them, creating circumstances that enable them, or failing to prevent/halt or prosecute them? Include the roles of both legal and moral duty bearers.
9. Why do you think this is happening – why are these victims being targeted, why are those responsible acting in this way?
10. In what ways are these violations a) similar and b) different to those taking place in your context/against your faith community?
11. Can you learn anything from this case that is relevant to your own context?

NOTE

Question 3 picks up on the ready-made [presentation](#) on understanding violations from Session 4 of the Local Changemakers Course
 Question 4 relates to the ‘[Dimensions of FORB](#)’ exercise on page 57 and the FORB Learning Platform’s 8 [films on FORB](#).
 Question 8 works well for groups who have done ‘[The clifftop](#)’ exercise on page 37, exploring legal and moral duty bearers.

TIP! For an overview of the dimensions, check out the '[Quick guide to religious freedom](#).'

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Explain that the group is now going to do an exercise exploring different types of violations of FORB facing different groups around the world.

- Form small groups of four (or no less than three per group). Give each group member a copy of the group’s case study with each group receiving a different case study.
- Explain that each group is going to read the case study they have been given and discuss it in their groups. Go through the flipchart sheet/PowerPoint slide of discussion questions making sure people understand the questions.
- Ask each group to appoint a note-taker and a presenter, who will present the conclusions of their discussions back to the plenary for 5 minutes each and respond to any comments or questions from the rest of the participants.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 55 MIN

- **GROUP DISCUSSION** (25 MIN)
 Circulate between the groups to answer any questions they might have during their discussion, and to monitor the group dynamic – draw quieter participants into the discussion if needed. Remind participants that they have around 4 or 5 minutes per question.

- **GROUP FEEDBACK & PLENARY DISCUSSION** (30 MIN)

Allow each group to present for up to 5 minutes, remembering to clap after each presentation! Invite the other participants to ask questions they might have. Be prepared to ask the presenters clarifying questions such as ‘Could you say more about...?’.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Congratulate presenters and groups on their work and their insightful reflections. Conclude by saying something along the following lines:

- One of the most important skills we need to have to work for freedom of religion or belief for all is the ability to recognise violations.
- It can offer us a new perspective when we step back from the situation of our own community or context and learn about the challenges to freedom of religion or belief in other parts of the world.
- In other contexts, other faith communities face violations and persecution – and members of our own faith community may sometimes be persecutors.

Source

SMC Faith in Development, <https://www.smc.global/en/>

“The ‘FORB around the world’ exercise provides a simple tool to help participants recognise a range of FORB restrictions and violations both in their own and other contexts. It’s often given ‘aha’ moments when they realise that religious groups they regard as perpetrators in their own context can be victims elsewhere.”

LISA WINTHER, INTERNATIONAL FORB TRAINER, NORWAY



Know your rights! 1 h 30 min

RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

WALK AND TALK

BUZZ GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any. No prior knowledge required.

PURPOSE

- To help participants test and develop their knowledge of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and justifiable limitations to the right.
- To develop skills in assessing if FORB limitations are justifiable.
- To help the facilitator tailor the knowledge input to the knowledge level and questions of the group.



DESCRIPTION

An opening exercise in the form of a fast-paced walk and talk quiz that helps the facilitator establish the knowledge level of the group before providing an interactive input on limitations to FORB based on their questions. Buzz groups visit 'stations', read a limitation scenario, guess if it is legitimate or not and then read and discuss the answer given on the back of the paper. Groups note down any confusion or questions that arise to bring to an interactive plenary discussion/knowledge input, which rounds off the exercise. Demands a solid understanding of permissible limitations on the part of the facilitator.

ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY

Quiz sheets can be used as a standalone awareness raising quiz for example in an exhibition tent.

Instructions

RESOURCES

- One copy of the 'Know your rights!' [quiz sheets](#) (20 pages). Print them out double-sided, so that the limitation scenario appears on the front and the explanation of why that limitation is or is not legitimate appears on the back.
- A bell or the stop-watch alarm on your mobile.
- One copy per participant of the [handout](#) 'How to determine whether a FORB limitation is legitimate – a tool for analysis'.
- Flipchart sheets headed 'Principles' and 'Questions'.

Find the quiz questions and answers on page 233 and the quiz sheets and handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/know-your-rights.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Prepare key points for the interactive plenary discussion/knowledge input. Make sure to include the points highlighted in the [handout](#) ‘How to determine whether a FORB limitation is legitimate – a tool for analysis’. Be prepared to relate these points to the scenarios highlighted on the limitation sheets. You may find it helpful to watch the 20-min FORB Learning Platform film ‘[8: Limitations to freedom of religion or belief](#)’ as you prepare your input. Find it at www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb.



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE (5 MIN)

Place the 10 limitation sheets on 10 chairs spread in numerical order around the room or outdoor space.

Explain that participants will now take part in a group quiz that will help us share our existing knowledge on FORB and identify the things that confuse us. Introduce the right by displaying and reading out the text of ICCPR article 18 on a PowerPoint or flipchart. (Do not give any further explanation of the right or take questions at this point).

Divide into buzz groups of 2-3 people. Ask each buzz group to go and stand beside one of the chairs. Explain that on each chair there is a description of a government regulation that could affect FORB. Explain that the group has 1 minute to guess whether the regulation described is legitimate according to human rights or whether it is not legitimate – a violation of human rights. Is it ok for the government to act in the way described? When the bell/alarm rings they should turn the sheet over and read the answer. They then have three minutes to discuss the answer and note down any questions, disagreements or confusion regarding that answer, before moving to the next question. Explain that their questions will be discussed later in the plenary.

Point out that this is a fast-paced exercise and that it is fine to guess the answers! It is not a test, but a fun way of rapidly sharing knowledge together and identifying our questions.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 80 MIN

• **WALK AND TALK (40 MIN)**

Remind them that their job is to guess if the limitation is legitimate or not and tell them to start!

After 1 minute ring the bell and tell them to read and discuss the answer on the back of the sheet.

After 3 minutes ring the bell again and ask them to move on to the next question.

Repeat for as many questions as the groups get through in 30 minutes, or sooner if energy levels seem to be dwindling.

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION/KNOWLEDGE INPUT (40 MIN)**

Ask everyone to return to the plenary. Put up two flipchart sheets – one headed ‘Principles’ and the other headed ‘Questions’ and use the following process:

- Ask each group to share one thing they learned from the exercise. If any of their answers highlight principles relating to how we decide if a limitation is legitimate or not (e.g., non-discriminatory, necessary to protect public health etc) then write these up on the ‘Principles’ sheet. Ask if anyone else has any principles they would like to add to the list.
- Ask each group to share one question they had in relation to a scenario. Write these up on the questions flipchart. (Do not answer the questions immediately just note them down).

- Following this, hold an interactive knowledge input, writing up key principles for determining if limitations are legitimate on the principles sheet, and using participants’ questions about the scenarios to illustrate the principles (thus answering the questions). Ensure that all the key points you have prepared in advance are made – either by you or by participants.
- Finish off by giving each person a copy of the handout, ‘How to determine whether a FORB limitation is legitimate – a tool for analysis’ as a resource to take home.



SHORT TALK

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Thank participants for their active engagement and conclude by saying that while some limitations are obvious violations of FORB, and some are obviously legitimate, often it is tricky to assess what is necessary to protect a legitimate ground (e.g., rights and freedoms of others) or whether a limitation will be indirectly discriminatory or not. But the more we understand these principles the more prepared we will be for our roles in defending, upholding and demanding rights.

Source

Katherine Cash, SMC Faith in Development/FORB Learning Platform

The president's advisors

55 min – 1 h 35 min



RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

ROLE-PLAY
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to civil society organisations, human rights defenders, faith leaders, and others involved in lobbying or advocacy work.

PURPOSE

- To help participants explore their attitudes towards rights for others in their own context, revealing and working with any resistance towards rights for all.
- To enable participants to apply knowledge they have learned about FORB and develop problem-solving skills.

DESCRIPTION

In this role-play exercise, the participants have just been appointed as the President's Religious Affairs Advisors and have to work together to make recommendations to the President on how the State should handle specific situations relating to freedom of religion or belief. This exercise requires a basic understanding of FORB among participants and should follow a knowledge input on understanding violations of FORB. (A ready-made knowledge input on this topic is available as part of Session 4 of the Local Changemakers Course: www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-course-materials.)

NOTE

This exercise requires careful and thoughtful facilitation, as it can uncover prejudices participants have in relation to who should have what rights, as well as misunderstandings of rights. Opposing views on concrete and controversial issues in the local context may well arise and create tensions. It is important to create a trusting environment so that participants feel comfortable sharing what they really think, instead of saying what they think the facilitator or others in the group want to hear.



TIP! Build your confidence as a facilitator by reviewing the 'Tips for facilitators' section on [page 282](#) and 'Responding to tricky questions' on [page 286](#).

Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Choose which [scenarios](#) you will use with your participants. Adapt them to your context and your audience if necessary.
- Create handouts with your chosen scenarios and print out enough copies for each group to have one copy of their scenario(s).

Find the [scenarios](#) on page 237 and at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/presidents-advisors-scenarios.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Welcome the participants and inform them that they have been appointed as the Religious Affairs Advisors to the President (or Prime Minister as appropriate), an important and sensitive position! Police, courts and faith communities all come to them for advice on what should happen in relation to the different situations. Tell them that the President trusts them completely and will probably follow their recommendations. In fact, the President is willing to commit extensive financial and staff resources to implement what they recommend. Emphasize again how important this role is.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 40-80 MIN

• **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)

Divide the participants into groups of three or four and give each group a handout containing the scenario they are to work on. Instruct them to come up with just ONE recommendation to the President for the case. They will present the scenario and their recommendation without any explanation. The group should decide who will be their spokesperson. (If groups seem ready after a shorter amount of time move to the next step sooner).

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION & FEEDBACK** (25 MIN)

Ask each group to present their presidential recommendation. Invite the other groups to comment on the recommendation – do they agree with it or not, and why? (Note this timing is for five groups, increase the time allowed for additional groups.)



• **(OPTIONAL) REPEAT THE PROCESS** (40 MIN)

Hand each group a new, more challenging scenario and repeat the groupwork, presentation and feedback process.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Sum up your reflections from the session, particularly on the significance of the choices the groups of presidential advisors made. Conclude by saying something along the following lines:

- It can be easy to believe in freedom of religion or belief in theory. When we focus on concrete situations in our own context, our fears and prejudices can easily get in the way of accepting rights for all. It is not easy to solve problems relating to freedom of religion or belief.
- Of course, few societies change overnight from having few rights to having full rights for all. Usually, the process of change is progressive over a long period of time. But is it important to know where we want to get to in order to identify the small steps that might be possible to take to get us there.



ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGIES

Depending on time available you can skip the second round of the exercise. Depending on the groups' level of knowledge and acceptance of the right you can also choose to run the exercise just once with cases that you think will challenge them. However, this is more difficult to facilitate and doesn't give the participants the same opportunity to develop their thinking and apply their learning in the second round.

TIP! During the group discussion, emphasise the importance of listening to each other and testing out thoughts and ideas together so that they can develop. It is ok to recommend something, hear feedback then change your mind about it being a good idea!

Source

Bassem Maher, Katherine Cash and Kristina Patring



A closer look at limitations 30 min

RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

ANALYSE

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any type of audience, however the exercise requires participants to have a basic prior understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB).

PURPOSE

- To help participants digest knowledge on legitimate limitations to FORB delivered in a preceding knowledge input.
- To give participants the opportunity to practice applying the skill of determining whether a limitation on FORB is legitimate or not, using a logical process provided in a tool.

DESCRIPTION

A plenary discussion exercise in which participants assess whether four short examples of limitations to FORB are legitimate or not according to international human rights law. Useful to use after an input on limitations to the right to enable participants to process their learning.

NOTE

This exercise works well as a follow-up to '[Dimensions of FORB](#)' on page 57, using the 20-min FORB Learning Platform 'Film 8: Limitations to freedom of religion or belief' as a knowledge input. Find the film and script at www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb. If you prefer, you can develop your own knowledge input on limitations, for which you might find the script of the film helpful.



FILMS ON FORB

Instructions

RESOURCES

- One copy per participant of the [handout](#) 'How to determine whether a FORB limitation is legitimate – a tool for analysis'.
- PowerPoint slides or flipchart sheets with the following four short examples of limitations written up (or create your own).
 - Legislation on 'disturbing the peace' limits the volume at which public meetings including religious gatherings, calls to prayer etc. can be broadcast via loudspeakers.
 - A law requires converts to obtain permission 30 days prior to a conversion ceremony or face a fine.
 - A law requires religious communities to be registered with the state. Unregistered religious activity is illegal.
 - A new law bans teachers in state schools from wearing religious symbols while teaching.

Find the handout at www.forb-learning.org/limitations-analysis-tool.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Refresh your knowledge about human rights and FORB so that you can explain the following concepts if needed:

- Absolute rights versus rights that can be limited.
- Legitimate grounds for limitations.
- Direct versus indirect discrimination.
- The margin of appreciation (particularly if you are conducting training in Europe).
- FORB as an individual right and as a collective right.

TIP! Watch the 8 explainer [films on FORB](#) or take a look in the [FORB library](#) to refresh and deepen your knowledge.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Give each participant a copy of the [handout](#) ‘How to determine whether a FORB limitation is legitimate – a tool for analysis’. Explain the rules outlined one by one. Answer any questions the participants may have.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 25 MIN

Read out the first short example from your prepared PowerPoint slides or flipchart sheet.

In plenary, ask the participants to refer to the handout on rules and solicit opinions on whether the limitation is legitimate or not. Ask participants to share their reasoning.

Provide feedback on participants’ thoughts, making sure that you differentiate very clearly between what might be participants’ opinions on whether a certain limitation should be legitimate and when international human rights law states that it is legitimate.

Repeat the process with the other three examples.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Conclude the exercise with the following reflections:

- One of the most important skills we need to have to work for FORB for all is the ability to recognise violations. That includes recognising when legal restrictions on FORB are illegitimate.
- It is useful to practice applying the skill of asking the right questions in a logical, step-by-step way to check if limitations are actually grounded in international human rights law. Otherwise, we risk assuming that a limitation must be necessary or that there is a good reason for it (especially if it doesn’t affect us). This is often what governments want us to believe!
- But be aware that these issues are complex and difficult. It is often a matter of interpretation, and the ‘margin of appreciation’ comes into play. As a reminder, that is the degree of discretion granted to national courts by international courts, on the basis that national authorities understand the national context best and are best placed to formulate national law. Some experts consider that courts give too wide a margin to states.



ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY

Rather than running this exercise as a plenary discussion, you can form small groups first and give one case study example to each group for discussion. Each group is then tasked to report back their conclusions in plenary, for discussion and feedback. If you choose this methodology, make sure you circulate between the groups and answer any questions they may have during their discussion. This methodology is best suited to groups of participants who have a good grounding in international human rights law as it can otherwise seem too daunting a task for some participants.

Source

SMC Faith in Development, <https://www.smc.global/en/>



Rights and regulations 55 min

RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

QUIZ

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any type of audience, however the exercise requires participants to have a good understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and the facilitator to have a strong understanding, as it explores complex elements of the right.

PURPOSE

- To help participants digest knowledge on legitimate limitations on FORB delivered in a preceding knowledge input.
- To give participants the opportunity to work together to develop the skill of determining whether administrative limitations to FORB are legitimate or not.

DESCRIPTION

An interactive team quiz in which participants work together to decide whether a proposed law is a legitimate limitation of FORB or not.

NOTE

This exercise works well as a follow-up to ‘[Dimensions of FORB](#)’ on page 57, using the 20-min FORB Learning Platform ‘Film 8: Limitations to freedom of religion or belief’ as a knowledge input. Find the film and script at www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb. If you prefer, you can develop your own knowledge input on limitations – for which you might find the script of the film helpful.



FILMS ON FORB

Instructions

RESOURCES

- One copy of the [question sheet](#) per small group of 3-4 participants, plus one copy of the facilitator’s [answer sheet](#).
- A flipchart sheet with the guiding questions written up.
- (Optional) A small prize for the winning team – this could be something simple like a snack for each member of the winning team.

Find the [question and answers](#) on page 240 and as handouts at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/rights-and-regulations.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Build your confidence! Refresh your knowledge about human rights and FORB so that you can explain the following concepts if needed:

- Absolute rights versus rights that may be limited.
- Legitimate limitations.
- Direct versus indirect discrimination.
- Collective rights to FORB (that belief groups can claim from the state – such as the right to obtain a legal identity) and individual rights to FORB that every individual has.
- The rights of parents and of children to FORB.

- Non-derogable rights.
- Direct versus indirect discrimination.



OPTIONAL EXTRA: BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE!

Refresh and deepen your knowledge of FORB by watching films 5. '[Protection from discrimination](#)', 6. '[Rights for parents and children](#)', and 8 '[Limitations to freedom of religion or belief](#)' to refresh and deepen your knowledge. Find all the films at www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Explain that group will take part in a quiz that will help them explore limitations to FORB. Use the following process:

- Ask participants to form quiz teams of 3-4 people, spaced out around the training room so that they cannot overhear each other. Instruct them to come up with a team name.
- Give each team one quiz sheet and ask them to write their team name at the top. Inform them they get one point for each correct answer, and a bonus point if they manage to write their explanation.
- Point to the guiding questions on the flipchart sheet and tell participants to think about these as they listen to the case study and answer the quiz questions.
 - Is the *absolute right* to have or change religion or belief being limited?
 - Is religious/belief *manifestation* being limited or is something not closely related to religion being limited?
 - Is there a *legitimate ground* for the limitation i.e., the protection of the rights and freedoms of others or of public health, public order, public safety or public morals?
 - Is the limitation *necessary* to protect this ground? (Is the problem serious enough, will the limitation be effective, are other solutions possible?)
 - Is the limitation *proportionate*?
 - Is the limitation directly or indirectly *discriminatory*?
- Read out the case study:

In 2018 legal amendments were proposed to the administrative law on religious denominations in Bulgaria. Some Bulgarian parliamentarians had put forward these proposals, as they were worried about radicalisation and perceived a growing influence from Turkey, with concerns that mosques were being used as a platform for political messages. They proposed a wide range of amendments to legislation.

 - A requirement that all worship be conducted in the Bulgarian language.
 - A ban on foreign financing of religious activities.
 - A requirement that all preachers should have received their religious training in Bulgaria.
 - 3000 Bulgarian citizens required as professing members (providing ID details to authorities) in order for a denomination to be registered.
 - A requirement that written permission be provided by both parents for each and every religious activity that a minor is to be involved in.
 - A ban on religious activities outside properties registered for the purpose.
 - A requirement that all denominations in receipt of government funding provide annual audited accounts to the Department of Religion.



HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 40 MIN

• **RUN THE QUIZ** (15 MIN)

Explain that each team is now going to complete the quiz, deciding if each proposed legal change is legitimate or not and why. Remind the teams they get an extra point if they manage to write down the right explanation for their choice of answer, and to use the guiding questions to help them. Read out each question, one by one. Allow 2 minutes per question, but no longer.

• **CHECK THE ANSWERS** (25 MIN)

- Ask the teams to swap their sheet with the team nearest them – they are going to mark each other’s answers! Instruct the groups to give one point for the correct answer, and one point for any part of the correct explanation that the team wrote down.
- Ask a group at random which team’s answer sheet they are marking and ask them to read out the answer given for question one. After having heard the answer, read out the correct answer and explanation from the answer sheet. Take time to clarify any misunderstandings that become apparent and discuss difficult issues, answering any questions the participants have.
- Repeat for the other six questions asking a different team each time.
- Ask each group to add up the total score for the quiz team they are marking and return the quiz sheets to you. Quickly review the scores and announce the winning team (and hand out the prizes – optional).

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Thank the participants for their enthusiasm and tell them this is a very difficult quiz – you were not expecting anyone to get all the answers right! Explain that after extensive domestic and international pressure almost all of the proposed amendments were rejected by the parliament in Bulgaria.



ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY

Remove the competitive element by allowing teams to keep their own quiz sheets and not allocating points.

Source

Adapted from the FORB Learning Platform's online training of the trainers' course. www.forb-learning.org/courses/tot

COVID-19: legitimate limitations? 2 h 10 min



RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

CASE STUDY

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any type of audience. The exercise requires participants to have a basic to good understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB), depending on the case studies chosen.

PURPOSE

- To help participants digest knowledge on legitimate limitations on FORB from a preceding knowledge input.
- To give participants the opportunity to work together to develop the skill of determining whether a limitation on FORB is legitimate or not, in the context of a public health emergency like the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To enable reflection on violations of FORB that may have taken place during the COVID-19 pandemic in the participants' context.

DESCRIPTION

A group discussion exercise based on case studies, designed to follow a knowledge input on legitimate limitations of FORB.

NOTE

This exercise works well as a follow-up to 'Dimensions of FORB' on page 57, using the 20-min FORB Learning Platform 'Film 8: Limitations to freedom of religion or belief' as a knowledge input. Find the film and script at www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb. If you prefer, you can develop your own knowledge input on limitations – for which you might find the script of the film helpful.



FILMS ON FORB

Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- One copy per participant of the [handout](#) 'How to determine whether a FORB limitation is legitimate – a tool for analysis'.
- Read through the facilitators [annotated version](#) of the case studies on page 243 to help you choose your case studies and prepare your comments to follow the groupwork.
- Choose a different case study for each small group of 3-4 participants. There are six case studies available to choose from. Print out four copies of each case study [handout](#) chosen.
- Prepare a flipchart sheet or PowerPoint slide showing the discussion questions.
- Flipchart sheets and markers for each small group to record their discussions.
- (Optional) A projector and screen or laptops, smart phones etc for showing a short introductory film on FORB and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Find the case study and analysis tool handouts at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/covid-19. Find the film at www.osce.org/odihr/515060.



OPTIONAL EXTRA: BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE!

Read-up on the impact of the pandemic with the Pew Forum report ‘[How COVID-19 Restrictions Affected Religious Groups Around the World in 2020](#)’. Available at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/covid-19.

Refresh your knowledge about human rights and FORB so that you can explain the following concepts if needed:

- Absolute rights versus rights that can be limited.
- Legitimate limitations.
- Non-derogable rights.
- Direct versus indirect discrimination.
- FORB as an individual right and as a collective right.

TIP! Take a look in the [FORB Library](#) or watch the eight [explainer films](#) on FORB to refresh and deepen your knowledge of the right.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 12 MIN

Explain that the group is going to spend some time thinking about FORB and the COVID-19 pandemic, using this as a way to practice assessing whether limitations on FORB are legitimate or not. Then:

- (Optional) Show the short introductory film on the COVID-19 pandemic and FORB produced by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (subtitles available in English, French and Russian).
- Give each participant a copy of the handout ‘How to determine whether a FORB limitation is legitimate – a tool for analysis’. Briefly explain the rules outlined one by one. Answer questions participants may have but stick to the time frame!



FILMS ON FORB

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 55 MIN

• **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION ROUND 1** (20 MIN)

Form small groups of four (or no less than three per group). Give each group a different case study, giving each group member a copy. Make sure each group has a flipchart paper and pens. Explain that each group should read their case study and discuss the following questions (displayed on flipchart paper or a PowerPoint slide).

- Are the limitations imposed by the government legitimate?
- Are any punishments given for breaking regulations proportionate and non-discriminatory?
- Why / why not? List all the reasons you can think of.
- What other reflections do you have about this case?

Ask each group to appoint a note-taker and a presenter, who will have 5 minutes to present the conclusions of their group’s discussion.

• **GROUP FEEDBACK & PLENARY DISCUSSION** (45 MIN)

Invite each group to read out their case study and then present their findings (5 min per group). Remember to clap after each presentation! Invite the other participants to ask questions or make additional observations. Use the contents of the ‘facilitators notes’ in the case studies to help you make additional points and (where relevant) tell participants what happened next in relation to each case.

Add the following general points:

- As we have seen, some governments pro-actively used the opportunity the pandemic provided to limit rights unjustifiably and discriminate, particularly in relation to minorities. Similarly, in some countries, the pandemic led to an increase in social hostilities in the form of scapegoating, discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes towards minorities. Existing patterns of government and social restrictions, violence and discrimination have been exacerbated.

- Some other governments failed to ensure that FORB was adequately respected in their responses to the pandemic – for example introducing blanket bans on meetings regardless of size, situation or the precautions taken.
- It is important to note that FORB is a non-derogable right. This means that the right cannot be suspended during a state of emergency. The same grounds for limitations to FORB apply in an emergency as in any other situation. Public health is a legitimate ground for limitations and can be used in the case of COVID-19. However, governments must interpret the grounds for limitations of FORB strictly, ensuring measures taken are necessary and proportionate and non-discriminatory.
- The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued a wide range of guidance on emergency measures and COVID-19 – for example saying: “Governments have to take difficult decisions in response to COVID-19. International law allows emergency measures in response to significant threats – but measures that restrict human rights should be proportionate to the evaluated risk, necessary and applied in a non-discriminatory way. This means having a specific focus and duration and taking the least intrusive approach possible to protect public health.”

TIP! Find OHCHR guidance at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/covid-19/covid-19-guidance>.

• **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION ROUND 2** (20 MIN)

Ask participants to return to their small groups to discuss how COVID-19 affected the right to FORB in their context(s). Display and read out the following discussion questions:

- Were the limitations imposed on FORB during the COVID-19 pandemic in your context legitimate or not? Were they proportionate and necessary to achieve a legitimate aim? Were they applied without discrimination?
- Why / why not?
- Was there any rise in religious intolerance or hatred during the pandemic in your context, such as blaming particular religious or belief communities for the spread of the virus?
- Are there any positive examples about how issues relating to FORB were resolved in your context during the pandemic?

Ask each group to appoint a new note-taker and presenter, who will have 5 minutes to present the conclusions of their discussions back to the plenary.

• **GROUP FEEDBACK & BRIEF PLENARY DISCUSSION** (30 MIN)

Invite each spokesperson to present their findings (5 min/group). If the groups are all from the same context, ask each spokesperson to skip over points already made by previous groups. After all the groups have presented, very briefly mention any common themes that emerged and thank the participants for sharing their important insights.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Conclude by saying something along the following lines:

The COVID-19 pandemic has been immensely challenging for all of us, including governments! Hopefully we can learn from this experience. COVID-19 will not be the last emergency the world faces. We all have a responsibility to monitor government responses to emergencies and to react when measures taken are disproportionate, unnecessary or discriminatory. For that reason, it is important to learn from the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, to know our rights and to understand the rules about limitations so we can apply them in future. Hopefully this exercise has helped us on the way.

Source

Rachel Fleming



Persuasion or coercion? 55-60 min

RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

SCENARIO
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any type of audience, however the exercise requires participants to have a basic prior understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB).

PURPOSE

- To help participants explore the differences between religious persuasion as the peaceful expression or manifestation of religion or belief, and coercion to change beliefs.
- To enable participants to practice the skill of recognising and analysing violations of FORB.

DESCRIPTION

A buzz group exercise in which participants discuss scenarios from different parts of the world. This exercise is a useful way to break up a knowledge input on recognising violations of FORB and encourages peer-to-peer learning.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Read through the [annotated facilitators version](#) of the scenarios on page 250 and choose four or five scenarios that will work well in your context. Try to choose a mix of more obvious and more complex scenarios with varying types of coercion (legislative, social, economic).
- Print one copy of each chosen [scenario handout](#) or write the scenarios on separate flipchart sheets.
- Set up 'stations' in the training space, which small groups of participants can gather around to read and discuss each scenario.
- Have a bell or mobile phone alarm to hand to keep time.

Find the scenario handouts at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/persuasion-or-coercion-scenarios.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 8 MIN

Explain the following:

Some people think that sharing your beliefs with another person with the aim of encouraging them to change their religion or beliefs is immoral. Others see sharing their faith as a central religious duty, considering it immoral to fail to share the 'good news' or truth of their beliefs. Human rights take no position on the question of the morality of sharing your beliefs, but three things are important:

- The right to change your beliefs is an absolute right. It may never be restricted, by anyone.
- Both freedom of religion and belief and freedom of expression protect the right to tell other people about what you believe and why you consider your

beliefs to be good or true. We also have a right to access to information about ideas. Religious ideas are no different to political or other ideas in this sense.

- Freedom of religion or belief explicitly forbids coercion to have, change or maintain your religion or belief.

But where do we draw the line between persuasion and coercion? Elicit responses from one or two participants, asking: How would you define the difference between persuasion and coercion?

Thank them for their thoughts and ideas and continue to provide input as follows: In any given case, we need to weigh up the following four factors:

- **WHO IS DOING THE PERSUADING?**

Does the person or body doing the persuading hold a position of power and influence over the person being persuaded? Are they abusing that power in their manner of persuasion?

- **WHO IS THE RECIPIENT?**

Is the person being persuaded particularly vulnerable to coercion for some reason? Is their vulnerability being taken advantage of in the manner of persuasion?

- **WHERE IS THE PERSUASION TAKING PLACE?**

Is the recipient there by choice and are they free to leave? If not, there is an increased risk of coercion.

- **WHAT FORM DOES THE PERSUASION TAKE?**

The following forms of persuasion are NOT acceptable, as they are coercive:

- Promises or offers of something of material value in exchange for conversion, e.g., money, work, humanitarian assistance or social advantages.
- Removal or threat to withhold something of value, e.g., access to education, medical care, employment, civil and political rights.
- Threat or use of physical violence or blackmail.

Elicit reactions to these criteria from one or two participants.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 45-50 MIN

- **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION** (20-25 MIN)

Ask the participants to get into threes with the people sitting closest to them. Ask each small group to gather at one of the scenario ‘stations’. Tell them they will have 5 minutes to discuss each scenario. After the bell/timer rings they need to move on to the next scenario. Display the guiding questions on a flipchart sheet / PowerPoint slide:

- Is it persuasion or coercion? Why?
- If it is coercion – who are the victim(s) of the violations, and who are the perpetrators?

- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (25 MIN)

Invite participants to return to their seats. Ask them to share their thoughts on each scenario. Add any missing points, using the facilitator’s notes to help you.

Ask:

- How did you find this exercise?
- Are any of the scenarios similar to situations that occur in your context?

TIP! Be careful with time management! Creating some time pressure with the use of an alarm or bell helps participants to focus their attention on the task at hand.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Conclude by saying something along the following lines:

- One of the most important skills we need to have to work for freedom of religion or belief for all is the ability to recognise violations.
- Sometimes violations are obvious, but sometimes they are complex, taking more subtle forms. This is particularly true in relation to the dividing line between persuasion and coercion.
- Whether an act is coercive or not depends greatly on the power dynamics between those involved and on the ability of the person being persuaded to walk away or refuse to continue to listen, without risking the loss of something of value e.g., healthcare, education, humanitarian aid.

Source

Rachel Fleming



'Persuasion or coercion'

Children and FORB – rights and responsibilities 1 h 20 min



RECOGNISING AND ANALYSING VIOLATIONS

ROLE-PLAY
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any type of audience. Particularly relevant to faith communities and the leadership/staff of faith-based organisations, and anyone working with children’s rights, schools and education. Requires participants to have a good understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB), as this exercise explores complex elements of the right.

PURPOSE

To help participants develop their analytical and problem-solving skills on the rights of parents and children and of faith-based institutions in relation to FORB.

DESCRIPTION

A problem-solving role-play exercise based on a fictional scenario, in which participants work together to recommend a course of action.

NOTE

This exercise works well as a follow-up to ‘[Dimensions of FORB](#)’ on page 57, for use with the 7-min FORB Learning Platform ‘[Film 6. Rights for parents and children](#)’. Find the film at www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb.



FILMS ON FORB

Instructions

RESOURCES

- One copy per participant of the scenario [handout](#) ‘Children and FORB – rights and responsibilities’.
- Flipchart sheet/PowerPoint slide displaying the buzz group questions.

Find the scenario handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/children-and-forb-handout.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 8 MIN

Explain that the group is going to take part in a role-play discussion exercise. Distribute a copy of the scenario handout to each participant and read it aloud:

“Five years ago, a faith-based organisation from a religious minority tradition was established. The minority is vulnerable to discrimination, harassment and at times violence, but there is legislation guaranteeing their right to freedom of religion or belief. These legal rights include the right to run charitable organisations and faith-based schools.

Amongst other things, the organisation runs a shelter for street children in the local town and a school in a rural area where there are no other educational providers of any quality. A few of the children in the shelter are orphans, but most have run away from difficult home circumstances. The shelter makes efforts to rehabilitate families where possible, although this is difficult. These institutions serve the whole community. The children in their care are aged between 3 and 16.

Following a local authority inspection, it has come to public attention that both the shelter and the school require children from the majority tradition to participate in daily prayer and confessional religious education according to the minority tradition. The organisation is being accused of aggressively evangelising/ converting vulnerable majority children. Anger is growing and there is a risk of violence towards the wider minority community.”

Explain that the participants should now imagine that they have recently been appointed to the board of this faith-based organisation. The management have turned to the board for advice on what to do, as the situation could quickly escalate. The board has been asked to provide two concrete recommendations that the management can take forward.

Ask participants to spend a minute or two thinking silently and getting into their role.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 10 MIN

• **BUZZ GROUPS** (30 MIN)

Ask participants to get into threes with people sitting next to them and distribute flipchart sheets and pens to each group. To help them come up with two concrete recommendations for the management, they should first discuss the following questions:

- Whose freedom of religion or belief is at risk of being violated?
- Should the school and the shelter change their policies? What are the arguments for and against?

After 15 minutes ask the groups to move on to developing two recommendations to present to the management and to write them up on the flipchart sheet. Each group should also appoint a spokesperson to present and explain their recommendations.

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (40 MIN)

Invite each group spokesperson to present and explain their two recommendations to the plenary (3 min/group). If necessary, ask questions to clarify the reasoning behind the recommendations. Give each group a round of applause and stick their recommendations to the wall.

Lead the plenary discussion with the following questions:

- Which set of recommendations do you think best respects the freedom of religion or belief of the children and parents concerned and the identity of the school? Why?
- What role do dynamics of power play in your judgement of that?
- How did you find this exercise? Was it easy or difficult?
- Have any similar problems taken place in your context? What happened? How were they resolved?
- What thoughts or reflections do you take with you from the exercise?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Congratulate the participants on all their ideas and thank them for their active participation.

Source

Rachel Fleming, adapted from the FORB Learning Platform's online training of the trainers' course www.forb-learning.org/courses/tot

FORB and gender

This collection of exercises is designed to help your target audience explore the relationship between freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and gender, with a focus on women's rights. Men and women hold the same rights. Freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief (to give the right its full name) guarantees women the right to think for themselves and make decisions about what they believe and the manner in which they express believing and belonging. As FORB necessarily involves the right to question beliefs and practices, it opens the door for healthy discussions about traditions and norms relating to any area of life (as does the freedom of expression).

Despite holding the same rights, men and women experience FORB violations differently. Often, women from religious and ethnic minorities are more exposed to violations of rights and have less access to justice, simply because they are a minority within a minority. Our understanding and implementation of FORB all too often overlooks the experience, voices and agency of women, which contributes to making their suffering invisible. An approach to promoting FORB that places women's access to the right centre stage is needed. We hope the exercises in this chapter will contribute to this happening.



GET PREPARED!

Build your confidence in facilitating sessions by learning more about the topic! Take the FORB Learning Platform's free online short course, '[Freedom of religion or belief and gender equality – enemies or allies](#)'? The course includes modules on FORB and women's rights and on FORB and religious family/personal status laws. www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender

Check out the 'FORB library' on the FORB Learning Platforms website where you can search for resources that explore gender issues. www.forb-learning.org/forb-library



Exercise overview

The first three exercises in this chapter are useful for introducing the topic of FORB and gender, helping participants to both gain knowledge and explore their attitudes to the topic.

- **[WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE – SEX AND GENDER?](#)** A basic exercise that introduces the concepts and helps participants explore societal limitations to the roles played by men and women.
- **[ARTICLE 18 PRONOUN SWAP](#)** A good opening exercise, sparking reflection on Article 18 as a woman's right.
- **[DIFFERENT DANGERS](#)** A 'sorting' exercise that helps participants recognise the gendered nature of FORB violations globally and in their contexts.

The following three exercises enable participants to deepen their knowledge and understanding of intersecting rights violations and develop problem-solving skills. These exercises require varying levels of prior knowledge on the part of participants.

- **[FORB AND GENDER EQUALITY](#)** A case study exercise that helps participants explore the links between FORB violations and gender.
- **[FORB AND FAMILY LAW](#)** A case study exercise that helps participants explore the impact of family law on women's rights, including their right to FORB.
- **[THE EXPERT ADVISORS](#)** A role-play exercise in which participants formulate recommendations to governments relating to FORB and gender.

Please note that you can also find two exercises focusing on gender in the [Action planning](#) chapter of this toolkit.

What's the difference – sex and gender? 1 h 15



FORB AND GENDER

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to faith-based/grassroots communities and civil society organisations/human rights defenders. Aimed at groups with little (if any) prior knowledge of the concepts of sex and gender.

PURPOSE

- To introduce the concepts of sex and gender to participants. (Note: this exercise does not deal specifically with non-binary gender identities or roles.)
- To enable participants to analyse the roles played by men and women in their communities and any limitations placed upon these roles, recognising the roots of these in societal and cultural norms.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise starts out as a fun, competitive drawing and word game that draws out gender stereotypes within the context. Participants are then gently challenged to unpack these stereotypes and discuss if and how women, men and society as a whole are negatively affected or benefit from these norms.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Flipchart sheets and marker pens for participants.
- Prepare one flipchart sheet with the heading 'MALE' and one with the heading 'FEMALE' and stick these up next to each other on the wall in the training room.
- Prepare a flipchart sheet or PowerPoint slide containing the 'Know the difference' illustration below.
- Ensure there is enough space in the training room for a quarter of the participants to form a queue in front of the flipcharts. Ask participants to move tables out of the way if necessary. Arrange the rest of the seats in a semi-circle around the space for the queues.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE: SEX AND GENDER

SEX

Biological and physical characteristics that distinguish males and females.

GENDER

The social, cultural, economic and psychological attributes that are associated with being male or female in a society.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

- Go round the group giving each person a number from one to four. Ask all the number ones to form a queue in front of the flipchart with 'MALE' written on and all the number twos to form a queue in front of the one saying 'FEMALE'. (Ask those with number three and four to watch and cheer their colleagues on for the moment.)
- Give the first person in each queue a marker pen. Tell the two groups that they are in a competition and that when you clap three times, the first person in each line should start drawing on the flipchart – group one should draw a man and group two a woman. Tell them that when you clap three times again, the pen should be passed to the next person in the queue who continues with the drawing and the first person goes to the back of the queue. There is only one rule about the drawing – it is forbidden to cross out anything that has already been drawn.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 70 MIN• **GAME ROUND ONE** (10 MIN)

Clap three times to start the game. Vary the pace, allowing participants very little or a bit more time to draw, keeping it fairly fast-paced so that everyone gets a couple of turns. This makes it more fun for participants and spectators.

After a series of turns, when participants have reached a point where they have started to add various details (necklace, hat, cigarette, handbag, etc.), give a round of applause. Thank the participants and ask them to return to their seats.

• **GAME ROUND TWO** (10 MIN)

Ask group three to line up in front of the male drawing and group four to line up in front of the female drawing for the second round of the game. Tell the participants that this round is different. It is not a drawing competition, but a word competition. The aim of the game is to write as many words as possible around the pictures. Each person may write ONE word only – a characteristic that they associate with men (group 3) or women (group 4), and then pass the pen to the next person and go to the back of the queue and waiting for their turn again. The winning team will be the one that can mention the most 'characteristics', so they need to write fast!

Be careful not to mention any examples of characteristics – leave it to the participants to come up with ideas. Be sure to encourage them and remind them that this is a competition!

When there are around 15 words on the lists stop the game. Thank the participants and ask them to return to their seats. Calculate the number of words mentioned on each flipchart sheet and announce the winning team.

• **PLENARY EXERCISE** (20 MIN)

Start the plenary discussion with the following questions:

- What do you see in the drawings groups 1 and 2 made?
What's the difference?
- Write words that come up around the drawings
– for example beard, breasts.

Pause the discussion after a few minutes. Go through all the words on the 'male' flipchart sheet one at a time. For each word ask if all men have that characteristic and then ask if there are women who also have this characteristic. If the group agrees that this is a solely male characteristic, then circle it. If the group agrees that not all men have the characteristic and that this characteristic can also

TIP! At first, this can be funny. Allow the conversation to unfold for a few minutes, but not too long!

be found in women, cross it off. Go through the examples fairly quickly, rather than having long discussions on each point.

Continue in this manner going through all the characteristics listed for men, and then repeat the exercise for all the characteristics listed for women, asking if all women really have that characteristic and if any men might have that characteristic too.

If need be, gently challenge with examples, e.g., "Are you sure that there are no affectionate men ... have you never seen a father or grandfather that you would describe as caring?" Or "Are you sure that there are no physically strong women... have you ever watched women wrestling? Or carrying firewood down the mountain, etc. Wouldn't you say they are strong?"

When this process is finished, look at what has been crossed out and what has been circled. Usually, a large number of words relating to gender stereotypes are crossed out, but a few words linked to biological sex remain, such as motherhood, fatherhood etc.

Comment that although you asked them to list the characteristics that they associate with men or with women, not so many of the words are circled as being unique to women and men. Ask participants for their reflections on the exercise and the words that are left on the list for example using the following questions:

- What do you think this means?
- Isn't there a difference between men and women then? Or what is the difference?

Encourage critical reflection without offering your own opinion.

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (30 MIN)

Introduce the plenary discussion as follows. Display the pre-prepared PowerPoint slide or flipchart sheet showing the definitions of sex and gender and read out the definitions. Make the following points:

- Sex is about our biology and physiology. Men and women are physically different – only women can bear children or breastfeed.
- Gender is different. Gender is about the social, cultural, psychological and economic attributes a society associates with being male or female – about the societal expectations, roles and limitations placed upon men and women on this basis.
- As individuals, we often internalise these ideas as though they are universally true or factually correct.
- In fact, these roles, expectations and limitations vary a lot between communities and cultures, even within the same country, and shift and change over time. They develop organically in our communities, cultures and in and through the religious interpretations we learn and teach. They can also develop as a result of external influence – for example through colonial influence.

Lead the plenary discussion with the following questions:

- Do socially constructed attitudes, expectations and roles given to men and women in our culture positively or negatively affect women and men? In what ways?
- Do these expectations and roles benefit anyone? Who and how? Are there institutions that benefit?
- Is there a cost to wider society in maintaining some of these gender roles, especially over time?

TIP! In most contexts this topic is sensitive – try not to be provocative but do challenge participants gently. Be prepared with plenty of examples!

TIP! Prepare some examples you can draw on that are relevant for your context to help stimulate the discussion.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Thank everyone for their engagement in the discussion. Wrap up by reminding them of the key difference between sex and gender: sex refers to the biological and physical characteristics of men and women, while gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expectations, and attributes that a society considers appropriate for women and men.

**ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY**

This exercise can be run more simply and calmly by cutting the drawing/word competition at the beginning, dividing into groups and asking groups to draw either a man or a woman and write words they associate with men and women around their drawings. After the groupwork, proceed with the plenary exercise and discussion, following the instructions as above.

Source

Adapted from the activity “What is feminine and what is masculine?” in [Church and Gender Equality](#): Resource and Tool Box, PMU Interlife.

Article 18 pronoun swap 30 min



FORB AND GENDER

REFLECT AND SHARE
BUZZ GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Thought provoking for any audience from the grassroots to decisionmakers, faith leaders and academics.

PURPOSE

To help participants explore their attitudes towards the right to freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and gender equality.

DESCRIPTION

A good opening exercise for a session on FORB and gender. In this exercise, a 'feminine' version of Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is read out by the facilitator and then discussed in buzz groups.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- One [handout](#) of the 'feminized' version of Article 18 of the ICCPR for each participant.

Find the [handout](http://www.forb-learning.org/exercises/pronoun-swap-handout) at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/pronoun-swap-handout.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Distribute one copy of the [handout](#) to each participant. Explain that the session is going to focus on FORB and gender and will begin with an exercise to refresh our memories about what FORB means.

Read out the revised Article 18 in full:

"According to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 18:

- *Every woman shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of her choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest her religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.*
- *No woman shall be subject to coercion which would impair her freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of her choice.*
- *Freedom to manifest her religion or belief may be subject only to such limitations as prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental freedom and rights of others.*
- *The state parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of mothers and, when applicable, female legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions."*

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 25 MIN• **BUZZ GROUPS** (15 MIN)

Ask participants to get into threes with people sitting next to them and discuss:

- When reading or listening to this version, how do you feel? Why?
- Do you think that women and men have the same experience of having the right to FORB in practice? Why or why not?

• **QUICK PLENARY DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

Invite two or three participants to briefly share their reflections.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Thank the participants for sharing their reflections. Make the following points:

- The point of reformulating article 18 is not to argue that women have, or should have, different rights to men. The point is that they have the *SAME* rights.
- FORB means that any woman, just like any man, has the right to think for herself, to believe whatever she believes, and to live her life on the basis of what she herself believes, even if that involves breaking social or religious norms.
- Like every man, every woman has the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of her religion or belief. She also has the right to be protected against coercion in matters of religion and belief.
- We are going to look more closely at these issues in the rest of this session.

Source

FORB Learning Platform online course ‘FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies?’
www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender

“The ‘Article 18: pronoun swap’ exercise is so simple, but it really helps participants to recognise freedom of religion or belief not just as a right for men or religious groups, but for everyone, and to identify gendered stereotypes about religion and culture. I’ve used it in very diverse cultural contexts and it wasn’t as controversial as I first thought.”

KRISTINA PATRING, INTERNATIONAL FORB TRAINER, SWEDEN



'Different dangers'

Different dangers 1 h – 1 h 40 min



FORB AND GENDER

SORTING EXERCISE

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to faith-based/grassroots communities and civil society organisations/human rights defenders. Requires a basic understanding of gender equality and FORB among participants.

PURPOSE

- To help participants recognise that violations of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) affect women and men differently.
- To enable participants to reflect on how different groups of women in their context are affected by violations of FORB.

DESCRIPTION

Quick sorting and listing exercises in small groups are followed by plenary discussion. The exercise follows on well from the [‘Article 18: pronoun swap’](#) exercise on page 102, but you can run it without connecting the two.



NOTE

In many contexts, women contend with societal norms that they should not speak up in public and that the kinds of violations they experience should not be discussed in public. To create safe space and build confidence, this exercise may work best in single-sex groups with a facilitator of the same sex. This strengthens women’s participation and empowers them to speak freely, which can also boost confidence to speak in a mixed group setting later.

If the training group is mixed, then two single-sex groups can come together at the end of the exercise and volunteer spokespersons can summarise the reflections of their groups. Facilitators can then invite participants to further reflect on similarities and differences in the reflections from the two groups.

In this exercise, it is advisable to be prepared to deal with emotions that this exercise may trigger in participants with personal experiences of violations. Have a co-facilitator who can help you with this should the situation arise!

Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- One copy of the ‘FORB violations’ [handout](#) per group of three participants.
- Prepare one flipchart sheet per group with the headings ‘MEN’ and ‘WOMEN’ at the top of two columns.
- One roll of tape and one pair of scissors per group of three participants.
- Think about which of the points in the [‘FORB and gender information sheet’](#) you would like to include in your comments during the plenary discussion.

Find the handout and information sheet at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/different-dangers.



OPTIONAL EXTRA: BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE!

This can be a challenging topic for some participants. Review the '[Tips for facilitators](#)' section on page 282 and '[Responding to tricky questions](#)' on page 286. Boost your understanding of the topic by taking the short online course '[FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies](#)' at www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Explain that both men and women around the world experience violations of FORB, but they experience them differently. Tell participants that they are going to take a closer look at this in small groups.

Ask participants to form groups of three with the people sitting closest to them. Give each group one copy of the 'FORB violations' handout, along with tape, scissors and the flipchart sheet with the headings women and men written on.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 45 MIN/85 MIN

PART 1

• GROUPWORK (15 MIN)

Ask participants to look through the violations on the handout, cut them up into strips and sort the strips into two piles – a pile of violations that men are, generally speaking, more likely to experience, and those that women are, generally speaking, more likely to experience. Tape the strips to the corresponding side of the flipchart sheet.

Point out that this is not a debate about whether women and/or men actually experience these violations in your context – the task is to decide if men or women are MORE LIKELY to experience the violation concerned in any given context.

• PLENARY DISCUSSION (30 MIN)

Stick the flipchart sheets to the wall and ask the groups to gather around them and spend a couple of minutes looking at other groups' responses.

Lead the discussion using the following questions:

- What do you notice? (For example, that the column for women is longer.)
- What kind of violations are women more likely to experience in general? (For example, violations in the context of the home, sexual violence.)
- Do different groups have different views as to who is most affected by some violations?
- Which of these violations do women in OUR community sometimes or typically face?
- Are any violations of FORB that happen in our context missing from list? How do those violations affect women and men?
- In our context, are all women affected in the same way or are some groups of women more affected or more vulnerable to particular types of violations? (Ask about women from particular minorities, majority women, women who go against social/gender norms and women who leave their religion/convert).
- How long does the impact of violations faced by women last?
- Why do women and men in our context face different types of violations? What is it about our context that results in this/what ideas and norms underlie these differences?

Try to ensure that the following points are made by you or participants during the discussion. Try to make the points 'come alive' by asking for or sharing stories and examples that illustrate them.

- Women face intersectional discrimination – they are at risk of harassment, discrimination and violence both because they are women AND because of their religious or non-religious identity and beliefs.
- Men primarily experience violations of FORB in the public sphere, while women face violations both in the public and the private sphere – in the home, family, and/or community. The reason for this is that women's and men's roles, capabilities and value are perceived differently by society, something which is determined by cultural and religious understandings.
- Very often, women's experiences of violations of FORB remain invisible and undocumented. There are many reasons for this, for example:
 - o societal norms concerning the role and rights of women
 - o impunity and the State's unwillingness to hold perpetrators accountable
 - o a culture of shame within some communities, which keeps such abuses (particularly sexual abuses) hidden, including the ostracization of women affected (and their children).
- Choose additional points to make from the '[FORB and gender information sheet](#)', according to their relevance for your context. Use stories and examples from your context to illustrate the points.



PART 2 (OPTIONAL)

• **GROUPWORK** (20 MIN)

Tell participants they are now going to focus in on the issue of conversion in their context. Distribute flipchart sheets and markers to each small group. Ask the groups to list the challenges a man would face if he tried to convert from one religion to another in your context. Then, list the challenges a woman would face if she tried the same. Compare the lists and identify the differences.

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (20 MIN)

Bring the groups back to the plenary and lead the discussion with the following questions:

- What difference did you identify in the challenges facing male and female converts in your context?
- What ideas or norms underlie these differences?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Thank participants for their attention and engagement with this difficult topic. Say something along the following lines:

- In the face of all the problems we've been discussing we have two options: to feel depressed and powerless or to identify something concrete, however small, that we can do to try to make change. We'll be looking at what each of us can do more closely in later sessions. (Find exercises to help you do this in the [Action planning](#) chapter of this toolkit.)
- If possible, share a positive story of people making change from the local context – this is very inspiring for participants.

TIP! Take inspiration from CHANGEMAKERS STORIES available [here](#).

Source

Adapted from FORB Learning Platform and Stefanus Alliance International learning resources by Rachel Fleming

FORB and gender equality 1 h 45 min



About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any. Suitable for groups with beginner or intermediate levels of knowledge about freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and gender. See ‘[The expert advisors](#)’ on page 112 for groups with more advanced levels of knowledge.

PURPOSE

- To explore the intersecting human rights and FORB violations experienced by women in different parts of the world.
- To enable participants to reflect on the ways in which women in participants’ context(s) experience intersecting violations of FORB and other rights, and how these differ from men’s experiences.

DESCRIPTION

A group discussion exercise based on a selected case study.

NOTE

In this exercise, it is advisable to be prepared to deal with emotions that this exercise may trigger in participants with personal experiences of violations. Have a co-facilitator who can help you with this should the situation arise!



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- [Case study](#) materials – choose one case study to read out.
- Prepare flipchart sheet(s) with the discussion questions listed.
- Flipchart sheets and marker pens for small groups to record their discussions.

Find the case study materials on page 255 and at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/gender-equality-cases.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Display the discussion questions on a flipchart sheet.

Explain that the group is going to listen to a case study that explores the links between FORB and gender. Ask them to look out for the answers to the discussion questions listed below, while the case is being presented.

Read out the discussion questions below and present the case study.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Who are the victims of the violations in the case?
- What rights are being violated? List as many as you can.
- In what ways is their freedom of religion or belief being violated?
- Who is committing these violations?
- In which ways was the woman in the story a victim, and in which ways did she show agency?
- What about the other women in the stories? Were they passive or proactive? Victims, perpetrators or changemakers?

TIP! If you have covered the dimensions of FORB (e.g., using the exercise on [page 57](#)), you could ask participants to identify specific dimensions of FORB that are being violated.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 85 MIN

- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)

In plenary, ask for participants' reflections on the discussion questions and note their answers on a flipchart sheet.

Then, ask follow-up questions:

- How did you feel, listening to the case presented?
- What role do you think that religion, ethnicity, class, and gender play in the violations?

- **GROUP DISCUSSION** (45 MIN)

Ask the participants to form groups of four and discuss the following questions in their group, recording their responses on a flipchart sheet. Each group should nominate a spokesperson to report their findings to the plenary.

- What FORB violations do women experience in your context? How do these intersect with violations of other rights?
- How does this differ from men's experiences?
- Do women from majority and minority religious groups in your context have similar or different experiences? In what ways?
- Are there attitudes or practices within your own or other religious or belief communities that make women more vulnerable to violations of FORB (and of other rights), or that keep their experiences invisible?
- In what ways do women in your context use their agency to protect and promote FORB and gender equality?

- **PRESENTATIONS AND BRIEF PLENARY DISCUSSION** (25 MIN)

Invite each spokesperson to present their findings (5 min/group). If the groups are all from the same context, ask each spokesperson to skip over points already made by previous groups. After all the groups have presented, briefly mention any common themes that emerged.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Conclude by asking the following question: Has this exercise given you any new insights or reflections about your context that you are taking away with you?

Thank everyone for sharing their valuable insights in the discussions.

Source

Adapted from the FORB Learning Platform online on-demand course 'FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies?': www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender

FORB and family law 60 min



FORB AND GENDER

CASE STUDY

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to civil society organisations and human rights defenders in contexts where family/personal status law include discriminatory aspects that are justified with reference to religion. Requires a good understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) among participants, as this exercise explores complex dimensions of the right.

PURPOSE

To help participants develop skills in identifying and analysing violations of FORB in the context of religious family/personal status law.

DESCRIPTION

A plenary discussion exercise based on a case study, that is designed to follow a knowledge input on family/personal status laws and violations of FORB.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Select one of three [case studies](#) about FORB and family law which will resonate in your context – a video about Palestine, a video about Malaysia, or a short powerpoint about India.
- Prepare a knowledge input on family/personal status laws and FORB. Use the [information sheet](#) on FORB and religious family law to help you prepare or take the religious family law module of the free, on-demand short course '[Enemies of allies: forb and gender equality](#)'. Remember to tailor your input to your audience by choosing and introducing issues in ways that will be constructive.
- Prepare a flipchart sheet with the buzz group discussion questions (see below).
- Flipchart and maker pens.

Find the case studies and information sheet at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/family-law.

Find the course at www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 20 MIN

Precede the exercise with a 10-15 minute knowledge input on the relationship between family law and FORB, based on the contents of the factsheet that accompanies this exercise. Be sure to mention the following:

- All law (religious and secular) is based in values.
- No law that is enforced should violate human rights, for example by being discriminatory or by coercing people to have or practice beliefs that they do not have. Sadly, many religious family and personal status laws include elements of discrimination or coercion. (You may wish to mention that quite



SHORT TALK

a lot of secular laws have such elements too, but the focus in this session is on religious family law).

- At the same time, minority religious laws are often perceived by minority communities as an important protection against assimilation and an important part of their institutional autonomy from the state.

Allow 5-10 minutes for questions and discussion.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 35 MIN

• CASE STUDY AND BUZZ GROUPS (15 MIN)

Explain that you are now going to share a short case study to illustrate the issues you have been talking about. Point to the discussion questions on the flipchart sheet and ask participants to have the questions in mind as the case is being presented.

Present the case study, then ask participants to get into threes with the people sitting next to them to discuss the questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In what ways is freedom of religion or belief being violated and what other rights are being violated?
- How does this impact upon women and children?
- In what ways is this situation similar or different to your own context?

• PLENARY DISCUSSION (20 MIN)

Invite participants to share their answers to the buzz group discussion questions. Make sure that all the dimensions of FORB that were violated in the case study are mentioned, as well as any other rights violated.

After participants have shared their thoughts on similarities and differences with their own context, lead the discussion with these follow-up questions:

- What other issues related to family/personal status laws (positive or negative) are there in your context?
- What arguments are used by the government and/or minority groups in your context to justify discriminatory laws?
- Are there any needs/efforts to reform family/personal status laws in your context?
- What are the obstacles to reform?

TIP! Learn about the dimensions of FORB with the '[Quick guide to religious freedom](#)'.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Summarise central themes that have arisen in the discussion, referring back to your knowledge input to emphasise key points. Thank everyone for sharing and say you hope they found that the exercise offered them a fresh perspective on some of the issues related to family/personal status laws and FORB in their context.

SOURCE

Adapted from the FORB Learning Platform online on demand course FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies? www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender.



The expert advisors 1 h 55 min

FORB AND GENDER

ROLE-PLAY
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to civil society organisations, human rights defenders, faith leaders, decisionmakers and others who are involved in lobbying or advocacy work. This exercise requires a strong understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB), gender equality and human rights more broadly among participants, as it explores complex dimensions of the right.

PURPOSE

- To help participants explore their attitudes towards FORB for all and deepen their understanding of complex intersecting violations.
- To enable participants to apply the knowledge they have learned and develop problem-solving skills.

DESCRIPTION

In this role-play exercise, the participants have just been promoted to the role of Technical Experts on FORB for all at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Their task is to work together to make key recommendations to various governments on how to resolve complex intersecting human rights violations.



RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Print enough copies of the two scenarios for every participant to have one copy of both scenarios.
- Write up the guiding questions and instructions on a flipchart sheet.
- Flipchart sheets and marker pens.

Find the [cases/scenarios](#) on pages 263-267 and as handouts at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/expert-advisors-cases.

Instructions

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Welcome the participants and explain the following:

- Congratulations! In recognition of all your hard work to promote FORB for all, you have just been promoted to the role of Technical Experts within the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).
- Your role involves travelling to various countries and meeting with civil society groups to learn about the most pressing issues. You then need to formulate your best concrete recommendation on what the government of the day should do to protect FORB for all and meet with government representatives to convince them to implement this.
- Luckily, a number of you have been promoted at the same time so you can share this responsibility and work together in small teams on this challenging task!

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1H 40 MIN

- **GROUPWORK** (55 MIN)

Divide the participants into four small groups and give each group copies of one of the two case studies and scenarios. Display and explain the following guiding questions and instructions on a PowerPoint slide or flipchart sheet.

1. Read the case study and scenario carefully. 10 min
2. Discuss the following in your teams: 20 min
 - o In order to address this issue taking both FORB and gender equality into account, what would be your team's key message in the meeting with government representatives?
 - o What potential counter-arguments might your team face from the government and how could you potentially respond?
3. Work together to prepare: 25 min
 - o Your key message to the government.
 - o Your concrete recommendation to the government.
 - o Your responses to TWO counter-arguments that you anticipate.

- **PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY FEEDBACK** (45 MIN)

Give each participant a copy of the case study/scenario they have NOT yet read and allow 5 minutes for them to read it. Explain that the two groups who focused on the Egypt case study will present their messages, recommendations and counter-arguments, while participants in the other two groups take on the role of the Egyptian government representatives listening to the delegation from OHCHR. Explain the following:

- Government representatives must listen carefully to the messages, recommendations and arguments carefully.
- After listening to the recommendations from both groups the government representatives vote individually on whether they are for or against implementing the recommendation of the first group and then the second group. (They can vote to implement the recommendation from both groups.)
- Government members who win the votes (for or against implementation) have to explain their reasoning to the plenary.

The two groups role-playing the OHCHR delegation have 5 minutes each to present, followed by 10 minutes for the 'government vote' and reasoning. Repeat the process for the Pakistan case study.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Lead the concluding discussion by inviting the following reflections:

- Share one thing that you found inspiring, important or difficult in your discussions within the OHCHR team.
- How did it feel to have the government representatives accept/reject your recommendation?
- What have you learned from this exercise that might be useful for your own work?

ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY

Choose the case study that is most relevant for your context and have all the groups work through the same scenario. Let all the groups present before putting the recommendations to a vote in the plenary. The OHCHR team that gets the most votes for their recommendation wins the competition. In the event of a tie the facilitator gets the deciding vote!

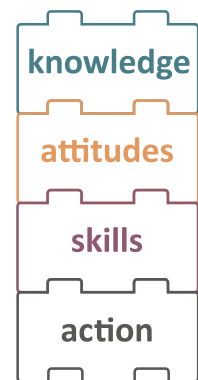
Source

Adapted from the FORB Learning Platform online on-demand course FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies? www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender

FORB, other rights and development

This collection of exercises is designed to help participants explore the ways in which human rights are indivisible, interrelated and interdependent – rather like a woven cloth with each individual right weaving in and out of the others. Alone each thread will break easily, woven together they are strong.

Freedom of religion or belief (FORB) is closely related to a wide range of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. If we are to protect FORB, we need to protect other rights and vice versa. Work to promote FORB is also integral to achieving progress in a range of development issues. Understanding FORB and recognising these linkages is integral to a rights-based approach to development. This chapter includes exercises contributing to all four building blocks of human rights education – knowledge, attitudes, skills and action, exploring the implications for programming.



GET PREPARED!

Build your confidence to lead sessions by reading up on thematic issues in the 'FORB library' www.forb-learning.org/forb-library. Here you can search for resources that explore cross-cutting issues such as freedom of expression, FORB and education or FORB and development.

Exercise overview

The first three exercises in this collection focus on helping participants recognise the connections between FORB and other human rights/development issues.

- **[THE WIDOWS OF KANDHAMAL](#)** Participants analyse a news article describing the aftermath of religiously-based violence, identifying the many other rights being violated together with FORB.
- **[TOUCHING POINTS – FORB AND DEVELOPMENT](#)** Helps participants explore the links between FORB and development work and reflect on the practical implications of these linkages for development/public-sector programming and or policy/legislative reform.
- **[MATCH THE SDGS](#)** Helps participants connect FORB related issues to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The four exercises that follow explore various aspects of the connection between FORB and freedom of expression touching on issues of hate speech and on legislation on blasphemy, public order and social harmony.

- **[PASS IT ON](#)** A simple opening exercise helping participants to reflect on the sources and impacts of disinformation.
- **[SPEAKING OF RELIGION](#)** Familiarises participants with freedom of expression and intersections with FORB, using a case of blasphemy legislation to enable reflection on attitudes.
- **[SAARA THE STUDENT JOURNALIST](#)** A group exercise addressing a fictional case of blasphemy and developing codes of conduct for different sectors of society.
- **[THE HATE SPEECH BAROMETER](#)** A plenary exercise enabling participants to understand the factors determining what constitutes illegal hate speech. Connects with the Rabat Plan of Action.

Please note that an exercise exploring [children’s rights to FORB](#) can be found in the ‘[Recognising and analysing violations](#)’ chapter of this toolkit, along with another exercise of relevance to freedom of expression, exploring the boundary between religious [persuasion and coercion](#).



The widows of Kandhamal 60 min

FORB, OTHER RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

ANALYSE

BUZZ GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any audience with good literacy.

PURPOSE

To help participants identify the multiple rights violations embedded in violations of FORB, enabling reflection on the interrelated and interdependent nature of human rights.

DESCRIPTION

Participants read a blog text describing the aftermath of violence targeting a religious minority, identifying which articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been violated.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- 1 copy per participant of each of the two handouts – ‘[The widows of Kandhamal](#)’ and the ‘[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)’ (UDHR).
- 1 copy of the annotated facilitators version of the text.
- Ordinary pens.
- Flip chart sheet and marker pen.

Find the [annotated facilitator's version](#) of the text on page 268 and both this and the handouts at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/kandhamal.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Explain to participants that they are going to do an exercise which helps us to reflect on the relationship between freedom of religion or belief and other rights. Give each person a copy of the blog text and of the UDHR and a pen.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 55 MIN

- **READ AND THINK** (20 MIN)
Ask participants to spend 20 minutes in silence, reading the UDHR and then reading the article. Whenever they come across something they think is a rights violation ask them to underline it and write the number of the article they think is being violated next to it.
- **BUZZ GROUPS** (15 MIN)
Divide participants into buzz groups of three and ask them to share their thoughts with each other.

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK** (20 MIN)

Ask one group for two examples of articles of the UDHR they thought had been violated and how. Note the articles on a flip chart sheet. Ask another group for two examples and continue with other groups until the groups have nothing more to add. Referring to the annotated facilitator's version of the article, mention any examples they have missed.

Ask the group for their reflections on the exercise – what struck them? Try to draw out points about the interrelated and interdependent nature of human rights from their answers. Conclude with the following question: Can we promote FORB effectively without promoting human rights as a whole?

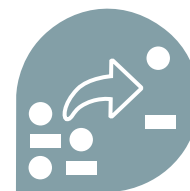
HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Thank participants for their engagement. If the exercise has left a heavy feeling in the group, share a positive story to encourage them that change is possible even in difficult circumstances! Think of an inspirational story from your context or share inspiration from the 'changemaker stories' on the following webpage, www.forb-learning.org/work-for-change/tactics.

Source

Katherine Cash, SMC Faith in Development/FORB Learning Platform

Touching points – FORB and development 65-95 min



FORB, OTHER RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

SORTING EXERCISE
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

THEMES

Freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and other human rights; development; discrimination; intersectionality; democracy; peace, security and stability.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to organisations working with FORB and/or with development issues (including faith communities), and to decisionmakers and officials.

PURPOSE

- To explore the link between FORB and development work both generally speaking as well as in specific contexts.
- To enable reflection on the practical implications of these linkages for development/public-sector programming and or policy/legislative reform.

DESCRIPTION

A two-part groupwork exercise. In part one groups sort a list cross-cutting issues relating to FORB, development and democracy into four categories – peace and security; discrimination; intersectionality; and democracy/rule of law – identifying which issues are most relevant to their context and work. In the second, optional part of the exercise, groups explore the practical implications of these linkages for development programming and/or policy/legislative reform.

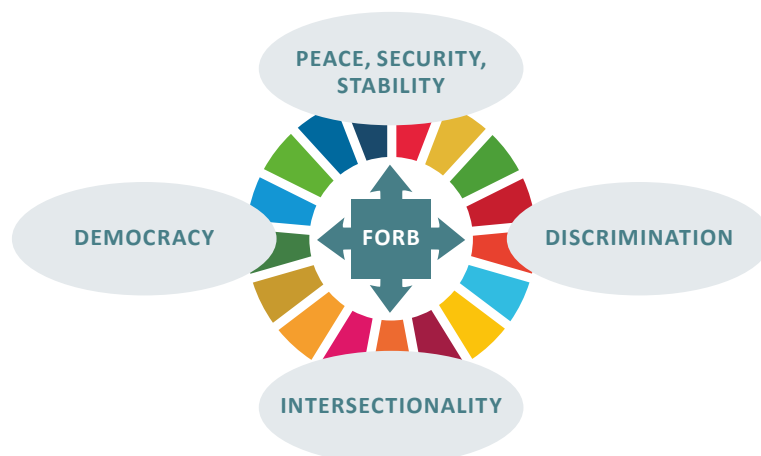


Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- [PowerPoint slide](#) or flipchart sheet with the illustration below.
- Prepare a flipchart sheet for each group of participants by copying the illustration below.
- Print one copy of [handout A](#) for each group.
- Print one copy of [handout B](#) for each participant.

Find the handouts and a pre-prepared PowerPoint slide at Hyperlinks to www.forb-learning.org/exercises/touching-points.



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Introduce the exercise as follows:

Regardless of whether we work specifically with FORB or with development work broadly, there can be advantages to making a conscious and active link between FORB and development.

In this exercise, we are going to explore how FORB links to some of the themes that we usually work with in development work, both generally speaking and in your context specifically. The exercise will also encourage you to think about how you or your organisation could work with some of these crosscutting issues. (If relevant to your audience note that linking FORB work to other issues within the development sector is a practical way to have a right-sized approach to FORB.)

Give the following general input for each of the bubbles on the PowerPoint/flipchart to help participants get going in their thinking:

- **PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY**
FORB violations often link to multiple issues related to peace, security and stability. In a corresponding manner fulfilment of FORB has been shown to contribute to peace, security and stability.
- **DISCRIMINATION**
FORB violations often link to numerous issues related to discrimination. In a corresponding manner fulfilment of FORB can help to counteract discrimination in society.
- **INTERSECTIONALITY**
FORB violations often relate to multiple types of advantage and disadvantage that people face for example based on gender, class or ethnicity. Achieving FORB for all may be impossible without tackling these intersectional elements.
- **DEMOCRACY**
FORB violations often link to several aspects of democracy. In a corresponding manner the fulfilment of FORB contributes to a strong and healthy pluralistic democracy. The European Court of Human Rights has explicitly stated that FORB is a corner stone of a pluralistic and democratic society, a view to which other regional human rights courts concur.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 40 / 70 MIN**PART 1**

- **GROUPWORK** (20 MIN)
 - Divide the participants into groups of four and hand each group a pre-prepared flipchart and a copy of handout A. Ask each group to appoint a rapporteur to briefly present their conclusions to the plenary at the end of the exercise.
 - Ask the groups to study the ‘bubble’ headings on the flipchart and the list of issues/themes on handout A and to sort the issues/themes under the headings, by writing them in the different bubbles on the flipchart paper. If they can think of any additional crosscutting issues that commonly arise in the context of development work that are not listed on the handout, please ask them to write those up in the bubbles too.
 - Mention that some of the issues can be written in more than one bubble. For example, intersections between FORB and gender could relate to both issues of discrimination and intersectionality in the context of FORB and development cooperation.
 - Once they have sorted the issues into bubbles, ask them to discuss which development issues relating to FORB are most relevant in their context and what these linkages look like. Tell them that their presentation to the rest of the participants should focus on this last question. Encourage participants to be as concrete as possible by providing examples. (If participants all come from the same context you could ask each group to focus on one of the ‘bubbles’ e.g., Democracy.)
- **PLENARY FEEDBACK** (30 MIN: 5-10 MIN PER GROUP)

Ask the group rapporteurs to briefly present the crosscutting FORB and development issues they thought were most relevant to their context and what concrete examples they identified to illustrate this. Allow a few minutes for questions and answers from other participants.
- **QUICK PLENARY DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

Hold a short plenary discussion on what participants learned and discovered about the linkages between FORB and international development work. Where there any new insights? What do they take with them from the groupwork and the presentations?

**PART 2 (OPTIONAL)**

- **GROUP DISCUSSION** (20 MIN)

Explain to participants that they are now going to go back into groups to discuss the practical implications of the touching points between FORB and development for their work. If there are participants from the same organisation or institution, then let them work together in organisational groups, otherwise let the participants work together in the same groups as before.

Display the following questions on a PowerPoint or flipchart sheets:

- Which of the crosscutting issues from the sorting exercise does your organisation/institution already work with or could it work with?
- Are FORB perspectives integrated into that work and how?
- Might the work benefit from integrating FORB perspectives? In what ways?
- What would integrating FORB perspectives mean in practice, for example:
 - o In problem analysis, baselines, programme design, ensuring non-discrimination in service delivery and that no one is left behind?
 - o For advocacy/awareness raising messages?
 - o For policy or legislative reform?

- Are there any action points you could take to begin a process of perspective integration in your organisation/institution's work? List these.

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK** (10 MIN)

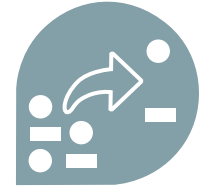
Ask each group to share one implication for programming/policies and one action point that they came up with. (More time could be devoted to this if time allows.)

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Thank everyone for participating and say you hope that the exercise helped them to reflect on how FORB and development relate to each other – on crosscutting issues broadly and in their context. Distribute handout B (illustrating the many issues relating to FORB) as a take-home resource to remind them of the issues discussed.

Source

Kristina Patring, SMC Faith in Development



Match the SDGs 40 min

FORB, OTHER RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

SORTING EXERCISE

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

GROUP EXERCISE

THEMES

Freedom of religion or belief (FORB), right to development, sustainable development goals (SDGs).

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to organisations working with FORB and/or with development issues (including faith communities), and to decisionmakers and officials.

PURPOSE

To help participants understand how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) link to FORB and analyse how these linkages could be useful in their context.

DESCRIPTION

A groupwork exercise where participants work together to match various statements relating to FORB with the relevant SDGs and their sub-goals.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare an envelope with [statements](#) in for each group by printing one copy of the 'Statements' handout per group and cutting it up so that each statement is on a separate slip of paper.
- One copy of the [SDGs and sub-goals](#) handout per group.

Find the statements and subgoals at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/match-the-sdgs.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Divide the participants into groups of no more than six. Hand out a set of statements and SDG sub-goals to each group.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 38 MIN

- **GROUPWORK** (23 MIN)
Ask each group to read through the different statements on the slips and then discuss and pair the statements with the relevant SDG subgoals. Some statements relate to several SDG subgoals, so there can be more than one right answer!
Circulate between the groups to answer any questions they might have as they work on the task.
- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)
Lead the plenary discussion with the following questions:
 - How did you find this exercise? Did anyone discover a new link between the SDGs and the right to FORB that you hadn't considered before?

- Are any of the linkages between FORB and the SDGs particularly important in your context? Why?
- Could these linkages be useful to highlight or take into account your work? If so, how?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Conclude the exercise by thanking everyone for their engagement in the discussion, and say you hope they found the exercise a useful starting point for thinking about how to make more use of the linkages between the SDGs and FORB in their work.

Source

Kristina Patring, SMC Faith in Development



Pass it on 25 min

FORB, OTHER RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

THEMES

Freedom of religion or belief (FORB), disinformation, freedom of expression, hate speech.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To enable participants to reflect on the sources and impacts of disinformation, particularly on our perceptions of the 'other'.

DESCRIPTION

A twist on the internationally popular whispering game. Disinformation is deliberately introduced into the mix and participants then discuss the real-life implications of this for their own context. A good opener for a session exploring disinformation, freedom of expression and hate speech.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare one slip of paper with the message 'justice and peace' on and another with the message 'freedom for all' on.
- Prepare three slips of paper with the following instruction: In the SECOND round of the next exercise ignore the message you hear from your neighbour and pass on the following message: 'THOSE PEOPLE ARE BAD!' Do not show this paper to anyone.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Before the game starts hand the three pieces of paper with the 'disinformation' instruction to three randomly chosen people. Try to do this as discretely as possible. Ask everyone to sit in a circle (if the people with the disinformation instructions sit close together ask them to spread out). Explain that we are going to play a whispering game called 'Pass it on' and that we're going to do it twice. Tell people that some people will receive slips of paper and that you are not allowed to show your slip of paper to anyone else.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 23 MIN

• ROUND ONE (5 MIN)

Give one person a piece of paper with the words 'justice and peace' on them. Ask them to whisper these words to their neighbour, who whispers it to their neighbour and so on with the words being passed around the circle. When the message comes back to the first person, ask them to relay it to the whole group. The message usually gets distorted along the way!

- **ROUND TWO** (5 MIN)

Say that we are now going to do a second round of the game. Repeat the exercise using the words 'Freedom for all'. This time the message should get distorted with 'misinformation' from the three people who say, 'Those people are bad'.

- **QUICK PLENARY DISCUSSION** (13 MIN)

Lead the plenary discussion with the following questions:

- The message from the start was freedom for all – what did it end up being and why? (Relate the answer you get to the concept of disinformation).
- What impact does disinformation have on us in real life?
- Can we believe what we read or hear about other groups?
- Is the state/the media/social media in our context a reliable source of information on religion-related issues?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank everyone for participating and say you hope that the exercise helped them to reflect on sources of disinformation and the harm it can cause.

Source

The FORB Learning Platform's online training of the trainers' course, www.forb-learning.org/courses/tot



'Pass it on'



Speaking of religion 1 h 15 min

FORB, OTHER RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

THINK-PAIR-SHARE

MULTI-FORMAT EXERCISE

About the exercise

THEMES

Freedom of expression; Freedom of religion or belief (FORB); blasphemy, public order and social harmony laws.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders. For audiences that may be less willing to share personal experiences (e.g., decisionmakers and officials) skip the first think-pair-share section.

PURPOSE

- To familiarise participants with the right to freedom of expression and its intersection with the right to FORB.
- To enable participants to recognise how the rights to freedom of expression and FORB are restricted by laws on blasphemy, public order, and social harmony.
- To help participants explore their attitudes towards rights for others in their own context.

DESCRIPTION

A think-pair-share exercise in which participants reflect on barriers to freely expressing religion or beliefs in their context followed by a discussion of a case study that highlights the impact of laws restricting freedom of expression and FORB. This exercise should be run after trust has been established within the group.

The exercise could helpfully be preceded with the '[Traffic lights](#)' exercise on page 55 using statements related to freedom of expression.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Choose the [case study](#) that you think will work best with your group of participants and print one copy per participant.
- Prepare flipchart sheets/PowerPoint slides with pair discussion questions written up (see below).

Read the case studies on [page 271](#) and download and print your chosen case study handouts at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/speaking-of-religion-handouts.



OPTIONAL EXTRA! BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE

Prepare yourself for any sensitive discussions by reviewing the '[Tips for facilitators](#)' section on page 282 and '[Responding to tricky questions](#)' on page 286.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

- Introduce the exercise by asking the following questions in plenary:
 - What is freedom of expression?
 - How is it protected under human rights law?
 - How does it relate to freedom of religion or belief?

Be prepared to briefly explain freedom of expression and FORB protections, in case participants get stuck. You might like to prepare a PowerPoint slide with the text of ICCPR article 19.

- After a brief discussion, emphasise the following points:
Freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression are both fundamental for a well-functioning society. They complement each other and are equally important for the protection of minorities, non-believers and those whose opinions or beliefs differ from power holders.
Our right to manifest our religion or beliefs includes the right to express it in words and actions. This is also protected by freedom of expression. Freedom of religion or belief includes the right to say what we believe and what we do not believe to be true. By saying what we believe to be true we will, most likely, contradict the basic tenets of faith of another tradition. But without freedom of expression, we would be unable to talk about our beliefs at all!
- Explain that we are going to reflect on this cross-cutting dimension of FORB and freedom of expression more deeply. Ask people to find a partner and move a little apart from neighbouring pairs.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 58-63 MIN

- **THINK** (4 MIN)
Ask everyone to spend 5 minutes thinking silently about the discussion questions on display:
 - Think of a time when you were able to freely express your religion or beliefs with others. How was that experience for you?
 - Have you ever been denied the right to freely express your beliefs? What happened?
 - Are there groups of people in your context who face barriers to freely expressing their religion or beliefs?
 - Who are they? What barriers do they face?
 - Why do they face those barriers?
- **PAIR** (15 MIN)
Ask people to discuss the questions in pairs for 15 minutes. Emphasise that no one needs to say anything that feels too private – they should share only what they feel comfortable sharing.
- **SHARE** (10 MIN)
Bring everyone back to the plenary. Thank participants for sharing their experiences with each other. Invite people to share their reflections on who faces barriers to freely expressing their religion or beliefs in their context – who faces barriers and why? What are those barriers?

- **KNOWLEDGE INPUT** (5-10 MIN)

Explain that you are going to focus the discussion on the issue of blasphemy laws and other similar laws that are often used to restrict expression of religion or beliefs. This issue may already have come up during the plenary discussion.

Hold a short talk emphasising the following points:

- It can seem logical and moral to ban offensive speech and behaviour, in order to protect social harmony. It is, however, impossible to define what is offensive. Some people are offended by the mere existence of ideas other than their own. According to international law, the speech that should be banned is speech that incites hatred and violence.
- Laws on blasphemy, apostasy and ‘protecting social harmony’ are usually much broader than this. These laws tend to make insulting religious feelings or defamation of religion (and especially the majority religion) a criminal offence. These laws usually violate both freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression.
- Often these laws are vaguely worded, providing no clear definition of what is and is not blasphemy. Sometimes no concrete evidence is required and there is often a lack of due legal process. These factors put anyone who expresses beliefs or opinions contrary to those of the majority or power holders at risk being accused of blasphemy, as well as making the laws easily abused for personal vendettas. As a result, minorities and dissenters are particularly vulnerable to accusations, but anyone can be affected.
- Criminal cases relating to blasphemy, (or the disruption of social harmony), often occur in the context of broader religious freedom violations, such as attacks on places of worship, desecration of religious sites, hate crimes and the harassment of individuals belonging to minority belief groups. In some contexts, violent extremists take matters into their own hands, inciting violence and administering mob justice against those accused. Instead of prosecuting and punishing those who use violence as response to peaceful speech, laws on social harmony and blasphemy often result punish the victims of that violence – those who are accused of blasphemy or disrupting social harmony.

Explain that we are going to look at a case study and reflect on it in pairs. Ask people to go back into their pairs.

- **THINK** (4 MIN)

Distribute the case study and ask everyone to read it quietly by themselves. Then display the discussion questions and ask everyone to spend a few minutes in silent reflection:

- How did you feel reading about the experiences of the person in the story?
- Do you think blasphemy and other similar laws are necessary or desirable? Why or why not?

- **PAIR** (10 MIN)

Tell participants that they will now share their thoughts in pairs. Emphasise that this is a sensitive topic, and they may have different views. Ask them to decide who will share first and to practice deep listening – to listen carefully and respectfully without interrupting. Say that often, we listen in order to mentally prepare our own response, especially if we have a difference of opinion, but that in this exercise we are going to practice listening simply to understand the other person’s point of view. When the first person has finished talking, thank them for sharing and then switch roles. Tell them that they have 10 minutes to share with one another.



SHORT TALK

After 4 minutes, remind participants to switch roles. Keep an eye on the dynamics within the pairs and remind people to listen carefully – it is possible to respectfully agree to disagree!

TIP! Be careful with timekeeping here!

• **SHARE** (10 MIN)

Lead the discussion with the following questions:

- How did it feel to express yourself without being interrupted?
- How did it feel to listen to your partner, with the sole purpose of understanding their point of view?
- Has the exercise given you any new thoughts or perspectives on blasphemy and other similar laws? In what ways?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Thank everyone for their willingness to listen to each other and engage with a sensitive topic. Say you hope they found the exercise helped them to deepen their understanding of freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief violations, or perhaps view them in a different light.

Source

Rachel Fleming



'Speaking of religion'



Saara the student journalist 2 h

FORB, OTHER RIGHTS AND DEVELOPEMENT

ROLE-PLAY
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

THEMES

Freedom of religion or belief (FORB), freedom of expression, blasphemy laws.

TARGET AUDIENCE

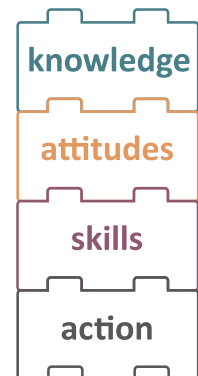
Best suited to civil society organisations, human rights defenders and decisionmakers/public officials in contexts with blasphemy legislation. Requires a good understanding of human rights and FORB among participants, as this exercise explores complex issues.

PURPOSE

To help participants develop their analytical and problem-solving skills on complex issues.

DESCRIPTION

Participants work together in four groups to address challenging questions arising from a fictional case study and to develop codes of conduct for different sectors of society.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Print one copy of the scenario [handout](#) 'Saara the student journalist' for each participant.
- Write the group discussion questions (1-4) on separate flipchart sheets, creating one set of four sheets for each of the four groups.
- Marker pens for each group.
- Browse through the recommendations given in the following United Nations documents. '[The Rabat plan of action on the prohibition of incitement](#)' and the '[Action plan for religious leaders and actors to prevent incitement to violence that could lead to atrocity crimes](#)'. This will help you support participants as they work with their codes of conduct.

Find the scenario on [page 273](#). Find the scenario handout and the UN documents referred to at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/student-journalist.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Distribute a copy of the scenario to each participant and read it aloud to the group.

Explain that the participants are going to work together in small groups to discuss how to handle these complex issues. Divide the participants into four groups and ask each group to appoint a spokesperson.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 45 MIN

- **GROUP DISCUSSION** (30 MIN)

Give each group marker pens and the four pre-prepared flipchart sheets with questions 1 to 4 written up. Ask them to record their answers on the flipchart sheets.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What risks and vulnerabilities did the blasphemy law contribute to in this scenario? How did the blasphemy law interrelate to other problems in Saraa's society.
2. How do blasphemy laws create risks in your context? What do those risks look like?
3. Should any of the speech/expression illustrated in this case be limited by law? Why/why not?
4. In your context, what advantages or disadvantages would there be to having 'hate speech' laws that restrict incitement to violence, as compared to blasphemy laws?

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK** (20 MIN)

Ask the spokesperson for group 1 to share their answer to the first question. Ask the other groups if they agree or disagree or have anything to add. If any group disagrees, ask them to explain their reasoning. Continue with question 2 to the group 2 spokesperson and so on.

Round off the feedback session with some general comments such as the following: It can seem logical and moral to ban offensive speech and behaviour, in order to protect social harmony. It is, however, impossible to define what is offensive. Some people are offended by the mere existence of ideas other than their own. According to international law, the speech that should be banned is hate speech that incites discrimination, hatred and violence. Laws on blasphemy, apostasy and 'protecting social harmony' are usually much broader than this. They tend to:

- be vague making it hard to know what is considered illegal.
- define offence from a majority perspective (in practice if not in theory).
- be open to abuse and false accusations – it's hard to prove you didn't say something.
- encourage violence by supporting the idea that we should punish people who peacefully express beliefs that the majority don't like.
- result in people who peacefully express their beliefs being blamed for social tensions. People who react to peaceful expression with hatred and violence should bear that responsibility.

- **ROLE-PLAY DISCUSSION** (25 MIN)

Ask participants to return to their groups and explain that they are now going to do a role-play exercise in which they will imagine that they live and work in Saara's city. Give each group a role:

Group 1 is a group of local politicians and a national member of parliament for Saara's city.

Group 2 is the interfaith council of the city – a group of faith leaders.

Group 3 is an informal network of journalists and media outlets in the city.

Group 4 is the board of the education department, that employs school and university staff in the city.

TIP! In some contexts, this might be challenging to facilitate. Build your confidence as a facilitator by reviewing our '[Tips for facilitators](#)' on page 282 and '[Responding to tricky questions](#)' on page 286.

TIP! This exercise is long and requires concentration. Why not schedule a break or introduce an energiser at this point. Find inspiration in the '[Icebreakers and energisers](#)' section on page 10.

Tell everyone that their group has gathered together in the light of what has happened to Saara, because they are concerned by the impact blasphemy accusations, hate speech and violence are having on the community. They are concerned that politicians, faith leaders, journalists and educational institutions are, at times, contributing to the problems.

Each group has decided to develop a code of conduct for their own sector – a list of dos and don'ts for politicians, faith leaders, journalists or schools/universities.

Ask the groups to spend 20 minutes writing their code of conduct on a flipchart sheet. They should appoint a note-taker and a rapporteur.

- **PRESENTATIONS AND FEEDBACK** (30 MIN)

Invite each group to present their conclusions. After each presentation invite the other groups to share their thoughts. Which suggestions would be most important or effective? Are there any dos or don'ts they would want to add to the list. Are any of the ideas presented problematic?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Thank participants for their engagement in this process. Invite them to share their reflections – how did they find this exercise?

Thank them for their thoughts and conclude with the following points:

- In this exercise we have reflected on problematic aspects of blasphemy laws and explored how such legislation can interplay with other problems in society such as corruption and intolerance.
- We have also brainstormed codes of conduct for the kind of faith leaders, politicians, teachers and journalists we would like to see in our communities.
- It might be helpful to know that the United Nations has developed a few tools relating to this that might be useful. The [Rabat Plan of Action](#) sets out the role and responsibilities of States and other actors in countering hate speech, and there is a [United Nations Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors](#) to prevent incitement to violence that could lead to atrocity crimes. (Provide copies of these if relevant to your audience).

Finish the exercise by inviting participants to spend a few minutes in silence trying to think of ONE thing they or their organisation could do to contribute to such codes of conduct or action plans being developed, disseminated or put into practice.

Source

Katherine Cash, SMC Faith in Development/FORB Learning Platform

The hate speech barometer 1 h 5 min



FORB, OTHER RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

THEMES

Freedom of religion or belief (FORB), freedom of expression, hate speech, Rabat plan of action.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Suitable for any audience for whom an understanding of the legal framework for hate speech is important. Requires a willingness to participate in participatory 'game' style learning. Assumes a basic understanding of FORB and of freedom of expression among participants.

PURPOSE

To help participants understand when freedom of expression crosses the line into unlawful hate speech/dangerous speech, using the threshold test of the Rabat Plan of Action as a tool.

DESCRIPTION

A game in which participants stand on a line between two corners of the room to signify how likely they think it is that a hate speech statement will lead to acts of discrimination, hostility or violence. The game illustrates the difficulty of defining hate speech and helps participants identify the factors that contribute to determining whether a statement constitutes illegal hate speech (as opposed to unethical but legal speech). The game concludes with a short knowledge input in which participants learn about the Rabat plan's threshold test for determining this.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- One copy per participant of the handout: ['Rabat plan of action – threshold test'](#).
- Prepare yourself to lead the exercise by reading the [Rabat plan of action](#) and ['The Hate Speech Crisis : Ways to start fixing it, A toolkit for civil society organizations and activists'](#) from Minority Rights Group.

Find the handout and the documents referred to at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/hate-speech-barometer.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Make the following points:

- The world is experiencing an unprecedented rise in hateful speech. We see this offline, on our streets but also, increasingly, online on our screens. Between 2011 and 2021, recorded incidents of online hate speech in Pakistan, for example, increased by 400%.
- There are many types of expression that might be considered 'offensive' or 'hateful'. Human communication covers an enormous and subtle scale when



SHORT TALK

it comes to negative speech. People are often critical of others in constructive or unconstructive ways. People can be sarcastic, tactless and insulting, and sometimes tease, ridicule, use stereotypes and mock or put people down. Sometimes people are so hateful that they call for discrimination and violence. Human communication is often ill thought through, sometimes worthy of condemnation and at times down-right dangerous.

- So, what protection from negative speech should we have and what right do we have to speak negatively of people and things of which we are critical?
- Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) states that: ‘Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law.’ This is a high threshold.
- Hate speech is a broad category of speech, not all of which is banned. Only advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement is meant to be banned.
- That doesn’t mean that other types of hate speech should be quietly accepted. On the contrary, a great deal of work needs to be done to counter hate speech, as understood in broad terms. However, the law is a blunt and dangerous instrument to use to regulate human communication. Experience shows that such legislation is easily twisted by governments to suppress criticism of the government and to protect majorities instead of those that are vulnerable.

Explain that the group is going to do an exercise to explore why it is difficult to define what constitutes illegal hate speech and to explore the factors that help determine whether a statement amounts to illegal hate speech or not. (If you will do separate exercises to explore ways of working to counter hate speech broadly at a later point mention that here.)

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 50 MIN

• **THE BAROMETER** (40 MIN)

Ask the group to imagine a line between opposite corners of the room. That line is a scale that represents the likelihood that a statement will result in acts of discrimination, hostility and violence, with highly likely at one end and highly unlikely at the other.

Explain that you will read out a statement and the group should place themselves on the line according to how likely or unlikely they think it is that the statement will result in acts of discrimination, hostility and violence. (In other words, whether the speech should be illegal according to international law.)

Ask participants to imagine that there is a religious minority community called the Alpha-centauri. Read out the following statement: ‘We should kill or banish all members of the Alpha-centauri religion.’

Ask people to move to the point on the line that represents how likely they think it is that this statement would lead to acts of violence. It is likely that most people will stand towards the highly likely end of the scale as the statement is extreme. Some may find it hard to decide where to stand and say they don’t have enough information. If this happens, comment that they have a good point!

Now explain that you are going to repeat the exercise giving them more information. They are going to imagine the exact same statement being made but with different contexts, different intents on the part of the person making the statement and different risks.

Read out the scenarios below. After each scenario, ask participants to move to the point on the line that represents the likelihood of the statement resulting in acts of discrimination, hostility and violence.

After each scenario ask a couple of people why they have stood where they are.

Ask questions like:

- What is it about this situation that makes you think it is likely/unlikely?
- Do you think the person involved intends for the statement to result in acts of discrimination, hostility or violence?

Try to draw out the following points from their responses: the likelihood depends on the social/political context, how influential the speaker is, who and how big the audience is and the speaker's intentions.

SCENARIOS

- A populist politician shouts 'We should kill or banish all members of the Alpha-centauri religion' while speaking at a large campaign rally. A small minority of Alpha-centauri followers live in the town and there have been previous incidents of violence.
- A member of the crowd shouts the statement at the same rally.
- The person saying the statement is sitting at home alone.
- Someone has written the statement as graffiti on a public wall.
- The statement is part of an art installation that highlights the negative impact of hate on Alpha-Centauri followers.
- The statement is made as part of a comedy show in a theatre.
- A social media influencer with a large following makes the statement in a YouTube video.
- An ordinary person, with no public profile puts the statement on their Facebook page.

• PLENARY DISCUSSION (10 MIN)

After going through all the scenarios, round off the exercise by asking participants what they thought of the game. Was it hard or easy? What thoughts struck them? Has it given them any ideas about what type of speech should be banned?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE (10 MIN)

After exploring their ideas, conclude by explaining the following:

As we have seen from this game, it is hard to define what speech should and shouldn't be illegal because it depends on numerous factors.

The UN has tried to tackle this dilemma by providing concrete advice and guidance for governments and others in a document called the 'Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence'.

The action plan includes a six-part threshold test that can be applied to cases of hate speech to determine whether they constitute speech that should be illegal or whether they constitute protected speech (albeit immoral, inadvisable or unethical speech). You may recognise these points from our discussions.

Present the following points, pointing to a flipchart sheet or PowerPoint slide that lists the words in bold:

Whether speech is likely to result in acts of discrimination, hostility or violence depends on:

- **THE CONTEXT** – for example, the demographic, social and political context. Is the target of the hate speech a vulnerable group, have there been previous incidents of violence etc.
- **THE SPEAKER** – their status, role and level of influence over the audience.



SHORT TALK

- **THE INTENT** of the speaker. Active intent is required to reach the threshold of ‘advocacy’ or ‘incitement’.
- **THE CONTENTS** (what was said) and the form (how it was said) – was the statement provocative and direct?
- **THE EXTENT OF DISSEMINATION/NATURE OF THE AUDIENCE:** how public was the expression, was it addressed to a large audience/did it have a wide reach, was it repeated frequently, or directed to an audience prone to act in response to such statements?
- Was there a **REASONABLE PROBABILITY** that the expression would incite harmful actions against the group (whether or not these actually took place)?

If, on the basis of the above points, the speech concerned IS likely to result in acts of discrimination, hostility and violence then the speech should be illegal.

These six points form a concrete tool that legislators can use in defining what should be considered an illegal act of hate speech, that courts can use in judgements and that monitoring bodies and civil society can use to monitor hate speech.

For example

- The Rabat threshold test is being used by the national authorities for audio-visual communication in Tunisia, Côte d’Ivoire and Morocco.
- The European Court of Human Rights has referred to the Rabat Plan of Action as relevant international materials in [judgements](#).
- The United Nations peacekeeping operation in the Central African Republic is applying the Rabat threshold test in its monitoring of incitement to violence.

Ask the group if anyone has ideas about how the plan could be used in their work/ context and allow some time for the sharing of ideas.

Thank the participants for their active engagement and useful contributions. Disseminate the handout to all participants.

Source

Katherine Cash, FORB Learning Platform. Inspired by and adapted from Minority Rights Group, ‘The Hate Speech Crisis: Ways to start fixing it – A toolkit for civil society organizations and activists’ 2022. <https://minorityrights.org/publications/hate-speech>

Understanding FORB in context

This collection of exercises is designed to enable your target audience to apply what they have learnt about FORB in general, looking critically at their own context and identifying challenges and conflict dynamics related to freedom of religion or belief (FORB). This reflection not only enables personal transformation; context analysis is an essential step in the development of any strategy to promote change – whether at the community level or for multi-stakeholder national level programmes. As such, context analysis exercises provide key skills and are a vital part of trainings on FORB. It is from this point that learning processes increasingly focus on enabling participants to work for change.

The exercises provide a range of tools to help different types of audience reflect critically and develop practical context analyses. The collection includes exercises for conflict analysis. In any society, it is normal for there to be real and perceived personal, social, and political conflicts of interest related to issues of religion and belief. Understanding conflict dynamics and our own role within them can help us to reflect upon and analyse the contents and effects of our ideas and actions. This, in turn, can help us find constructive, conflict-sensitive approaches to promoting change – remembering that conflict sensitivity is not the same as avoiding or ignoring a conflict.



GET PREPARED!

Prepare for context analysis sessions by researching the state of FORB in your country. Check out the 'FORB library' on the FORB Learning Platform's website, searching for 'country information' and/or the name of your country. www.forb-learning.org/forb-library.



Exercise overview

The first two exercises in the chapter are warm-up exercises, offering fun, thought-provoking ways to introduce context analysis sessions.

- **THE WEB OF GOOD** A fun game that helps participants recognise the things they appreciate about their community/society before moving on to look at problems.
- **CHANGE CHAIRS** A physical game that explores participants' perceptions of and attitudes to conflict. Ideal to open sessions on conflict analysis.

The following four exercises provide alternative ways to do a FORB context analysis. The first two are based on Candelin's three-phase model of persecution (disinformation – discrimination – violence). The third uses Galtung's 'Triangle of Violence' (physical, structural and cultural violence) as a basis, while the fourth takes the 'Dimensions of FORB' as its starting point.

- **A FORB MAP OF OUR TOWN** Participants fill a flipchart 'map' with information about which members of their community face what types of violations in what settings. Ideal for grassroots communities and civil society organisations.
- **THREE PHASES OF PERSECUTION** A more theoretical version of the previous exercise, this exercise works well for civil society organisations and more formal trainings, helping participants develop basic context analyses.
- **THE TRIANGLE OF VIOLENCE** Encourages participants to explore the ways in which religious, cultural, and social norms are used to justify both FORB violations and different kinds of violence in their context. Useful as a basis for fuller, written analyses.
- **RESEARCH TEAMS** Small groups work together to find information to answer sets of research questions relating to the dimensions of FORB.

The next exercise provides a creative methodology for analysing any specific violation, in this case applied to early and forced marriage.

- **TRAPPED IN THE SPIDERWEB** A game in which participants create a visual representation of the 'web' of attitudes, behaviours and rules that trap girls into early and forced marriage before brainstorming change strategies to destroy the web.

The final two exercises in the chapter are more generic and work with any audience.

- **THE PROBLEM TREE** Helps participants to identify the root causes and the consequences of problems they wish to tackle.
- **THE FORCEFIELD** Helps participants to carry out an actor analysis, identifying allies and opponents.

Please note that the '[Challenging pillars of power](#)' exercise in the [Action planning](#) chapter of this toolkit also includes a context analysis process.



The web of good 15 min

UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To enable participants to recognise the good things that they appreciate about their society/community, before moving on to look at problems.

DESCRIPTION

A fun game and a good opening exercise for sessions focused on context analysis. Participants stand in a ring and throw a ball of wool or string to each other; naming things they appreciate about their community each time the ball is thrown. This creates a visual representation of being interconnected in the form of a 'web' of wool.

RESOURCES

- A ball of wool (or string).

This exercise is available in multiple languages as part of the Local Changemakers Course. See Session 5 in the facilitator's guide to the course. www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.



TIP! This exercise uses a methodology very similar to the 'Trapped in the spiderweb' exercise. Don't use both exercises in the same training event.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Ensure there is enough space in the training room for participants to form a ring. Ask participants to move tables and chairs if necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Ask the group to stand in a ring. (The ring should be sized so that participants can easily throw the ball of wool to one another.)

Explain the following:

- We are going to throw a ball of wool across the ring to one another.
- Before throwing the ball, each person has to complete the following sentence, 'A good thing about living in my town is...'. For example, 'A good thing about living where in my town is being close to my family', or the football team or the local school. You are not allowed to say something that someone else has already said so it will get harder as we go along!
- When you throw the ball, hold on to the strand of wool with one hand and throw the rest of the ball onwards with the other hand. This will create a strand joining you to the person before you and the person after you. Keep hold of the strand for the entire exercise.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 8 MIN

Start the exercise yourself by completing the statement and throwing the ball of wool to someone on the other side of the ring. Remember to keep hold of the end of the wool! Gradually a 'web' will be created between the participants.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

When everyone has caught the wool once, bring the exercise to a halt but ask people to keep hold of the strands.

Conclude with the following reflections:

- What does the space between us look like now? A spider's web or a net perhaps?
- Even if the rest of this session focuses on the problems in our country or community, there are good people and good things happening too. There are things that work!
- It is important to remember these things when we work to change problems. Partly because they give us strength and hope. And partly because networks of good people and good things could be a resource to help us tackle the problems.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers



Change chairs! 20 min

UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

To enable participants to explore their attitudes towards conflict.

DESCRIPTION

A fun, physical and thought-provoking game in which participants swap chairs if they agree with a statement read out. A good opening exercise for a session on conflict analysis as the statements given relate to understandings of conflict.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Envelope containing short paper notes with statements written on them (see below).
- Review the key points for the plenary discussion (see below) and think of illustrative examples from the participants' context.
- Ensure there is enough space in the training room for participants to arrange their chairs in a ring. Ask participants to move tables if necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Ask participants to arrange their chairs in a ring and sit down. (There should be a chair for each participant but no chair for you as the facilitator.) Place an envelope containing small paper notes with statements written on in the middle of the ring. Each statement starts with the phrase "Change chairs if you think that...". (See suggested statements below.)

Explain that the group is going to do a fun, physical game to get us all thinking about the theme of our session – conflict. Explain to participants that the person in the middle of the ring should take a random piece of paper from the envelope and read it out. Everyone who agrees with the statement should change chairs. Anyone who does not agree or isn't sure should remain seated. The person left without a chair then reads the next statement.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 15 MIN

• PLAY THE GAME (5 MIN)

Kick the game off by standing in the middle, reading a statement, and then trying to sit down so that someone else is left without a chair. The person left standing takes a new statement from the envelope and reads it out loud. Ask participants to keep the note after reading it out, not put it back in the envelope. The same procedure follows until all statements in the envelope have been read or time runs out.

SUGGESTED STATEMENTS:

- Change chairs if you find conflicts hard to deal with.
- Change chairs if you think that a conflict can always be solved if you put enough effort in to it.
- Change chairs if you think that it can sometimes be a good thing that a conflict happens.
- Change chairs if you think that conflicts in themselves are neutral, it is how we manage the conflict that matters.
- Change chairs if you think conflicts are exciting.
- Change chairs if you have at some point failed to solve a conflict in a good way.
- Change chairs if you think conflicts sometimes need to be solved by resorting to violence.
- Change chairs if you think conflicts never need to be resolved using violence.
- Change chairs if you think that it is a form of violence to not be able to express your opinion freely.
- Change chairs if you think that requiring government permission to hold worship and build/maintain worship facilities is a form of violence.
- Change chairs if you think that peace building is an important part of promoting freedom of religion or belief.
- Change chairs if you think that conflicts cannot be solved if there is no attempt to create justice between the parties.

TIP! Why not adapt the statements to your context, or create your own?

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

Lead the group in a discussion about what conflict is, by asking:

- Were there any statements that you strongly agreed with? Why?
- Were there any statements that you strongly disagreed with? Why?
- How does conflict relate to human rights?

KEY POINTS

Aim to draw out the following key points in the discussion, using examples from your own context:

- A conflict is when different individuals or groups have different interests.
- Conflict in itself is neither positive nor negative. What makes conflict positive or negative is the way it is handled.
- Almost all social change, good and bad, involves conflict as the balance between different people’s interests changes.
- Sometimes you need to escalate a conflict – making it clearer, in order for the conflict issue to be resolved.
- Claiming rights usually involves escalating a conflict by making the conflict more apparent – for example by protesting about an injustice. Working for equal rights involves shifting the balance of power over political and economic resources between groups – for example requiring majorities to give up traditional privileges.
- Conflicts that are handled constructively can lead to positive social change.
- Suppressing or avoiding a conflict is not usually a constructive strategy.
- It’s great to seek win-win solutions. However, justice may require win-lose solutions if powerful groups/individuals need to let go of power/resources, so that others can have their rights respected.
- The tricky thing is to find constructive ways to challenge injustices (making a conflict more apparent in the short term) without increasing the overall level of conflict in the medium to long term.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank everyone for their active participation and say you hope the exercise helped them to explore (and perhaps challenge) their ideas about conflict.

Source

SMC Faith in Development, <https://www.smc.global/en/>



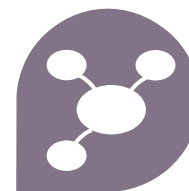
'A FORB map of our town'

“Participants enjoyed the FORB in our town exercise – it worked perfectly. It gave them a chance to reflect on violations they encounter in daily life and triggered deep conversations. It’s great for developing creative, analytical, critical thinking and teamwork skills.”

HAMMAM HADDAD, FACILITATOR, JORDAN

A FORB map of our town

1 h 45 min



UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

MAPPING EXERCISE

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

A basic context analysis exercise, ideal for grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

Not suitable in more formal training settings. For formal settings or more complex tools of analysis, see '[Three phases of persecution](#)' exercise on page 148 or the '[Triangle of violence](#)' exercise on page 151.

PURPOSE

- To enable participants to deepen their knowledge and understanding of how freedom of religion or belief (FORB) issues affect different people in their context.
- To help participants learn skills for mapping human rights violations using a simple, visual model.
- To help participants develop analysis skills in order to recognise patterns of human rights violations, based on Candelin's three phases of persecution model.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise uses a flipchart 'map' of a town along with a set of characters to help participants map and analyse violations related to FORB in their context. Participants' own experiences and knowledge of FORB is used along with any additional knowledge you bring as a facilitator.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Pre-prepared flipchart 'map' (see instructions below).
- Flipchart pens.

This exercise is available in multiple languages as part of the Local Changemakers Course. See Session 5 in the facilitator's guide to the course. www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

This exercise will be easier to facilitate if you read up on the state of FORB in your country in preparation for the session. You can find guidance on accessing information on FORB in your country at www.forb-learning.org/learn/country-guidance.

Make the following practical preparations before the session:

• CREATE THE FORB MAP OF YOUR TOWN

Tape together four flipchart sheets to form a big block. Draw a map of a village/town on the sheets. Include rough drawings or the names of 10 different places where people might face problems related to religion or belief. (See illustration on [page 143](#).)

Below is a list of suggested places to include on your 'map'. Leave out any that aren't relevant in your context, replacing them with others that are more

relevant. Make sure you include homes, places of worship, public places like shops and 'official' places like the police station.

When drawing the map, leave plenty of space between places, but group together places that are closely related e.g., different government offices. Don't be tempted to try and fit everything on one flipchart sheet – you will need space to write between the drawings during the exercise.

Suggested places to include on your map: Homes, a school, a hospital, places of worship, a marketplace, a factory, a farm, a bus, the police station and courthouse, the government office for planning permission, the government office for religious affairs, and the government office for registering births, deaths, and marriages.

(Alternative version: Divide into groups and ask each group to create their own map. Adds 20 minutes to the exercise.)

- **PREPARE FLIPCHART SHEETS WITH CHARACTERS**

Prepare 1-2 flipchart sheets with the following characters written on, replacing the words in bold with the names of the religions relevant to your country context. For example, instead of writing 'smaller minority woman' you might write e.g., Baha'i woman. The writing should be big and clear enough for everyone to read from a bit of a distance.

CHARACTERS

- **Majority** boy/man
- **Majority** girl/woman
- **Majority** religious leader
- **Largest minority** boy/man
- **Largest minority** girl/woman
- **Largest minority** religious leader
- **Smaller minority** boy/man
- **Smaller minority** girl/woman
- **Smaller minority** religious leader
- Female convert from **majority religion** to **minority religion**
- Male convert from **minority** to **majority religion**
- Male atheist whose views have become apparent via a social media post.
- Inter-religious couple (specify which religion the man and woman have)
- Challenger: **majority** woman whose behaviour/ideas go against **majority** cultural norms
- Critic: A person who criticises religious ideas or practices, or the behaviour of a religious actor, or how the state deals with religion

Put the flipchart map and the character flipchart sheet(s) up on the wall in advance of the session.

- **PREPARE A KNOWLEDGE INPUT**

Prepare a short, 10 min knowledge input based on Candelin's three phases of persecution model: disinformation – discrimination – violence. Choose from the following options, according to what will work best with your target audience:

- Show the FORB Learning Platform's short 7-min [film](#) about the model.
- Use the ready-made [script](#) and [PowerPoint](#) presentation of the model from session 5 of the Local Changemakers Course.
- Create your input based on the booklet '[Freedom of religion or belief for everyone](#)' from Stefanus Alliance International.

All these resources can be found at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/map-of-our-town.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

• **PRESENT THE FLIPCHART MAP**

Ask the group to stand in a semicircle around the flipchart map. Explain the following:

- People face problems for freedom of religion or belief in concrete situations and places. They might face hate speech on the bus or on social media, discrimination at work or problems in their encounters with the state – with policies and laws, local officials or the police force.
- Some of these places or situations can be seen on this ‘map’. (List the places you have drawn/written on the map.)
- This map represents our town or area, but we can also think about our country more broadly. We are going to map problems related to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief on the map.

• **PRESENT THE CHARACTERS**

Explain that our mapping will take its starting point in a number of characters who might face problems related to FORB in one or more of the places on our map.

Read through the list of characters on the flipchart sheet. Ask if any characters who might face problems are missing and add characters as the group sees fit.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 90 MIN

• **THINK** (5 MIN)

Ask everyone to silently pick a character who they think would face problems related to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief in their country/ community.

Ask them to look at the ‘map’ and spend 3 minutes thinking about the following question: In which places on the map would your character face problems because of their ideas or religious identity, practices or beliefs? What problems would they face?

Make sure it is clear that the task is to map the experiences of victims of violations rather than focusing on perpetrators.

• **SHARE AND DOCUMENT** (45 MIN)

1. Ask one person to say which character they chose and, very briefly, what places on the map their character could face problems and what kind of problems these are.

On the flipchart sheets, briefly note the character and the type of problems they mention next to each place a problem is experienced. For example, you might write ‘Inter-religious couple – harassment’ next to the bus.

Stop the person who is sharing after 2 minutes, even if they have only said a few of the places/problems they thought of. This is to ensure others have time to contribute!

2. Ask if anyone else chose this character and if they have additional points to make about this character. Encourage some discussion and storytelling at this point.
3. Ask if any of the other characters would face the same problems in the same places. Note these characters next to the problems concerned.

Repeat steps 1-3 above asking another person about a character they chose. Continue going through the characters until there are 10 minutes left of the 45 minutes allocated. At this point, ask everyone who has a problem that has not been discussed yet to come up and write the problem at the relevant place on the map, noting the character concerned. Spend the last few minutes reading each other's additions.

• **KNOWLEDGE INPUT** (10 MIN)

Give a short knowledge input based on Candelin’s three phases of persecution model: disinformation – discrimination – violence. (See ‘Advance preparation’ above for details of resources to help you do this).

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (30 MIN)

Ask everyone to sit in a semi-circle in front of the flipchart map. Tell the group that they are going to analyse the findings of their mapping using the model they learnt about in the talk.

Ask the following questions and write up key points from the discussion on blank flipchart sheets. If additional problems or characters come up in the discussion, make a note of these on the map too.

- Are there examples of disinformation, discrimination and violence on our map?
- Who is affected by the problems we identified?
 - o Who is particularly vulnerable in our community?
 - o Do women and girls face different problems and vulnerabilities than men and boys?
- How serious are the problems in terms of frequency, scale and impact?
 - o Frequency: Do the problems we have identified occur occasionally or frequently? Are any of them systematic – built into the way society works?
 - o Scale: Are a few or many people are affected by the problems? Which problems affect most people?
 - o Impact: Which problems have the most severe impact on those affected? Remind the group that even if only a few people are affected, if a violation has a devastating impact on those people, it is a really serious problem.
- Who is contributing to the problems?
 - o Is the state actively committing violations, passive about the problems created by others, or active in promoting FORB?
 - o Are WE ever part of the problem, consciously or unconsciously?
- Are there characters – individuals or religious communities – whose problems we don’t really know or understand properly? Could we find out about their experiences and add this to our map and our analysis?
- (Optional) What feelings are coming up as we work to identify and analyse these problems?

TIP! As this exercise is quite long, why not take a break here or run an energiser? See [pages 10-25](#) for ideas.

During the discussion, try to highlight how examples raised by participants illustrate how FORB violations often involve violations of other rights too, for example, women’s rights, rights to education or employment. Make the point that our human rights are all interconnected. We need them all!

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Conclude by saying something along the following lines:

In the face of all the problems we’ve identified we have two options: to feel depressed and powerless or to identify something concrete, however small, to try to change. To become changemakers in our own communities.

If possible, briefly share a changemaker’s story from your own local context – this is very inspiring for participants. If the remainder of your training includes action planning sessions, mention that participants will have the opportunity to think about how they can make change in those sessions.

TIP! If you can’t think of a story from your local context, share inspiration from these ‘[Changemakers stories](#)’.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers

Three phases of persecution 1 h 15 min



UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

ANALYSE
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

A more theoretical version of '[A freedom of religion or belief map of our town](#)' on page 144, this exercise is well suited to more formal settings, for example with decisionmakers, officials or national faith leaders. (Either exercise can work well with civil society organisations and human rights defenders.)

PURPOSE

- To enable participants to deepen their knowledge and understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB) violations in their context.
- To help participants develop analysis skills in order to recognise patterns of human rights violations, using Candelin's 'Three phases of persecution' model (Disinformation – Discrimination – Violence).

DESCRIPTION

An exercise that combines groupwork and plenary discussion to help participants define violations of FORB in their context and analyse them according to Candelin's three-phase model of persecution. Requires a basic understanding of FORB among participants.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart paper, marker pens and post-it notes in different colours for the different groups.
- A table for each group to work at.
- A copy of the Stefanus Alliance booklet '[Freedom of religion or belief for everyone](#)' for each participant, (available to download and print in several languages).
- One [handout](#) of a simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) for each participant.
- Flipchart sheet/PowerPoint slide with group discussion questions written up (see below)

Find the booklet and the handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/three-phases.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Prepare a short, 10 min knowledge input based on Candelin's three phases of persecution model: disinformation – discrimination – violence. Choose the methodology that will work best for your audience from the following options:

- Show the FORB Learning Platform's short 7-min explainer [film](#) about the model.
- Create your input based on the booklet '[Freedom of religion or belief for everyone](#)' from Stefanus Alliance International. Try to include examples from your own context that relate to each phase and that illustrate the State being both passive and active in violations.

- Use the ready-made script and PowerPoint presentation of the model from Session 5 of the Local Changemakers Course.

All these resources can be found at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/three-phases.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 14 MIN

Give a short 10 min knowledge input based on Candelin’s three phases of persecution model: disinformation – discrimination – violence. Allow time for questions afterwards from participants.

Explain that the participants are now going to work together in small groups to use the three-phase model to analyse violations of FORB happening in their own context.



SHORT TALK

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 60 MIN

• **GROUPWORK AND PRESENTATIONS** (45 MIN)

Divide participants into small groups. Ask them to appoint a spokesperson who will present back to the plenary. Point to a flipchart/PowerPoint slide and ask them to discuss the following groupwork questions, writing their answers on a flipchart.

GROUPWORK QUESTIONS

What violations of freedom of religion or belief do you see in your country today? List examples for each of the different phases of the persecution model: disinformation, discrimination and violence. For each example you list, answer:

- Who is committing the wrongdoing? Is the state active or passive?
- Who are the victims?
- Do other religious groups suffer from the same restriction/violation?
- What dimensions of freedom of religion or belief are violated in these examples?
- What other human rights are being violated?

TIP! Circulate among the groups during the discussion. Encourage them to think beyond their own religious community.

Allow 20 minutes for the groupwork, then invite each group to present their findings.

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)

Lead the discussion with the following questions:

- What did you think of this exercise?
- Was there anything new to you?
- Do you agree with the findings of the other groups?
- What would you say is the greatest challenge to freedom of religion or belief in your context/society?
- To what extent are the problems related to religion? Are there other factors behind the disinformation, discrimination and violence – for example ethnicity, social status, economic status, political affiliation, gender, language? How can you find out?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN



Conclude the exercise by thanking everyone for their hard work and for their engagement in the discussion.

ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY

In contexts where FORB issues are perceived as particularly controversial and/or sensitive, it may be helpful for participants to use the three-phase model to analyse external contexts, rather than applying it directly to their own contexts. Case studies to choose from are included in the Stefanus Alliance booklet ‘[Freedom of religion or belief for everyone](#)’, or you can explore the collection of

case studies in Part 2 of the toolkit to find alternatives – see the '[Index of case studies](#)' on page 274.

Choose a different case study for each small group to work with. Use the same methodology as above but cut the third groupwork question and use the following plenary discussion questions instead:

- Was it useful to analyse a case like this? In what ways?
- Would you say that any of the FORB violations/restrictions we read about are justified/legitimate/necessary/proportional? Why/why not?
- How are the violations affecting the victims' lives as a whole, (rather than just their ability to believe and to practice)?
- Is it always the same religious group/belief community that is the victim all over the world? Why or why not?
- (Optional) Is there any learning that you could usefully apply to your own context? Invite participants to share reflections if they feel comfortable doing so.

Source

Adapted from FORB for everyone, Stefanus Alliance International <https://www.stefanus.no/english/forb-booklets>

“The three phases of persecution exercise helps participants recognise how disinformation, discrimination and violence are interconnected. It allows them to think beyond the direct forms of violence to the values and practices that maintain, protect and sustain it. It aims at a profound change in how violations are analysed - looking at them in a deep and a holistic manner.”

YOSRA ELGENDI, FORB TRAINING OF THE TRAINERS COURSE
FACILITATOR



The triangle of violence 2 h

UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

WATCH AND DISCUSS

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Ideal for civil society, human rights defenders, faith leaders and decision makers. Useful for multi-stakeholder context analysis processes as it enables different actors to highlight different aspects of importance to them.

PURPOSE

- To enable participants to deepen their knowledge and understanding of FORB violations in their context, and how violations relate to different forms of violence.
- To help participants explore the ways in which religious, cultural, and social norms are used to justify both FORB violations and different kinds of violence in their context.

DESCRIPTION

A groupwork and plenary discussion exercise, exploring how physical violence, discriminatory structures in society and our ideas about 'the other' are interlinked. For use with the FORB Learning Platform's short film '[The Triangle of Violence – a tool for context analysis](#)'.



Instructions

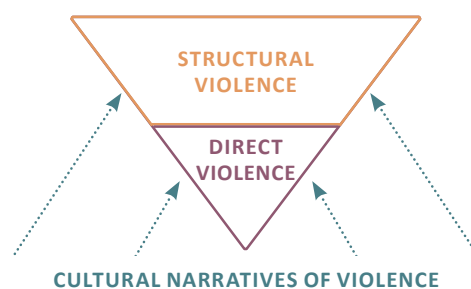
RESOURCES

- The FORB Learning Platform's short film '[The Triangle of Violence](#)'.
- A projector and screen or laptop or another device for showing the film(s).
- Pre-prepared flipchart sheets and markers for each group.
- Post-it notes in three different colours.

Find the film at www.forb-learning.org/films/practitioners-toolbox.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare flipchart sheets for each group with the diagram below.
- Prepare one or two illustrative examples of direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence from the participants' context to help them understand these concepts.
- Test the equipment you will use to screen the film in the training room ahead of time.



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 14 MIN

Explain the following:

In most contexts FORB violations are linked to social conflicts. The triangle of violence is a very useful conflict analysis tool. In this exercise, we're going to look at three different kinds of violence: direct violence, structural violence and cultural narratives of violence and use them to do our own FORB context analysis.

The advantage of this approach is that it helps us reflect on the potential ways in which we contribute to or accept structural violence and cultural narratives of violence. This is empowering because it means there is something we can do about it!

First, we're going to watch a short 6-minute film together that explains these three different kinds of violence.

After showing the film, lead a brief plenary discussion to clarify key concepts by asking:

- Was there anything you didn't fully understand or want to know more about?
- Was there anything you find challenging, or hard to accept?

Use the illustrative examples that you prepared earlier to help answer any questions from participants.

TIP! It's important not to rush into the groupwork exercise without clarifying key concepts, otherwise participants might find the exercise overwhelming.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 45 MIN

• **GROUPWORK** (55 MIN)

Divide the participants into small groups and ask each group to appoint a spokesperson to present their findings to the plenary. Hand out the pre-prepared flipchart sheets, post-it notes in three different colours and marker pens to each group.

Tell the groups that their task is to brainstorm as many violations of FORB in their context as they can, starting with examples of direct violence. Tell participants to write examples of direct violence on a specific colour post-it notes and stick them to their diagram (Allow 15 min for this – less if direct violence is not common in your context).

Tell the groups to move on to brainstorming violations of FORB that are examples of structural violence. Ask them to write these on another specified colour of post-it note and stick them to their diagram (allow 20 min).

Finally, ask the groups to look over the FORB violations that they've identified on the direct and the structural levels of the triangle. Ask groups to discuss the following questions:

- What attitudes or justifications in people's minds make these violations seem okay to some people in our community/country?
- How are those attitudes and justifications being transmitted and perpetuated?

Remind participants that these are the cultural narratives of violence. Ask them to write these on the third colour of post-it note and to stick them along the arrows on the diagram (allow 20 min).

TIP! Remind participants of the gender dimension. Are there particular kinds of violation that affect women or men, or do violations have a different impact on women and men?

• **PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY DISCUSSION** (50 MIN)

Invite each group to present their findings (up to 5 min/group). Ask group presenters to skip examples and points already made by groups before them, to avoid unnecessary repetition. Give each group a round of applause and congratulate them on their hard work.

Lead the plenary discussion with the following questions:

- Was it harder to think of examples of some kinds of violence than others?
- What don't we know? Structural and cultural violence are often invisible to us! Do we know what the law says about freedom of religion or belief, or about how other groups are affected by violations? How can we find out?

TIP! Why not schedule a break or introduce an energiser at this point? The '[Fistfight/Push and pull](#)' games on page 22 work particularly well with this exercise.

- Have we thought about how men and women might be affected differently by structural or direct violence, or cultural narratives of violence?
- How do the different types of violence relate to one another?
- Are there any ways in which we contribute to supporting violence, through our attitudes, way of talking, actions or lack of action?
- Given the roles we have in the community as individuals or organisations, what kinds of violence can we contribute to reducing?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank everyone for their thoughtful contributions and say you hope they found the exercise helped them to deepen their understanding of FORB violations in their context, or perhaps view them in a different light. Mention any coming sessions in the training that will focus on action planning to tackle some of the issues highlighted.

Source

Bassem Maher and SMC Faith in Development <https://www.smc.global/en/>

"The 'Triangle of violence' helped us to develop context analyses for seven countries together with partners in the Asia Religious and Ethnic Freedom Project. The results of the exercise enable partners to identify differing perspectives, with some identifying structural problems in legislation and others highlighting the cultural narratives underpinning violations of FORB. Those narratives are often missing from human rights reporting and the exercise helped us identify them – which is vital for developing effective strategies for change."

INDIRA ASLANOVA, SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND, KYRGYZSTAN



Research teams 1 h 50 min

UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

ANALYSE
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to civil society organisations, human rights defenders and decisionmakers for whom a thorough grasp of the state of FORB in the country is important. Particularly useful in contexts with wide-ranging violations of the right. Requires participants to have a basic grasp of FORB and of the framework for determining if limitations to FORB are legitimate.

PURPOSE

To assist a group or an organisation in carrying out a context analysis covering all the dimensions of FORB.

DESCRIPTION

Using research questions and reports on the state of FORB in the country, participants work in groups to investigate the state of different dimensions of the right to freedom of religion or belief in their country. Requires the facilitator to research the state of FORB in the country in preparation for the exercise.



Instructions

RESOURCES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Read the questions on the research question [handouts](#).
- Find and read national and international reports on the state of [FORB in your country](#). (This is good practice before leading any training on FORB.)
- Identify which sections of the reports will be useful in answering the research questions. Compile these sections to form a 'research pack' for participants to use.
- Based on your reading, adapt the research question handouts by removing questions that are not relevant to your context and adding questions you find more relevant. Aim to have 3-4 questions per template (group).
- Print out one 'research pack' per group (6 groups) and two copies of the research question sets (6 different question sheets x 2 copies per group).

Find the editable research question handouts at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/research-teams-handout.

Find guidance and help to find country information at www.forb-learning.org/learn/country-information.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Explain to participants that their task is to research a FORB context analysis that covers different dimensions of FORB. Divide participants into 6 groups and give each group a set of research questions and a research pack.

Explain that each group has different questions and that their task is to find out as much information as they can about their questions using the research pack provided, their own knowledge or by searching the internet. Ask them to write key points they find on flip chart sheets to present to the plenary.

Comment that in doing their analysis it is important to have the following in mind:

- Consider both legal restrictions of the right (including family and personal identity law) and the restrictions/violations that are, in practice, placed on people by authorities and by members of the family, community or extremist groups.
- Remember the rules governing when limitations on FORB are legitimate (or not). Remind them of these if necessary.
- Think about the different ways in which males and females are affected.

TIP! Learn more about the dimensions of FORB with the '[Quick guide to religious freedom](#)'.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 40 MIN

• **RESEARCH** (40 MIN)

Ask the groups to get started with their research and tell them they have 40 minutes to find as much information as they can. Circulate among the groups, helping them if they struggle to locate the information they need in the research packs/online.

• **PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY DISCUSSION** (60 MIN)

Bring participants back to the plenary. Give each group up to 5 minutes to present their findings and an additional 5 minutes for questions and discussions of the findings and then move to the next group, even if there is a lot more you could discuss!

When all the groups have presented ask participants to share their reflections using the following questions:

- Have you learnt anything new today? Did anything surprise you?
- Are there things you still want to find out?
- From what has been described, what do you think are the most important challenges for FORB in the country?
- How did this listening to the results of everyone's research make you feel?

TIP! Schedule a break or run an energiser after half of the groups have presented in order to keep energy levels going.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Thank participants for their hard work and congratulate them on their research. Make clear if the information gathered will be documented and shared with them after the training. Mention any coming sessions in the training that will focus on action planning to tackle some of the issues highlighted.

If looking at problems has left a heavy feeling in the group, share a story to encourage people that change is possible! Think of an inspirational story from your context or share inspiration from the 'changemaker stories' on the following webpage: www.forb-learning.org/work-for-forb/tactics.

Source

Katherine Cash, SMC Faith in Development/FORB Learning Platform



Trapped in the spiderweb 50 min

UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

GAME

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations and human rights defenders.

PURPOSE

- To help participants explore a range of causes of early/forced marriage.
- To enable participants to identify preventive actions, including changes to religious, societal and legal norms related to freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and gender and personal status/family law.

DESCRIPTION

Participants stand in a ring and throw a ball of wool or string to each other as they answer questions on the causes of early/forced marriage. A volunteer representing a teenage girl stands in the middle and gradually becomes trapped in a tangled web. Participants then work to free the volunteer by naming immediate actions and long-term preventive measures that can be taken to change the situation, cutting a strand of the web for each idea.

The exercise can be easily adapted to focus on other crosscutting FORB issues, by placing a different rights-holder/victim of violations at the centre of the ring.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- A ball of wool or string.
- A pair of scissors.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Ensure there is enough space in the training room for participants to form a ring. Ask participants to move tables and chairs if necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Ask participants to stand in a ring. Ask a co-facilitator (or a volunteer) to stand in the centre of the ring. Explain to everyone that the person in the middle is playing the role of a teenage girl under the age of 18 whose marriage is being planned by her parents without her being involved. Explain that the group is going to play a game to explore the reasons the girl might be in this situation.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 45 MIN

- **EXPLORING THE CAUSES** (20 MIN)
Give the ball of wool or string to one of the participants. Instruct him/her to hold onto the end of the wool. Ask the participant: why is she in this situation? After the participant gives an answer, he/she keeps hold of the end of the wool, says the name of another participant, and throws the ball of wool to him or her. That person names another cause, and, holding on to the wool, throws the ball to a new participant.

As the group gives causes, prompt the participants to be more specific by asking them follow-up questions, such as:

- What is the role of the father?
- What does the law say about early marriage and women’s rights?
- Are religious leaders involved?

It is important that the causes become really concrete and specific. Statements should also be questioned sometimes if, for example, participants give reasons such as the parents thinking that the girl is not paying enough attention to her studies. Ask:

- Is that really a cause or just an excuse?

These follow-up questions help the participants to explore a range of immediate and more long-term causes, as well as different actors involved. They encourage participants to reflect more deeply on the issue and uncover structural causes, including religious and/or societal norms and family/personal status laws or laws relating to FORB.

The activity continues in the same way until all participants have given at least one cause. As the ball is thrown and causes are named, a web is formed, trapping the girl. Pause the exercise at this point.

• **QUICK PLENARY DISCUSSION** (5 MIN)

Invite two or three participants to share their reflections. Ask:

- How does it feel to see the girl trapped in this situation?

• **EXPLORING PREVENTIVE ACTIONS** (20 MIN)

Hand the scissors to the last participant who gave a cause. Ask:

- What could we do, to prevent this girl from being married or to prevent this from happening again to other girls?

Once the participant has named a preventive action, h/she cuts the string that they are holding on to and hands the scissors to the next person in the ring.

Remind participants that actions need to be taken immediately and over the long term. Ask follow-up questions to make sure that the actions are specific and concrete, and to broaden the range of preventive actions to include work with religious leaders and changing societal norms, as well as legal remedies and advocacy with duty-bearers. Ask:

- Who has a responsibility to do that?
- How can we convince them to fulfil that responsibility?
- Who is influential and could help to bring about that change?

Continue until all participants have named a specific preventive action and cut up the net, freeing the person in the middle. If the person in the middle is a participant who volunteered to take on the role, invite them to share their reflections:

- How was this experience for you?
- Which of the preventive actions did you favour?
- Was there anything you would have liked the participants to do differently?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Congratulate the participants on all their ideas and thank them for their active participation. Remind them that just as they hold knowledge about the causes of early/forced marriage, they are also developing the skills to strategize ways to prevent this from happening to other girls.

Source

Adapted from the activity “Why doesn’t she leave?” in [Church and Gender Equality: Resource and Tool Box, PMU Interlife](#).



The problem tree 1 h 30 min

UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

ANALYSE

GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any.

PURPOSE

To help participants develop analytical skills, using the problem tree tool to analyse the root causes of a freedom of religion or belief (FORB) problem and its consequences.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise introduces the problem tree tool. Groups work together to apply it to a specific FORB violation in their local context, as a first step towards creating positive change. Requires a basic understanding of FORB among participants.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets and marker pens.

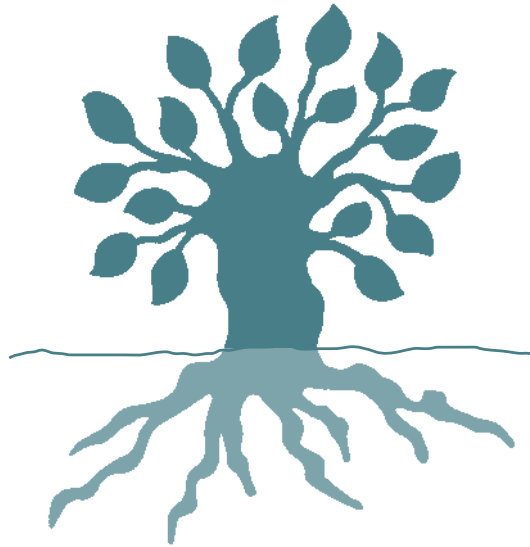
ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare a sample problem tree to demonstrate with, using a simple problem that is relevant to the context and easy to understand for your target audience. This will help to avoid confusion between the problem, its root causes and consequences.
- This exercise will be easier to facilitate if you read up on the state of FORB in the local context in advance so that you can help the participants to define a specific problem they want to tackle. You can find guidance on accessing information on FORB in your country at www.forb-learning.org/learn/country-information.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Introduce the model, drawing the tree trunk, roots, and branches and explaining the following:

- The trunk of the tree is the problem. We need to think about what specific problem we want to work on.
- The roots of the tree are the root causes of the problem. Why is this problem happening?
- The branches of the tree are the consequences of the problem. What are the consequences of this problem for the people affected by it?
- The leaves of the tree represent all the people affected by those consequences.



HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 15 MIN

- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)

Together with the participants, analyse a simple problem (real or imagined) that is relevant to your context and easy to understand using the problem tree model, e.g., the price of fuel is increasing every week or frequent blackouts. This problem does not need to be related to FORB, the purpose is to explain the model.

- **GROUPWORK** (40 MIN)

Divide participants into groups of 5-8.

- Ask each group to identify a problem related to FORB that impacts upon their local context. Encourage them to be as specific as possible in defining the problem. Point out that the more specific the problem they identify is, the more useful their analysis will be!
 - For example, instead of defining the problem as ‘discrimination’ they might choose ‘Police discriminate by refusing to document crimes reported by members of minority X’ or ‘Community X can’t get permission to build a place of worship’. Instead of identifying intolerance as the problem they could choose ‘Minority children are being bullied at the local school’, or ‘Local religious or political leaders or local media are using hate speech’, or ‘Street harassment of minority women in religious dress’. Allow 10 minutes for this before moving on.
- Ask each group to draw a tree, beginning with the trunk and writing the problem they chose in it. Then, analyse the root causes of the problem, drawing the tree’s roots and writing causes among them. Finally identify the consequences of the problem, drawing the branches of the tree and writing the consequences among them. Encourage the groups to explore social, economic, and political root causes including attitudes, behaviours and rules/laws/policies. Allow 20 minutes for this before moving on.
- Ask groups to move on and discuss the following questions:
 - What are the most serious consequences?
 - o Which root causes will be easier to address/more difficult to address? Why?
 - o Identify one specific action they as individuals/their organisations could take to address the problem.

(If participants work for the same civil society organisation, adapt the last two questions as follows: Discuss which of the root causes and effects of the problem your organisation currently works with. Which root causes would it be strategic to work with in future?)

- **PRESENTATIONS TO PLENARY** (20 MIN)

Ask each group to present their problem tree and their reflections on the discussion questions (5 min/group).

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Congratulate the participants on all their ideas and thank them for their hard work. Invite brief reflections from participants on the process.



ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY

If time allows, ask each group to draw a second tree beside their problem tree, this time showing their 'vision of success'. What will the situation look like when the problem is resolved (trunk) – what factors will contribute to the problem being resolved (roots) and what will the consequences (benefits/risks) for those affected be (branches)?

Source

Adapted from Lisa VeneKlasen and Valerie Miller (2002) *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: the action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*.



The forcefield 60 min

UNDERSTANDING FORB IN CONTEXT

BRAINSTORM
PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any audience with a basic understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB).

PURPOSE

To help participants identify the most influential forces which could contribute to positive/negative change in relation to a specific FORB problem in the local context.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise introduces the forcefield analysis tool. Groups work together to apply it to a specific FORB problem in their local context. The exercise requires a basic understanding of FORB among participants and works well as a follow-up to [‘The problem tree’](#) and other context analysis exercises that have identified problems.



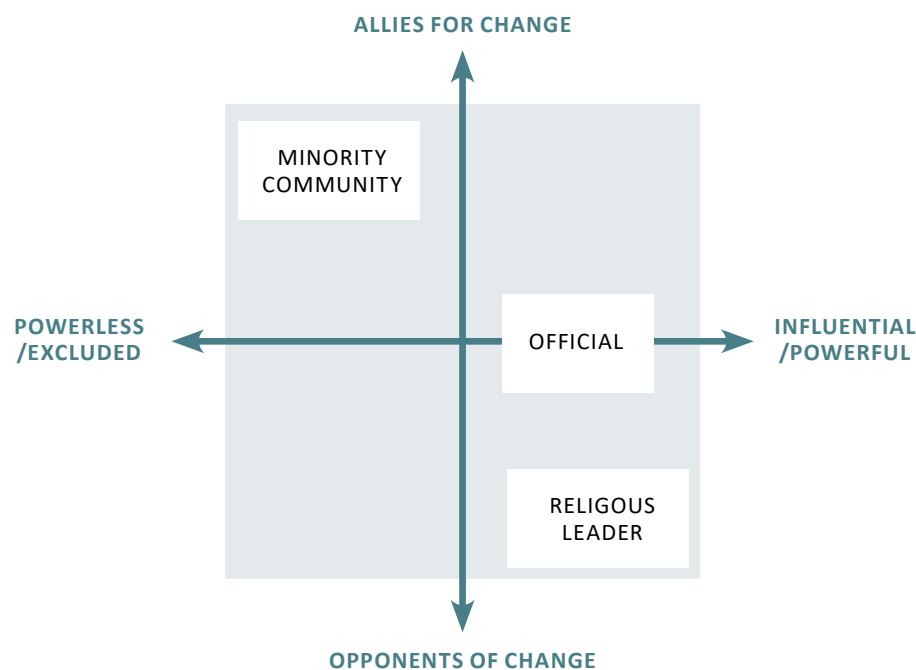
Instructions

RESOURCES

- Marker pens and post-it notes.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare a large matrix on flipchart paper similar to the diagram below, with a number of sample post-it notes on:



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 8 MIN

Ask participants to collectively choose a specific problem related to FORB that is impacting their local context. If you are running this exercise as a follow-up to another context analysis exercise, ask them to choose from one of the problems they identified/tackled in that exercise. If not, encourage them to be as specific as possible in defining the problem they want to tackle. (For example, a specific problem might be a piece of legislation, police violence or communal violence in district x.)

Display the matrix diagram for the participants and write the problem up at the top. Explain that participants are going to reflect on the following question:

- Who are the key actors (individuals or organisations) that are involved in, affected by or have influence over the problem?

Point to the diagram and explain using examples such as: a religious leader with lots of influence who strongly and actively opposes change would be placed towards the bottom right corner, whilst a disempowered, small minority community affected by the problem might be in the top left corner. An official with some practical influence over the situation, but who is unaware of the problem and has no particular opinion on it might be in the middle somewhat to the right.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 50 MIN

- **PAIR WORK** (25 MIN)

Divide the participants into pairs. Ask them to brainstorm the key actors who are involved in, affected by or have influence over the problem and write some ideas on post-it notes. Once they have two or three ideas they can come up and place them on the matrix – if another pair has the same idea, just stick the post-it notes on top of each other.

To avoid crowding around the flipchart sheet, encourage pairs to step away from the matrix after they have added their post-it notes and continue brainstorming, coming back once they have a few new post-it notes to add.

Once new ideas have been exhausted (or time is up), ask the participants to gather around the matrix.

- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (25 MIN)

Review the matrix together and lead the discussion with the following questions.

- Who are the potential allies who could help tackle the problem? Are there any that stand out?
- Who has influence and supports change on this issue? Are they using their influence?
- Are there actors who are relatively neutral, or just a little negative that could be persuaded of the importance of the problem, and mobilised to use their influence to solve it?
- Is there potential to mobilise and empower disempowered groups so that they have a stronger voice?
- Is it possible to transform attitudes among some key influencers who oppose change, so that they become less strongly opposed or less vocal on the issue?
- Which of all the actors identified is it most strategic to prioritise? Mark the post-it notes accordingly.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Thank everyone for their ideas and insights. Explain that in later sessions of the training, they will look more closely at action planning to tackle the problem and make use of the priorities they have identified.

Source

Adapted from Kurt Lewin's Force Field Analysis and George Lakey, Training for Change www.TrainingForChange.org

Action planning for FORB

This collection of exercises is designed to support your target audience through the process of action planning for the protection and promotion of the right to freedom of religion or belief (FORB). Analysing and facing up to problems within communities and societies can be overwhelming, particularly when participants feel a responsibility for making change happen. It can also be hard to see ourselves as changemakers. This is particularly true for individuals and groups that are unfamiliar with action planning. When embarking on the process of developing action plans and strategies, it can therefore be helpful to begin by providing inspiration and ideas to help participants focus on opportunities and possibilities rather than obstacles and problems, before introducing tools for action planning. It is also important to remind participants of the need to limit themselves to realistic plans that are sustainable and safe for people to implement.

The chapter includes exercises that provide inspiration as well as simpler and more complex action planning exercises, suited to different target audiences. Your choice of exercises will be strongly linked to the nature of your target audience – in particular, whether you are working with individuals, less formal community groups or an organisation that has more formal strategic and action planning processes. The chapter concludes with two action planning exercises specifically focused on FORB and gender issues.



Exercise overview

The first three exercises in the chapter provide useful ways to kick off action planning sessions.

- **CHANGEMAKERS STORIES** Buzz-groups discuss three inspirational changemakers' stories.
- **BYSTANDERS AND HEALERS** Helps participants identify the factors that contribute to us either passively observing injustices or taking action to make a difference.
- **WHO AM I?** Helps participants to identify the arenas in their personal and professional lives through which they could make a difference.

The following two exercises help prepare participants for action planning.

- **TALKING ABOUT TACTICS** An important precursor to the development of an action plan, this exercise opens participants eyes to the broad spectrum of tactics available for promoting human rights. This helps prevent action plans that 'do what we always have done'.
- **WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?** Using the results of a context analysis exercise, participants choose and define the specific problem that they wish to develop an action plan for.

The three exercises that follow provide different methodologies for action planning.

- **OUR CHANGE JOURNEY** Enables participants to develop action planning skills using a visual tool and a 10-step process that is easy to grasp and suited to any audience and topic.
- **THE DOUBLE DIAMOND** A structured process of brainstorming, narrowing down and developing ideas.
- **CHALLENGING PILLARS OF POWER** Combines elements of context, power and actor analysis with action planning. Based on the theories of non-violent resistance.

The final two exercises in the chapter assume a strong prior understanding of both FORB and gender on the part of participants and focus on action planning in the intersection between FORB and gender. They use the action planning template from 'Our change journey'.

- **ACTION PLANNING WITH THE GENDER INTEGRATION CONTINUUM** Participants learn about the 'gender equality continuum' as a tool for ensuring gender aware approaches to FORB programming/action planning.
- **REFORMING FAMILY LAW** Designed for groups that are already committed to the idea of legal reform, this exercise includes a knowledge input, the discussion of reform needs and case studies of reform as well as action planning in groups.



Changemakers stories 20 min

ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

STORYTELLING

BUZZ GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders.

PURPOSE

To provide inspiration from the change-making actions taken by others.

DESCRIPTION

Three changemakers' stories are read out in plenary and then discussed in buzz groups.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Local Changemakers Course Session 6 [PowerPoint](#), slides 3-10.
- [Changemakers stories](#).
- Projector and screen.

Find the PowerPoint and stories at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/changemakers-stories.

This exercise and the accompanying stories and PowerPoint are available in multiple languages as part of the course materials for Session 6 of the Local Changemakers Course, (find the exercise stories in the facilitators guide). www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Explain that before the group takes a closer look at action planning, they are going to start by listening to three stories of people who are making change for freedom of religion or belief in their communities.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 17 MIN

Read out the three changemaker stories, using the accompanying PowerPoint slides.

Ask participants to get into threes with people sitting next to them and discuss the following questions:

- Which story spoke to or inspired you most and why?
- Can you think of inspiring stories of changemakers from your context?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Conclude by saying that even if the situations in the stories might be very different to ours, and even if the actions people took aren't things that would be relevant for us to do, hopefully these creative and brave changemakers can inspire us to believe that change is possible and worth struggling for. To believe that everyone can do something, however small, to make a difference.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers

TIP! Use the three stories given, come up with your own, or choose from the wider selection available [here](#).

Bystanders and healers 25 min



ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

REFLECT AND DISCUSS

PLENARY EXERCISE

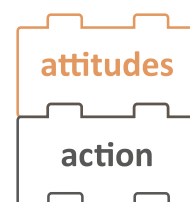
About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders.

PURPOSE

- To help participants move from problem identification towards action planning.
- To help participants recognise that each of us has, at some point, acted both as a ‘bystander’ – keeping quiet when we see injustices and a ‘healer’ – standing up for our own or somebody else’s rights, in however small a way.
- To help participants identify the deliberate choices and steps they can take towards becoming more active ‘healers’ in relation to rights violations.



DESCRIPTION

In this exercise, participants reflect individually on times they have intervened to stop injustices (however small) and times they have done nothing, discussing in plenary the factors that make us more likely to act. This exercise works well as a follow-up to ‘[A FORB map of our town](#)’ on page 144.

Instructions

RESOURCES

- One A4 sheet of paper per participant.
- Enough ordinary pens or pencils for every participant to have one or two.
- Flipchart/whiteboard and marker pens.

This exercise is available in multiple languages in the facilitators guide to the Local Changemakers Course, Session 6. www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Give each person a blank A4 paper and ask them to fold it in half and write the word ‘Bystander’ at the top of one half and the word ‘Healer’ at the top of the other half.

Explain the following:

- We are going to do an exercise that helps us think about our experiences of making change.
- A bystander is someone who keeps quiet and does nothing when they see an injustice happening – for example bullying or discrimination.
- A healer is someone who speaks up or does something to support the person or people affected by the injustice.
- Emphasise that we have all played both these roles at different times.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 20 MIN

- **WRITE OR DRAW** (5 MIN)

Ask each participant to write or draw an example of a time when they played these roles on their sheet of paper. This could be an everyday situation, for example a time when they called for help when they saw a classmate being bullied, or when they spoke up when a family member or colleague was mistreated. Or a time when they were a bystander and didn't call for help or speak up in such a situation for whatever reason.

- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)

Begin by emphasising that everyone plays both roles at one time or another, then ask two or three volunteers for an example of a time when they were a bystander or healer. Don't discuss the specific incidents as that is not the point of the exercise. Simply affirm people's experiences.

Then ask the group the following questions:

- What feelings came up during this exercise?
- Why did you sometimes take action and sometimes not? What made the difference?
- What would help you to move from being a bystander to a person who stands up for your own rights and the rights of others?

Write their answers on a flipchart sheet/whiteboard.

Try to draw out the following points from people's answers to the final question, or to prompt people to give these answers, using questions related to these points:

- We are more inclined to act when we have a relationship or feel empathy with the victim.
- We tend to be more confident in taking action when we are not alone, especially as part of an organised group.
- We tend to be more confident if we have knowledge about the topic and the 'system' – what the rules are and who to complain to or ask for help.
- We tend to be more confident if we are prepared – if we have thought through the situation and planned how we want to act in advance or if we have done it before. Role-play can be a great way to practice!

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Conclude the discussion by highlighting the following:

- We can take conscious decisions to become healers instead of bystanders, for example by building relationships with people who are affected by rights violations, getting organised in groups, seeking out the information we need and planning how we want to act together.
- We won't always be able to act – it won't always be safe or constructive to do so! But we'll be more likely to act and more effective if we build relationships, work together etc.
- In our action planning process, we are going to think about HOW to go from being bystanders to healers in relation to some of the violations of freedom of religion or belief we have discussed.
- If you have conducted a problem identification exercise (for example 'A FORB map of our town') then refer to the problems identified – for example looking at flipchart sheets listing problems. Ask people to silently think about which of the problems identified they would like to be a healer for. (Allow a moment for people to think, but don't invite responses.)

Source

Adapted from [The Human Rights Education Handbook](#) : Effective Practices for Learning, Action, and Change, p90. Human Rights Resource Center, University of Minnesota

Who am I? 15 min



ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

DRAW AND SHARE
PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders.

PURPOSE

To help participants identify where and how they could work to protect and promote freedom of religion or belief (FORB) in their everyday lives.

DESCRIPTION

In this exercise, participants draw their personal and professional networks and imagine the role they could play to promote FORB within those settings.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets and marker pens for each participant.

This exercise is available in multiple languages in the facilitators guide to the Local Changemakers Course, Session 6. www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Give everyone a flipchart sheet and a flipchart/colouring pen. Explain the following: We are all part of a community in which we have lots of relationships and play different roles – for example, in our families, workplaces or faith communities, and in our networks of friends and acquaintances.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Explain the following:

We are going to try drawing our personal networks. Draw yourself in the centre of the paper and then draw your networks on different parts of the paper.

That could be:

- Family and friends.
- Your workplace and colleagues/school and schoolmates.
- Your faith community, and any other community groups you belong to – perhaps through a hobby like a sports team, or women’s group. They could be formalised groups or just informal networks.
- Your network on social media.

For each of the groups or networks you identify, think about the kind of role you could play to promote freedom of religion or belief in or through that setting. You have 10 minutes.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Ask everyone to stand in a ring and hold up their drawings. Make comments about how rich and interesting the pictures are – and how they illustrate the many different roles we play in life and the opportunities we have to protect and promote the right to FORB for all. (If you have time, you can extend this exercise to include a round of sharing, asking each person to share one way in which they think they could promote FORB.)



'Who am I?'

“The Bystander-Healer and Who am I exercises generated mixed feelings. There was sorrow at the realization of how often we have been bystanders, including on social media. But learning about all the concrete tactics we can use gave a lot of hope as to how we can change and become proactive changemakers. There was a strong sense of commitment to using the tactics in the group.”

UKOHA NGWOBIA, FACILITATOR, NIGERIA

Talking about tactics 1 h 55 min



ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

BRAINSTORM
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders.

PURPOSE

- To introduce participants to four types of tactics for protecting and promoting human rights (Emergency, Change, Building and Healing tactics).
- To enable participants to apply this learning to their context and develop their skills by brainstorming concrete action ideas.

DESCRIPTION

A brainstorming and discussion exercise in which participants learn about tactics for protecting and promoting human rights. After a short knowledge input introducing tactics, groups read about practical examples of how people use the tactics to tackle freedom of religion or belief (FORB) related problems and brainstorm ideas for each category of tactics (Emergency, Change, Building and Healing tactics).

This exercise is designed to follow '[A FORB map of our town](#)' on page 144 but can follow any context analysis/problem identification exercise. Display the relevant flipchart sheets from the exercise concerned, to remind participants of the violations they identified in their context.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets from a prior context analysis/problem identification exercise e.g., the 'FORB map of our town'.
- Plenty of post-it notes and marker pens.
- One copy of the 'Talking tactics' [poster collection](#). (This includes a summary poster, posters describing each of 15 tactics and story posters which illustrate each tactic being used to promote FORB).
- Four pre-prepared flipchart sheets headed 'Action ideas: tactic name' for each of the following tactics: Emergency tactics, Change tactics, Building tactics, Healing tactics.
- The ready-made [presentation script](#) and accompanying [PowerPoint](#) (slides 13-24) for this exercise.
- If using the alternative methodology, you will also need the 'Emergency tactics' [handouts](#).

Find all the resources for the exercise at

www.forb-learning.org/exercises/talking-tactics.

The poster collection, presentation script and PowerPoint for this exercise are available in multiple languages in the accompanying materials to Session 6 of the Local Changemakers Course.

www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Arrange the chairs in a semi-circle facing the front of the training room. Stick the flipchart sheets from your preceding context analysis/problem identification exercise on the wall.
- Put the tactics/story posters out on four tables that participants can sit around, placing the posters for one category of tactics on each table – Emergency tactics, Change tactics, Building tactics, and Healing tactics. Put the matching ‘Action ideas’ flipchart sheet on the table with the posters, along with post-it notes and pens.

----- **OVERVIEW OF THE 15 TACTICS** -----

EMERGENCY TACTICS: Prevent; Stop and save; Call for help and warn

CHANGE TACTICS: Protest; Persuade; Provide incentives; Defy

BUILDING TACTICS: Build awareness; Build engagement; Build skills;
Build relationships and networks

HEALING TACTICS: Material and psychosocial support; Document violations;
Highlight and commemorate; Seek justice and compensation

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 14 MIN

Begin the exercise with the ready-made [presentation](#) with accompanying [PowerPoint](#) (slides 13-24). The presentation creates awareness of practical ways in which participants can protect and promote human rights. It introduces four sorts of tactics for promoting human rights (Emergency, Change, Building and Healing tactics), opening participants eyes to the many different ways in which they could make change. (Although the exercise begins with a knowledge input, the focus of the exercise as a whole is on learning and gaining inspiration through stories and mutual reflection, rather than theory.) The knowledge input can be adapted to tailor it to your target audience if desired.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 1 H 40 MIN

- **DISCUSSION GROUPS** (60 MIN)

Divide participants into four groups and explain the following:

We’re now going to spend some time exploring and discussing the emergency, change, building and healing tactics in groups. On each table you will find posters relating to one of these four types of tactics. The posters either explain the tactics in a little more depth or contain stories of people using the tactics to promote FORB.

Each group will spend 15 minutes at a table reading the posters and brainstorming action ideas for one category of tactic. The key question is – how could we use these tactics to promote FORB in our context? After that, groups will rotate and spend 15 minutes discussing the next category, before rotating and discussing again.

When you get to your tables use the following process:

- Read and think: Spend a few minutes reading and thinking about the posters and about any action idea post-it notes left by previous groups.
- Brainstorm: Thinking about the problems we identified in our context analysis exercise (point to the relevant flipchart sheets on the wall), brainstorm as many ideas as you can for ways in which these tactics could be used to tackle those problems.

**SHORT TALK**

- Write your ideas on post-it notes and stick them to the ‘action ideas’ flipchart sheet. Please write clearly on the post-it notes, so that other people can read them! At this stage it doesn’t matter if you think the ideas are realistic – be as creative as possible.
- Remember to think both about actions we can take as individuals in our daily lives and actions we could take in groups or organisations – perhaps through our faith communities, workplaces, or youth groups or by gathering a new group of people together.

Tell each group which category they should start with and send them off to the tables to start working. During the groupwork, move between groups to check on how they are doing. Tell the groups when it’s time to move on to the next category of posters – every 15 minutes.

TIP! Why not schedule a break or introduce an energiser at this point? The ‘[Emoticons](#)’ game works particularly well with this exercise.

• **PLENARY FEEDBACK** (40 MIN)

Fetch the ‘Action ideas’ flipchart sheets from the tables and put them up, spacing them out along a wall.

- Ask participants to gather round the sheets to read the action ideas.
- After a few minutes, ask participants to choose an action idea that they think is a good idea that would ‘work’ in their context. They should take this post-it note from the flipchart sheet and sit back down (in the plenary).
- Ask each person in turn to share the action idea they chose, saying why they chose it. Ask anyone else who thinks this is a good idea to put their hands up. Depending on the size of your group and time available, ask one or two of these people to comment on why they think it is a good idea.
- If there is time after everyone has had a chance to share, ask participants if there were any other action ideas that they really liked that no one picked.
- Gather all the post-it notes that participants picked and put them on a new flipchart sheet, labelling it ‘Our favourite action ideas’.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Congratulate the participants on all their ideas and thank them for their active participation. Conclude by saying that we are going to take what we have learnt about tactics and our action ideas with us as we develop action plans in coming sessions.



COMPLIMENTARY METHODOLOGY 45 MIN

Emergency tactics are used when a specific human rights abuse is happening or about to happen to a specific person(s) in a specific place (e.g., harassment, attacks on places of worship, hate crimes). If tactics for such situations are particularly relevant for your group, do the following exercise prior to using the exercise above for Change, Building and Healing tactics only.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Remind participants of what emergency tactics are and show [PowerPoint](#) slide 24, reading out the examples.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 40 MIN

• **DISCUSSION GROUPS** (20 MIN)

- Divide participants into three groups and explain that each group will focus on one of the three emergency tactics (Prevent; Stop and save; Call for help and warn).
- Give each group post-it notes and pens, the relevant Tactic poster and accompanying story posters, and the ‘Emergency tactics’ handout of discussion questions for their specific tactic.

- Give the groups the following instructions: Read out the text on the posters and discuss the questions on the handout. As part of this you will be brainstorming action ideas – write your ideas on post-it notes. You have 20 minutes.

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK** (20 MIN)

Give each group up to 5 minutes to present the tactic they looked at and their action ideas, putting their post-it notes up on the 'Action ideas: Emergency tactics' flipchart sheet.

After the presentations, open for discussion of the following questions:

- Does anyone have any more ideas about ways to handle emergencies?
- Was it hard to think of ideas?
- Which ideas did you like the best?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Encourage the group, praising ideas they have come up with and recognising that it isn't easy to think of ideas – especially in relation to emergency tactics, where taking action can be risky or dangerous.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers inspired by the tactics model of the New Tactics in Human Rights Project www.newtactics.org



'Talking about tactics'

“It was a wonderful session. The activities helped participants discover the full range of ways to respond to human rights violations. The posters helped people understand the idea of the tactics and think about the roles they could play in promoting human rights in the community. Different participants could see themselves using different tactics.”

HAMMAM HADDAD, FACILITATOR, JORDAN



What's the problem? 55 min

ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

MULTI-FORMAT EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders.

PURPOSE /DESCRIPTION

Designed to precede an action planning exercise, this participatory, inclusive exercise helps participants to choose 1-3 freedom of religion or belief (FORB) problems for which they will go on to do action planning.

NOTE

This exercise is designed for groups who have done both the 'Talking about tactics' exercise on page 170 and either the 'FORB map of our town' exercise on page 144 or an equivalent context/problem analysis exercise (e.g., 'Three phases of persecution' on page 148 or 'Triangle of Violence' on page 151). It should be followed by an action planning exercise e.g., 'Our change journey' on page 178.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- The five 'Action ideas' flipchart sheets from the Talking tactics exercise ('Our favourite action ideas', plus one sheet for each category of tactic).
- The 'FORB map of our town' flipchart sheets OR a flipchart with a list of problems identified through an equivalent context/problem analysis exercise.
- One copy of the 'Talking tactics' [poster collection](#).
- Whiteboard/Flipchart sheets and markers.

Find the posters at www.forb-learning.org/tactics-posters.

This exercise and the poster collection are available in multiple languages in the facilitators guide and accompanying materials of the Local Changemakers Course (find the exercise in Session 8 in the facilitators guide and the posters in the accompanying materials to Session 6). www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Stick your context analysis flipchart sheets, 'Action ideas' flipchart sheets and all the 'Talking tactics' posters up on the walls as reference materials.
- Decide how many action planning groups you will have in the action planning exercise to follow this. (If using the Our Change Journey, you will need 4-8 participants per group.)

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Ask everyone to gather round the context analysis and the action ideas flipchart sheets and explain the following:

In later exercises, we are going to develop action plans that could be used to tackle a problem in our community. But before we get to that stage, the question is which problems should we focus on? We identified problems for freedom of religion or belief in the 'FORB map of our town' (or equivalent) exercise. And based on that and what we have learned about tactics, we have brainstormed and picked our favourite action ideas. Each of these ideas relates to something we consider to be a problem.

In this exercise, we are going to focus in, choosing the problem or problems we want to create action plans for.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 52 MIN

- **THINK** (9 MIN)

First gather round the context/problem analysis flip chart sheets and ask participants to remind themselves of the problems identified. Then ask participants to look at the 'action ideas' flipchart sheets, and especially at 'our favourite action ideas', and silently think about the following questions:

- What problems do our action ideas try to tackle?
- Which of these problems are most important to tackle?
- Which problems can we make a difference to?

- **PAIR** (10 MIN)

Ask participants to get into pairs and explain the following task:

In your pairs, choose one problem you think we should make an action plan for today, based on your thoughts about what is important and what we can make a difference to. Be as concrete and specific as possible in defining the problem.

For example, instead of saying that the problem is 'intolerance' you could say:

- Minority children are being bullied at the local school, or
- Local religious or political leaders or local media are using hate speech.

Instead of saying minority (or all) women are vulnerable, you might say:

- High rates of school dropout among (minority) girls,
- Street harassment, especially of minority women, or
- Early and forced marriage.

And instead of saying government discrimination you might say:

- Local police do not investigate crimes against people from minorities properly, or
- Community X can't get permission to build a place of worship.

- **SHARE** (10 MIN)

Ask each pair to say which problem they chose in one sentence.

Write the problems in a list on the left-hand side of a flipchart sheet or whiteboard. Leave a space to the right for people to put a cross next to the problems they want to vote for.

- **VOTE AND CHOOSE** (20 MIN)

Ask everyone to put a cross on the flipchart next to the TWO problems that they, personally, think the group should develop action plans for. Discuss the results in the group and together decide on a maximum of three problems to write action plans for (fewer than three if your group is smaller than 12 as you need a minimum of four participants per problem).

Emphasise that even if the problem you put a cross next to hasn't been chosen, you can use the action planning skills we learn today to work with your chosen problem at a later date.

TIP! Adapt these examples so that they are relevant to your context!

- **DIVIDE INTO GROUPS** (3 MIN)

Ask the group to stand in a ring. Go around the ring numbering participants from one to the number of action planning groups you will have, (e.g., from 1 to 3 if you will have three groups).

Allocate a problem to each group and tell participants that their group will develop an action plan for that problem in the next session.

If any participant very strongly wishes to be in a different group to the one allocated (perhaps because they have knowledge of a particular problem), see if anyone is willing to swap.

(Instead of numbering participants you could allocate specific participants to specific problems or to let participants choose which problem they want to work on – but make sure the action-planning groups are evenly balanced in terms of participant numbers.)

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Conclude the exercise by thanking everyone for their thoughts and engagement in the discussion. Follow the exercise with an action planning session, for example using the '[Our Change Journey](#)' exercise on page 178.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers

Our change journey 2 h 30 min



ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

GROUPWORK
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders. Useful for politicians in some contexts.

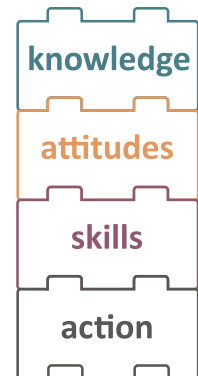
PURPOSE

To enable participants to deepen their knowledge and develop action-planning skills.

DESCRIPTION

Following a brief knowledge input on a simple ten-step process for action planning, groups draw and write their action plans as a visual 'journey' on flipchart sheets. Depending on your target audience, these action plans could be real plans that small groups want to implement, or sample plans developed as a way of learning action planning skills.

The exercise is designed to follow the '[What's the problem?](#)' exercise on page 175 but is easily adapted for use after any problem analysis exercise. Participants should have chosen a problem to develop an action plan for prior to the exercise. The exercise is aimed at groups with little (if any) prior knowledge of action planning processes.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- 'Our change journey' [handout](#) – one per participant.
- Ready-made [PowerPoint](#) presentation and [script](#).

Find the handout, PowerPoint and script at

www.forb-learning.org/exercises/our-change-journey.

These resources are available in multiple languages in the accompanying materials to Session 8 of the Local Changemakers Course. www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Ensure there is a large table and chairs set up for each action planning group to work at.
- Tape together the short sides of two flipchart sheets, creating a long paper. Prepare one of these per group. Put these long papers, pens and the 'Our change journey' handouts on the tables before you start the exercise.
- If the group has identified action ideas through previous exercises (e.g., the Talking tactics exercise), stick your flipcharts with action ideas up on the walls.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 17 MIN

• KNOWLEDGE INPUT (10 MIN)

Deliver the ready-made presentation using the [script](#) and [PowerPoint](#) presentation (slides 3-24). The presentation uses the imagery of planning a journey to introduce the process of action planning and the simple ten-step visual action planning tool that participants will use in the exercise.



SHORT TALK

- **EXPLAIN THE EXERCISE** (7 MIN)

Explain the following:

In the 'What's the problem?' exercise, we chose problems and divided into groups. Now each group will try to develop an action plan to tackle their problem, using the 'Our Change Journey' model we heard about in the presentation. These action plans could be real plans, that we want to implement after the training, or practice action plans that help us learn action planning skills we can apply later.

On the group tables, you will find a long flipchart sheet on which to draw and write your change journey. You will also find copies of the 'Our change journey' template to help you and as a handout for you to take home.

Your task is to create an action plan to tackle your group's problem on your flipchart sheets, using the different elements of the change journey model. You will have about 1 hour and 10 minutes in total to do this.

Show slide 25 while explaining the following:

The steps to take to make your plan are:

1. Decide who the changemakers are: who are the group of people or organisation who will implement the plan?
 2. Write the main problem that your group has been given to work with.
 3. Identify concrete attitudes, behaviours or rules that you want to change.
 4. Create a goal to mirror your problem.
 5. Identify the desired attitudes, behaviours and rules.
 6. Add the other 'people' involved – the people affected; the people, organisations or authorities who are part of the problem; and those with the power to make a difference.
 7. Choose and add your tactics and the main activities to be done in order to achieve the goal.
 8. Identify a few key practical steps needed to implement these activities.
 9. Identify what your messages are to the different people involved. What arguments will convince them?
 10. And finally, think about what risks you might face along the way.
- You don't have to do things in this order, but it's probably helpful!

Emphasise the following:

It would be possible to spend a long time reflecting on each question, but the aim of this exercise is to create the 'bones' of a plan – the big picture, which we can reflect on and develop more later if we decide to implement it.

Aim to spend about 8 minutes on each part! Remember this is a brainstorm of a rough plan! Write down your spontaneous thoughts and ideas and don't spend time formulating things carefully – a roughly formulated single sentence, or a few bullet points is enough.

And don't forget the action ideas we've already formulated in previous exercises! Perhaps you can use one or two of them in your plan.

Explain that after the groupwork, each group will have 5 minutes to present their 'change journey' to the rest of the group, followed by 10 to 15 minutes of discussion of their plan.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 2 H 10 MIN (APPROX)

- **GROUPWORK** (1 H 10 MIN)

Send everyone to their groups to start working. Go from group to group, checking they have understood what they need to do.

Keep time! Remind people to move on to the next question after 10 minutes and again at regular intervals after that.

Keep an eye on the groups – checking that they are staying on topic and on track, encouraging and giving them tips as best you can. If a group is stuck with a question you can't help with, suggest they move on to another step in the action planning process and come back to that issue later.

- **PRESENTATIONS AND FEEDBACK** (15-20 MIN/GROUP)

Invite each group in turn to present (5 min) and receive feedback (max 15 min).

Make it clear that the aim of this discussion is to support, encourage and help one another, developing our ideas together. It is not a competition to see who has the best action plan – none of us have had time to come up with the perfect plan!

Use the following questions to lead the feedback discussion:

- What do you like about this action plan?
- Do you have any suggestions for how to make the plan even better? For example, additional people we could work together with or other tactics that could be used.
- Would any of the tactics/actions be ineffective, unrealistic, or too risky?
- Do you think the tactics/actions planned would result in achieving the goals of changed attitudes, behaviours and rules or in progress towards that goal?

Be strict with time keeping, ensuring every group gets a fair chance to present and get feedback.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Congratulate participants on their excellent work and their engagement. Emphasise that, regardless of whether they intend to use their action plan or not, they have learnt a lot of action planning skills that they can use in all kinds of change making processes they are involved in in the future.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers

TIP! Why not schedule a break or introduce an energiser at this point? The 'Fistfight' game on page 22 works particularly well with this exercise.

TIP! If all the groups are working on the same problem, shorten the process, allowing less time for discussion of each individual plan and more time for a collective assessment of the plans.



'Our change journey'

“A fun session! Participants enjoyed developing their change journey maps. They all had concrete ideas about what they want to do to make change after the course is finished.”

HIDAYA DUDE, FACILITATOR, TANZANIA

“The activities in the action planning sessions help the participants sharpen their skills – they’ll be more effective as changemakers as a result.”

HAMMAM HADDAD, FACILITATOR, JORDAN

“The participants decided to form a group that’s going to continue to work together to promote FORB in the city through advocacy, awareness raising and mobilisation.”

UKOHA NGWOBIA, FACILITATOR, NIGERIA



The double diamond 3 h 30 min

ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

BRAINSTORM

MULTI-FORMAT EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

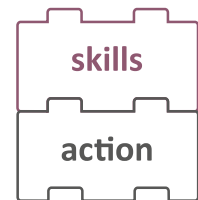
Any.

PURPOSE

To help participants develop action planning skills by practicing creative thinking, critical analysis, idea development, and step-by-step planning.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise introduces the double diamond model of structured idea development for action planning. Participants start by choosing a specific freedom of religion or belief (FORB) problem and brainstorming different ideas for tackling the problem. They then move on to select the best ideas and further develop them. In the last stage of the exercise, they choose one action idea and formulate a step-by-step action plan for it. This is a long exercise so you will need include breaks and energisers!



NOTE

Participants should have taken part in context analysis and problem identification exercises prior to doing this exercise e.g., '[The problem tree](#)' on page 158, '[The force-field](#)' on page 161, or '[What's the problem](#)' on page 175. This exercise is an alternative to '[Our change journey](#)' on page 178.

Instructions

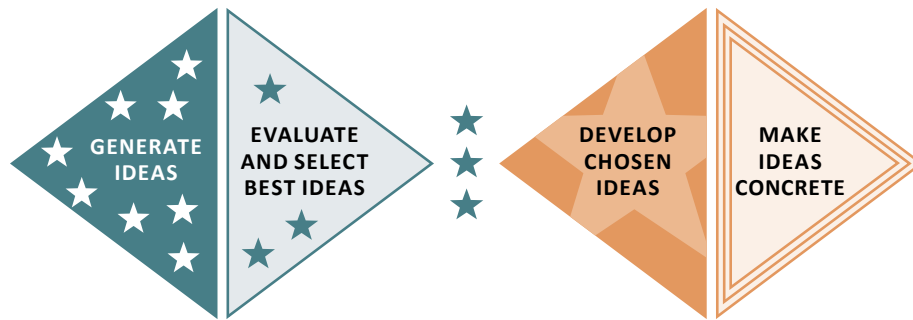
RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets containing the results of earlier context analysis/ problem identification exercises.
- Flipchart sheets and marker pens.
- Plenty of post-it notes and ordinary pens.
- A basket or hat and enough slips of paper for one per participant.
- Handout of the [action plan template](#) for each participant.

Find the handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/double-diamond-template.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare a flipchart sheet or whiteboard with the double diamond model (see illustration below).
- Prepare three flipchart sheets with the headings 'Generate ideas', 'Step-by-step plan' and 'Monitoring'.
- Prepare a flipchart sheet with the guiding questions for developing ideas (see 'groupwork – develop ideas' below).



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 8 MIN

Point to the diagram and explain the following:

In this session we are going to develop an action plan for addressing a problem using the double diamond tool. The double diamond tool is a creative process for idea development that starts with a problem question.

We're going to start by choosing a specific problem related to FORB that we would like to tackle. Then we are going to go through a four-phase process:

1. **GENERATE IDEAS:** We are going to brainstorm as many different ideas as possible, thinking outside and inside the box. No idea is too ambitious or crazy at this stage!
2. **EVALUATE AND SELECT IDEAS:** Then we are going to evaluate the ideas, choosing a few that have the most potential.
3. **DEVELOP IDEAS:** In small groups, we will then develop the chosen ideas more fully, once again thinking creatively both inside and outside the box.
4. **MAKE IDEAS CONCRETE:** Finally, we are going to choose one or two ideas to fully formulate and test.

This four-stage process works by separating the creative from the analytical stages of the action planning process. This helps to make sure that everyone is at the same place at the same time – first opening up for creativity and then thinking critically and evaluating the ideas.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 3 H 20 MIN

• CHOOSE A PROBLEM (20 MIN)

Point to flipcharts with the results of previously conducted context analysis/ problem identification exercises. Of the problems previously identified, ask the group to discuss and agree on one specific problem that they want to work on. Encourage them to be as specific as possible in defining the problem – the more specific they are the easier action planning becomes!

For example, instead of saying that the problem is 'intolerance' they could say:

- Minority children are being bullied at the local school, or
- Local religious or political leaders or local media are using hate speech.
- Instead of saying minority (or all) women are vulnerable, they might say:
 - High rates of school dropout among (minority) girls,
 - Street harassment, especially of minority women, or
 - Early and forced marriage.
- And instead of saying government discrimination they might say:
 - Local police do not investigate crimes against people from minorities properly, or
 - Community X can't get permission to build a place of worship.

Write the problem chosen above the double diamond model on the whiteboard/flipchart, in the following format: 'How can we contribute to solving the problem of...?'

- **GENERATE IDEAS IN PLENARY** (20 MIN)

Stick the flipchart headed 'generate ideas' up on the wall. Hand out plenty of post-it notes and pens. Invite participants to think quietly for 3 minutes, writing down any ideas they come up with on the post-it notes. Encourage them to be creative and remind them that at this stage there is no such thing as a bad idea!

Invite participants up to the flipchart one by one, to briefly explain the idea and stick it to the flip-chart. If someone has had the same idea before them, they can stick their post-it on top of the original one.

After everybody has contributed at least one idea, ask if anyone has any more ideas. Sometimes hearing other peoples' ideas can spark more ideas. Write those up on post-it notes and stick them on the flipchart too.

- **EVALUATE AND SELECT IDEAS IN PLENARY** (20 MIN)

Lead the discussion by asking the following guiding questions:

- Which ideas do you like the best?
- Which ideas do we think have the greatest potential to contribute to solving the problem and why?
- Which ideas do we think we could further develop?

Continue until the group has reached a consensus on four ideas to further develop.

- **GROUPWORK – DEVELOP IDEAS** (45 MIN)

Divide participants into four groups and allocate an idea to each group to further develop. Give each group flipchart sheets and pens. Display the following guiding questions on a flipchart or PowerPoint:

- How will your idea contribute to solving the problem? What positive change will it bring about?
- Break your idea down into activities – what, and with whom.
- Which of these would be the main activity?
- What is the key message behind your idea? How would you communicate this?
- Who can help to implement this idea? Think about your allies. What role do you want them to have?
- Are there any risks associated with your idea? Who might oppose the idea? What could you do to mitigate those risks?

Ask each group to appoint a spokesperson to present their ideas back to plenary. Explain that each group will have 5 minutes to present their idea to the rest of the group, followed by plenary discussion of the idea for a further 10 minutes and that once all groups have presented, we will vote for our favourite idea to take to the next stage of the process.

- **PRESENTATIONS AND FEEDBACK** (60 MIN)

Invite each group in turn to present (5 min) and receive feedback (10 min max). Use the following questions to lead the feedback discussion:

- What do you like about this idea?
- Do you have any suggestions for how to make it even better?
- Does anything about it seem unrealistic, or unachievable?

Be strict with time keeping, ensuring every group gets a fair chance to present and get feedback.

- **VOTE AND CHOOSE** (5 MIN)

Hand out the slips of paper and ask everyone to vote anonymously for their favourite idea that they would like to see turned into a concrete action plan. Count the votes to find the favourite idea to use in the final stage of the double diamond process – making ideas concrete.

TIP! Why not schedule a break or introduce an energiser at this point? Check out the '[Icebreakers and energisers](#)' section on page 10 for inspiration.

Emphasise that even if the idea you voted for hasn't been chosen, you can use the action planning skills we have been learning today to develop a concrete plan at a later date.

• **PLENARY DISCUSSION – MAKE IDEAS CONCRETE** (30 MIN)

Stick up the flipchart sheets headed 'Step-by-step plan' and 'Monitoring' and hand out the action plan template.

Explain the following:

- As you will realise from looking at the handout, you have already been working through the action plan template for four different ideas! Now we are going to finish the process together, focusing on your favourite idea.
- First, we will aim to come up with a step-by-step plan together. Then, we will come up with some ideas for monitoring our plan – how will we know if it is actually working, or if we need to adapt it?
- We won't have time to cover all this in great depth today, but after this training you can take the ideas and the template away with you and develop your action plan more fully.

For the step-by-step plan, lead the discussion with these questions:

- What is the main activity linked to your favourite idea?
- Let's consider the who, what, when and how for that activity, by listing the key steps. What needs to happen first? Who should do that, and when? Solicit answers from the group, then seek consensus before writing it up on the flipchart sheet. For example, ask, 'Can anyone see a step that needs to happen before that?'
- Remind participants that they are not trying to capture every single detail, just the key steps in the right order. Write these up on the flipchart sheet.

For monitoring, lead the discussion with these questions:

- Let's stay focused on the main activity for now, so that we have one complete example. What are the signs of change we hope to see as a result of that activity?
- How will we know if this activity is having the desired effect? Is there some way in which this will be visible? What can we do to check?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Congratulate participants on their excellent ideas and engagement. Say that you hope they found both the double diamond tool and the action planning template useful, and something they can continue to use in the future.

TIP! Sometimes participants find it difficult to come up with monitoring activities. Prepare a few examples that are relevant to the context.

Source

Adapted from the double diamond model popularised by the British Design Council.

Challenging pillars of power 2 h 45 min



About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

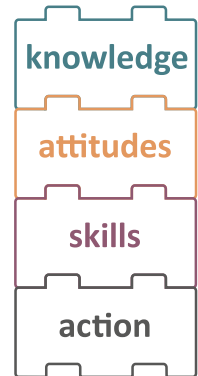
Best suited to civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders.

PURPOSE

- To enable participants to deepen their understanding of a specific freedom of religion or belief (FORB) violation in their context by applying key concepts from the theory of non-violent struggle.
- To help participants develop strategic action planning skills.

DESCRIPTION

A groupwork exercise in which participants critically analyse sources of power and 'pillars' of power that perpetuate a specific violation of FORB in their context and strategize ways of tackling the violation by weakening those pillars of power. Prior to this exercise, participants should have identified some specific FORB problems they wish to analyse/develop action plans for, for example using '[The problem tree](#)', page 158 or the '[What's the problem](#)', page 175.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets and marker pens in different colours.
- [Handout/poster materials](#) on human rights tactics / non-violent methods.

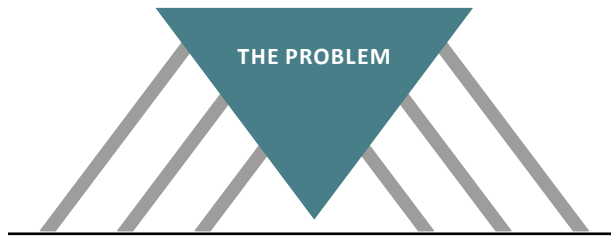
Find the handout and posters at

www.forb-learning.org/exercises/pillars-of-power.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare a knowledge input on the theory of non-violent struggle (suggested contents provided below). Make sure to have in mind two or three contextually relevant examples of 'pillars' of power and their sources of power.
- Prepare a brief input on human rights tactics/non-violent methods with the aid of the following materials (or other materials of your choice): 'Talking tactics' posters and presentation or the '198 non-violent methods' handout.
- Four pre-prepared flipchart sheets with the diagram below.
- Pre-prepared flipchart sheets with the six steps of the process (see below) written up. Keep these covered at the start of the session, and only reveal them one by one.
- Choose which framework for tackling the problem you will use with your target audience (non-violent methods, human rights tactics, or another framework illustrating strategies), choosing the framework that best matches the organisational vision and mission. Prepare your knowledge input and handouts/posters accordingly.

TIP! Revealing steps in a process one-by-one prevents participants from becoming overwhelmed and keeps them focused on the task at hand.

**HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE** 14 MIN

Give the following short input while drawing/referring to the diagram:

Human rights violations can only persist because power structures support, enable or tolerate them. If power structures in society didn't at least tolerate human rights violations, violations would only ever be small scale and sporadic because systems would be reformed to prevent them and those who commit violations would be punished.

So, who has power in relation to violations in our context? A key concept in the theory of nonviolent struggle is the concept of 'PILLARS OF POWER'. Society has many structures, or pillars, of power. These pillars are comprised of institutions, groups of people and ways of thinking – attitudes. In relation to FORB, institutions could, for example be state or religious institutions and the majority group might have attitudes that accept or justify discrimination against minorities.

Every society has its own pillars, which operate at all levels of society. For example:

- Police and security agencies
- Military, and other coercive structures
- Political parties
- Judiciary
- Civil service and bureaucracy
- Educational system that produces and controls knowledge
- Organized religion – leadership structures as well as ideas and values
- Media – who manage the provision of information to people
- Business community
- Student unions, workers unions, labour organisations.

These pillars have different SOURCES OF POWER by which powerholders ensure cooperation or obedience:

- Authority and legitimacy: The ability to issue a command and people obey – law, status or practice that ensures allegiance, support and loyalty. The state often holds authority and loyalty, but other actors can also have this type of influence – for example allegiances to religious leaderships and institutions.
- Human resources: Strength and power lies also in the number of people. Numbers count.
- Skills and knowledge: Practical and technical know-how and understanding is a source of power.
- Material resources: Weapons, money, other assets such as buildings, equipment, land, natural resources – for example, controlling water is power.
- Sanctions: Capacity to enforce or threaten with punishment or approval physically, politically, economically, and/or psychologically.
- Intangible factors: Symbols (flags, emblems) cultural or religious beliefs and other psychological, traditional, ideological, religious or cultural factors that make people obey and assist and respect.

**SHORT TALK**

Remember that human rights violations only persist because the pillars of power support, enable or tolerate them. So how do we change that? The theory of nonviolent struggle is based on the idea that all these pillars of power – all political relationships and systems of power, from the national to the grassroots-level – rely on the obedience, cooperation or acceptance of individuals, groups, and organisations. Power holders have no power if people do not give them power. Non-violent campaigns try to end human rights violations by withholding or weakening the sources of power that institutions, systems or groups rely on.

Different pillars of power (institutions, groups or majoritarian ideas) rely on different sources of power – for example the business community has material resources, while religious leaderships often hold legitimacy and influence people's ideas and behaviour. Power is pluralistic, taking different forms and changing over time. So different kinds of actions – from protests, to boycotting companies, to social media campaigns, can help weaken different sources of power and the weaken or change the institutions, groups and attitudes that rely on them.

Before running the exercise, check the participants have understood the key concepts by asking for examples of actors and attitudes that constitute the pillars of power in their context and what their sources of power might be.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 2 H 30 MIN

• **GROUPWORK – ANALYSIS** (40 MIN)

Divide the participants into four groups. Give each group a pre-prepared flipchart sheet and marker pens. Point to the flipchart sheet with the steps of the process written up. Reveal step one and explain the following:

STEP 1: Identify a specific FORB problem that you want to tackle. Write this in the triangle space. 5 MIN

Ask each group to discuss and agree one specific problem they want to work on and write this up in the triangle on their flipchart diagram. (Ideally, the participants should have identified specific problems they would like to work on in prior exercises).

Remember to encourage the group to be as specific as possible in defining the problem. For example, instead of saying that the problem is 'intolerance' they could say:

- Minority children are being bullied at the local school, or
- Local religious or political leaders or local media are using hate speech.

Instead of saying minority (or all) women are vulnerable, they might say:

- High rates of school dropout among (minority) girls,
- Street harassment, especially of minority women, or
- Early and forced marriage.

And instead of saying government discrimination they might say:

- Local police do not investigate crimes against people from minorities properly, or
- Community X can't get permission to build a place of worship.

After the groups have completed this step, reveal step 2 on the flipchart sheet:

STEP 2: What would you like to see instead of the violation? Try to be specific in describing the solution. Write this up on your flipchart sheet. 5 MIN

After the groups have completed this step, reveal step 3 on the flipchart sheet:

STEP 3: What pillars of power (institutions, groups or ideas) prop up this problem and what are their sources of power? Write these in two different colours (one for pillars, one for sources) in the diagonal pillars. 30 MIN

- **KNOWLEGE INPUT** (10 MIN)

Before introducing step four, give a brief overview of approaches to tackling the problem i.e., non-violent methods, human rights tactics, or other strategies that fit within the organisational vision and mission.

You could share handouts of '198 ideas for non-violent action' or use the ready-made Local Changemakers Course PowerPoint presentation 'Talking tactics' and put the accompanying tactics posters up on a wall for participants to look for a few minutes.

- **GROUPWORK – IDENTIFY METHODS / TACTICS / STRATEGIES** (50 MIN)

Continue the groupwork with the following steps, revealing one at a time:

STEP 4: What could your group do to change the power structures upholding this injustice? Identify methods/tactics/strategies they could use to weaken or bring down each pillar and list these under each pillar on your diagram. 30 MIN

STEP 5: Which pillar is most significant? Is there a pillar that would be most strategic for your group to tackle first, due to your capacity/expertise/resources? Highlight this on your diagram. 10 MIN

STEP 6: Which method/tactic/strategy would be the best starting point for tackling that particular pillar? Who could be your allies on this? Expand on this under that pillar. 10 MIN

Ask each group to appoint a spokesperson who will briefly present the problem, their solution, the most significant pillar and sources of power, and their chosen method/tactic/strategy for tackling this along with allies.

- **GROUP PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY DISCUSSION** (50 MIN)

Invite each spokesperson to present their group's work (5 min/group, plus 5 min question and answer session from the rest of the participants).

Lead a brief plenary discussion with the following questions:

- What reflections or insights about your context are you taking away from this exercise?
- Which of the tactics / methods / strategies proposed by the different groups did you think would be most effective? Why?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank the participants for their hard work and ideas. Say that you hope they have been inspired to put some of their ideas into action!

Source

Adapted from Pillars of Power <https://turningtide.org.uk/toolkit/pillars-of-power/> and Non-violent struggle – 50 crucial points by CANVAS (2006).



SHORT TALK

TIP! Why not schedule a break or introduce an energiser at this point? Check out the '[Icebreakers and energisers](#)' section on page 10 for inspiration.

Action planning with the gender integration continuum 2 h 40 min



ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

GROUPWORK
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to civil society organisations/human rights defenders or public policy makers. This exercise requires a strong understanding of FORB and of gender equality on the part of both participants and the facilitator.

PURPOSE

- To learn about the gender integration continuum as a tool for integrating gender into FORB programming/action planning.
- To support participants to adopt gender aware approaches to tackling freedom of religion or belief (FORB) related issues.

DESCRIPTION

Participants work together to complete an action plan template, incorporating gender aware approaches. This exercise works well as a follow-up to problem identification exercises such as '[The problem tree](#)' exercise on page 158 and '[What's the problem?](#)' on page 175 and as a follow up to exercises in the FORB and gender chapter of this toolkit (page 96) e.g., '[FORB and gender equality](#)', '[FORB and family law](#)' or '[The expert advisors](#)'.



Instructions

RESOURCES

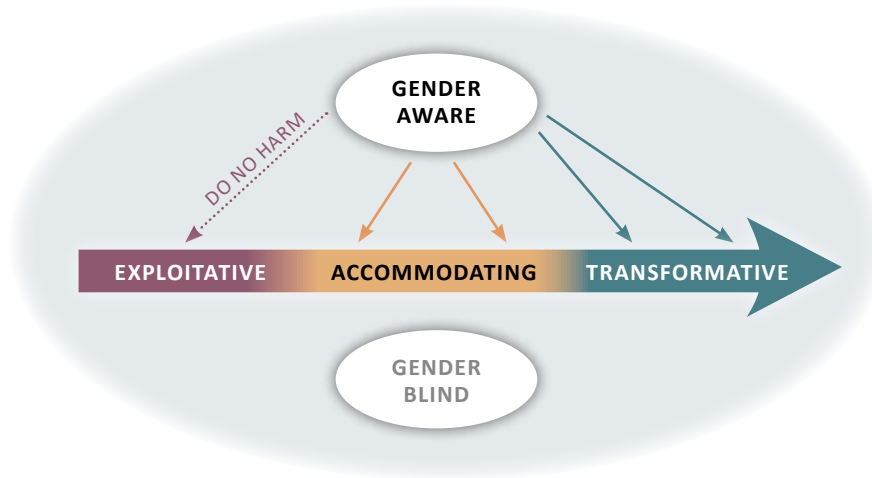
- Enough copies of the '[Action plan](#)' template for each participant.
- Enough copies of the '[Gender integration continuum action ideas](#)' handout for each participant.
- Flipchart sheets and marker pens.
- PowerPoint or other form of knowledge input on gender transformative approaches.

Find the template and handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/gender-integration-continuum.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare a knowledge input on gender transformative approaches and ideas for action-planning (suggested content below).
- Prepare some examples of gender-blind/exploitative, gender accommodating and gender transformative actions from your own context.
- Write up the guiding questions on a flipchart sheet (see below).

GENDER INTEGRATION CONTINUUM



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 19 MIN

- **KNOWLEDGE INPUT – THE GENDER INTEGRATION CONTINUUM** (9 MIN)

The gender integration continuum is a tool for analysing the way in which projects and programmes manage gender norms and inequities. As such it is a relevant tool for action-planning and programme design related to FORB.

The framework helps us to distinguish between ‘gender blind’ FORB action-plans or programmes, which are designed without analysis of the differences in the FORB violations faced by men and women, or of the social and political roles, expectations, responsibilities, rights, and power dynamics between and among women and men, and ‘gender aware’ action-planning, which examines and addresses those violations, roles and power dynamics.

Gender aware action-planning can be evaluated along a continuum from exploitive to transformative. Exploitive ‘gender aware’ initiatives make use of existing inequalities and reinforce stereotypes. Even if the intention is to promote a positive outcome, the approach is harmful and can undermine the objective and exacerbate inequalities in the long term.

Effective gender aware actions fall on the continuum between accommodating and transformative. Accommodating means the action idea works around existing gender inequalities to try to improve the situation without directly challenging power dynamics. Transformative actions critically challenge gender norms, strengthen systems that support gender equality, change inequitable gender norms, and strengthen equitable gender norms.

The overall objective of gender integration in programming and action-planning for FORB is to ensure that women’s experiences of FORB violations are recognised and that activities contribute to women being empowered to claim and gain full access to the right. This generally involves moving toward gender-transformative actions – gradually challenging existing gender inequities and promoting positive changes in the gender roles, norms, and power dynamics that result in violations and a lack of freedom.

Let’s look at some examples:

- An all-male delegation of faith leaders meets with the Minister of Religious Affairs (also a man) to lobby him on the need to protect women from the risk of religious conversion through marriage (gender blind/exploitative).



SHORT TALK

TIP! Swap these examples for ones relevant to your context!

- A civil society organisation conducts consultations with minority women’s groups before conducting research on violations of the right to FORB and publishing a report on the findings (gender accommodating).
 - A network of civil society organisations works together to establish a female religious leadership forum, bringing together representatives from diverse faith traditions and geographical areas, committed to the promotion of both FORB and gender equality (gender transformative).
- **DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)
Invite comments and questions on the presentation, then ask follow-up questions:
 - Can you think of any examples of FORB action/programming that is gender blind or exploitative from your context?
 - Can you think of any good examples of FORB action/programming that is gender accommodating or gender transformative from your context? Allow time for sharing of any inspirational examples.
 - In relation to issues you work on, do you think a gender transformative approach is possible in your context, or is it more advisable to focus on a gender accommodating approach?

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 2 H 20 MIN

- **GROUPWORK** (1 H 30 MIN)

Divide participants into small groups and hand out flipchart sheets and marker pens. Give each participant a copy of ‘Action plan’ template and the ‘Ideas for action planning’ handout.

Tell groups that their task is to develop a gender aware action plan for tackling a FORB and gender related problem. They should do this by recreating the action plan template on their flipchart sheets and filling it in. Go through the various elements of the action plan template and point to the groupwork questions displayed on the flipchart sheet, remind participants of the gender integration continuum.

GROUPWORK QUESTIONS

- **PROBLEM:** Choose a specific FORB and gender equality issue that you want to tackle. Be as specific as possible – what are the problematic attitudes, behaviours and rules?
 - **GOAL:** What would gender transformative change look like in relation to this issue? For example, a positive change in gender norms, power dynamics or policies within an institution (attitudes, behaviours, rules).
 - **TACTICS/STEPS:** Can you draw on any of the suggested activities from the handout? Or adapt your own ideas so that they are gender aware (either gender accommodating or gender transformative)?
 - **ALLIES:** Are there women's groups you want to work with? Or male faith leaders who actively support gender equality? Or progressive scholars who support gender-sensitive religious interpretations?
 - How will we know if this action plan is having the desired effect? Is there some way in which this will be visible? What can we do to check?
- **GROUP PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY DISCUSSION** (50 MIN)
Invite each group in turn to present and receive feedback from the plenary (maximum 10 min/group).

Make it clear that the aim of this discussion is to support, encourage and help one another, developing our ideas together. It is not a competition to see who has the best action plan – none of us have had time to come up with the perfect plan!

TIP! A ready-made PowerPoint presentation/script introducing the action planning model is available in multiple languages in Session 8 of the [Local Changemakers Course](#).

TIP! Why not schedule a break or introduce an energiser at this point? ‘[Emoticons](#)’ on page 25 works particularly well with this exercise.

Use the following questions to lead the feedback discussion:

- What do you like about this action plan?
- Do you have any suggestions for how to make any part of the plan more gender transformative?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Congratulate participants on their excellent work and their engagement. Emphasise that, regardless of whether they intend to use their action plan or not, they have learnt gender sensitive action planning skills that they can use in all kinds of change making processes they are involved in in the future. Outline next steps in accordance with the plan for your training and the process to follow it.

Source

Adapted from the Gender Integration Continuum training module, Interagency Gender Working Group, the FORB Learning Platform's online course 'FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies?', www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender and the 'Our change journey' exercise from the Local Changemakers Course, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers.

Reforming family law 3 h 10 min



ACTION PLANNING FOR FORB

GROUPWORK
GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to civil society organisations, human rights defenders, religious communities and legislators with an interest in legal reform. The exercise assumes both participants and the facilitator have a strong prior understanding of freedom of religion or belief (FORB), of gender equality, and of religious family/personal status laws. It also assumes that participants already recognise needs for legal reform in their context and have identified areas of reform they would wish to see.

Not suitable for introducing the topic of family law and gender to audiences who have not yet recognised such needs or oppose the idea of reform.

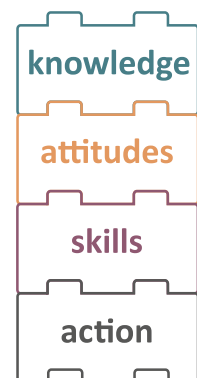
PURPOSE

- To enable participants to explore different approaches to the reform of religious family/personal status laws.
- To enable participants to develop ideas for action and plan effective, contextualised strategies for work to reform religious family/personal status laws.

DESCRIPTION

A four-part exercise including a knowledge input and plenary discussion; exploration of case studies in buzz groups; groupwork in which participants develop an action plan for the reform of a religious family/personal status law in their context; the presentation and discussion of action plans in plenary.

This exercise works well as a follow-up to '[The problem tree](#)' exercise on page 158, '[What's the problem?](#)' on page 175 and '[FORB and family law](#)' on page 110.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Suggested contents for a [knowledge input](#).
- One copy of the '[Action plan template](#)' per participant.
- One copy of the handout '[Reforming family law: Ideas for action planning](#)' per participant.
- Flipchart sheets and marker pens
- PowerPoint or other form of knowledge input on reform of religious family/personal status laws.
- Case study materials

Find the template, handout and case studies at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/reforming-laws.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Prepare a knowledge input on approaches to reform of religious family/personal status laws (suggested contents can be found [here](#)).
- Choose case study materials relevant for your context from the following:
 - Short film on Muslim Sharia law by Musawah, challenging the idea that religious family/personal status laws are divine and therefore not possible to change.
 - PowerPoint slides on reform of Tunisian family/personal status law.
 - PowerPoint slides on reform of Christian family/personal status law in India.
 - PowerPoint slide and short film on implementing reformed family/personal status law in the Lutheran church, Palestine.
- Write up the guiding questions for the groupwork on a flipchart sheet (see below).

**OPTIONAL EXTRA: BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE!**

Strengthen your knowledge on the issues by taking the FORB Learning Platform's free, on-demand mini-course: 'FORB and gender equality – Enemies or allies?', which includes a module on religious family law. www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 10-15 MIN

Start the exercise with a knowledge input on religious family/personal status law, including contextually relevant needs for reform (as well as any positive aspects of current legislation) and approaches to reform (religious approaches, secular approaches and legal approaches). Find some suggested contents for a presentation script for you to adapt and use at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/reforming-laws-infosheet

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 2 H 50 MIN (PLUS A BREAK)

- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (15 MIN)
Invite comments and questions on the presentation, then lead a plenary discussion with the help of the following questions:
 - What are the main challenges or obstacles to reform?
 - What are some of the common arguments against reform in our context? How might we respond?
 - Which of the approaches to reform presented (religious/secular/legal) are already being used by actors in our context?
 - What advantages and disadvantages do you see with each approach?
 - Have any reforms that contribute to gender equality been made already? How did that happen – which approaches were used?
- **CASE STUDIES AND BUZZ GROUPS** (15 MIN)
Briefly present/screen your chosen case study or studies. Ask participants to get into threes with people sitting next to them and discuss:
 - Is there anything we can learn from the case studies that is relevant for our context?
 - Do they spark any ideas for action we could take towards reform?
- **GROUPWORK** (1 H 30 MIN)
Divide participants into small groups, giving each group flipchart sheets and marker pens to record their ideas. Give each participant a copy of the 'Action plan template' and the 'Ideas for action planning' handout.

**SHORT TALK**

TIP! A ready-made PowerPoint presentation and script introducing the action planning model is available in multiple languages in Session 8 of the Local Changemakers Course. www.forb-learning.org/changemakers.

Explain that the task of the groups is to develop an action plan for reform of a family/personal status law that they consider to be problematic. Go through each section of the action plan template to explain it, pointing to the guiding questions displayed on the flipchart sheet as you do so. Tell participants that they have 1 hour 30 minutes to develop their action plan.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- **PROBLEM:** What specific family/personal status law do you wish to reform?
- **GOAL:** What reform do we wish to see put in place?
- **TACTICS:** Which approach to reform do you think would work best
 - religious/secular/legal/multi-faceted approach?
- **STEPS:** What would be a positive step towards reform of the laws? What would that change/step look like? Can you draw on any of the suggested activities or approaches from the handout?
- **ALLIES:** Are there women's groups you want to work with? Progressive scholars who support gender-sensitive religious interpretations? Legislators or judges who wish to see reform?
- How will we know if this action plan is having the desired effect? Is there some way in which this will be visible? What can we do to check?

• **GROUP PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY DISCUSSION** (50 MIN)

Invite each group in turn to present and receive feedback from the plenary (maximum 10 min/group).

Use the following questions to lead the feedback discussion:

- What do you like about this action plan?
- Do you have any suggestions for how to make it even better?

After all the presentations have been made and discussed, highlight any common themes or ideas coming from the presentations.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 5 MIN

Congratulate participants on their excellent work and engagement in the discussions. Outline next steps in accordance with the plan for your training and the process to follow it.

Source

Adapted from the FORB Learning Platform's online course, 'FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies?' www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender

TIP! Why not take a break or introduce an energiser at this point? Check out the '[Icebreakers and energisers](#)' section on page 10 for inspiration.

Evaluation and follow-up

This collection of exercises is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned and what they will do as a result of taking part in the training. The exercises also provide you as the facilitator with opportunities to assess whether you have met your learning objectives and to receive feedback that can influence how you and your organisation work in the future.

Evaluation is an ongoing process. This process begins well before the training, with participant needs assessment and the definition of learning objectives (see [pages 278-283](#) for guidance). It continues during the training, with ongoing feedback from participants to help you tweak the contents and format to their needs. End of training evaluation helps participants reflect on what they have learned from the training as a whole and helps you begin to assess the degree to which your learning objectives have been achieved. This process continues with follow-up some time after the training. During follow up you have an opportunity to assess impact and outcomes - what difference has the training made?

In this chapter you can find participatory exercises to help you evaluate and participants reflect on what they have gained in terms of knowledge, attitudes, skills and action.



Exercise overview

The first two exercises in the chapter can be used during or at the end of the training and invite participants to give open and honest feedback about particular aspects.

- **ON TARGET** Participants put dots or stickers on a 'target' to indicate the extent to which they agree with different statements about the training.
- **COMPLETE THE STATEMENTS** Participants complete pre-prepared statements designed to help the facilitator gain feedback.

The following three exercises are designed for end of training evaluation and allow participants to reflect on and share what they have gained in terms of knowledge, attitudes, skills, action plans or contacts.

- **MY BACKPACK IS FULL OF...** Participants draw backpacks and fill them by writing or drawing all the things they take with them from the training.
- **HEAD, HEART, HANDS** Participants write their reflections inside images of a head, heart and hand.
- **LETTER TO MYSELF** Connecting end of training evaluation with follow up, this is a private reflection and personal commitment exercise in which participants write letters to themselves that the facilitator sends to them later.

The final exercise is a follow up exercise that helps the facilitator to assess impact and outcomes.

- **RIPPLES OF CHANGE** Used 6 months to a year after the training, this exercise uses a participatory methodology to help trainees to identify positive changes that can be linked back to the training.



On target 20 min

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

FEEDBACK EXERCISE

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any.

PURPOSE

- To enable participants to give open and honest feedback about their experience of the training.
- To provide the facilitator with feedback on particular aspects of the training.

DESCRIPTION

A very simple participatory evaluation exercise, which is particularly good for groups that need support in talking freely. A target drawing is used to capture and visually display data about how 'on the mark' participants perceived particular aspects of the training. This exercise can be used either after a specific session/day or at the end of the training (see alternative methodology).



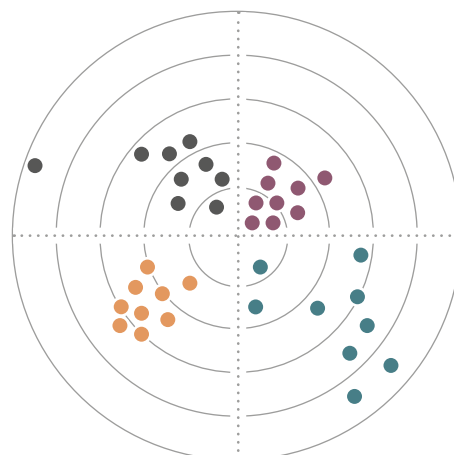
Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheet and marker pens.
- Dot stickers (or small post-it notes or pens) in four different colours.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Draw a large target with four quarters on a flipchart sheet (see illustration).
- Develop four different statements about the session/day, based on what you would like to receive feedback on, and allocate a colour to each one. For example:
 - **BLUE:** The problem analysis tool we tried today will be useful for my work.
 - **RED:** Today's learning sessions on freedom of religion or belief were relevant to my context.
 - **GREEN:** Enough time was allocated for each activity.
 - **YELLOW:** I had plenty of opportunities to share my experiences and knowledge with others during today's activities.



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Explain to participants that they are going to participate in an evaluation activity to give feedback on the day. Their task is to indicate their response to four statements by sticking coloured dots on the target you have prepared. Provide each learner with four different coloured dots and explain that each colour corresponds to a different statement.

Explain that as you read each statement, they should place the corresponding coloured dot in the appropriate section of the target, placing it close to the centre if they strongly agree with the statement, and close to the outer ring if they strongly disagree.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 15 MIN

- **DOTS ON TARGET** (5 MIN)

Read each statement and invite the participants to come up and place their dots on the target.

- **QUICK PLENARY DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

After you have gone through all the statements ask the participants to look at the target to see how the session/day/training was rated. The clusters of coloured dots should clearly indicate the group's rating of the day's work. Ask them to share and comment on their observations.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank the participants for their valuable feedback.

TIP! Document the responses after the session as quantitative data to inform your overall evaluation of the training.

**ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY**

- **VOTE WITH YOUR FEET:** Instead of using coloured dots on a flipchart, use chalk to create a huge 4-ring target on the floor, labelling the rings poor, average, good and excellent. As you read each statement out participants should move to stand on the appropriate part of the target. Ask some people to comment on why they have chosen to stand in the different rings.
- **END-OF-TRAINING:** For an end-of-training participatory evaluation, make four targets with four questions each – for example, one target for logistics, one for facilitation, one for contents and one for learning objectives. Prepare four questions for each target and ask participants to respond to all 16 questions on all four targets in one go. By looking at the spread of dots on the different targets, you can quickly see what you need to focus your plenary discussion on in order to get more in-depth feedback on problems or more detail about what they think went well and why. This is a good way of evaluating many aspects quickly, in a participatory way. (Add 5 minutes to the time for 'dots on target' and 10 minutes to the time allowed for plenary discussion.)

Source

Adapted from the FORB Learning Platform's online training of the trainers' course.
www.forb-learning.org/courses/tot

Complete the statements 35 min



EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

FEEDBACK EXERCISE

PLENARY EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any.

PURPOSE

- To enable participants to give open and honest feedback about their experience of the training.
- To provide the facilitator with feedback on particular aspects of the training.

DESCRIPTION

A very simple participatory evaluation exercise, which is good for capturing qualitative data and feedback about the training.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets.
- Plenty of post-it notes and pens.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Identify areas that you would like feedback on and create statements that you would like participants to complete (see below for examples).
- Prepare several flipchart sheets, each with a different statement written at the top and plenty of room for participants to add post-it notes.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Explain that participants are going to take part in an evaluation exercise in which they provide feedback about the training by completing a set of statements. Distribute post-it notes and pens to the participants and display the flipchart sheets with your chosen statements written up. For example:

- The most important thing I have learnt in this training is...
- The most useful activities in this training were...
- The facilitator was...
- The main thing that could be improved in this training is...
- One key thing the facilitator could do better is...
- Something I wish we had more time for is...
- As a result of this training, I will...

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 30 MIN

• INDIVIDUAL FEEDBACK (20 MIN)

Ask participants to complete each statement on a separate post-it note and to stick the notes to the appropriate flipchart.

- **PLENARY DISCUSSION** (10 MIN)

Review the completed statements. Lead the plenary discussion with the following questions:

- Could you say more about....?
- Could you give me an example?
- Is there anything you think we could drop from the training to have more time for X?

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Thank the participants for their valuable feedback. Document the responses after the session as qualitative data to inform your overall evaluation of the training.

Source

Adapted from the FORB Learning Platform's online training of the trainers' course www.forb-learning.org/courses/tot

My backpack is full of... 30-45 min



EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

DRAW AND SHARE
INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Best suited to grassroots-level groups/faith communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders.

PURPOSE

To enable participants to reflect on what they have gained from the training.

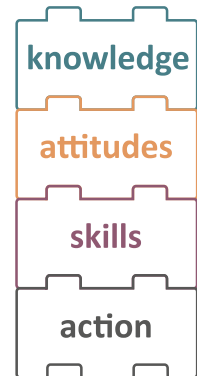
DESCRIPTION

A simple and effective reflection exercise for the end of a training in which participants draw or write all the things they have learned, as well as anything they wish to leave behind (such as old ideas or attitudes).

Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets and marker pens for each participant.



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Explain that participants are going to take part in an exercise that helps them reflect on what they are taking with them from the training – on what they have gained in terms of knowledge, ideas, skills and relationships. Give each participant a flipchart sheet and marker pen.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 18-23 MIN

Ask participants to draw a backpack and to fill it by writing or drawing everything they have learned or gained from the training inside the backpack. The backpack should contain all the elements they would like to carry home with them and on through life.

As participants are reflecting, give them some ideas to help them consider the range of things they have gained from the training. Have they gained particular knowledge, skills or tools that they value and could use? Or new ideas, feelings, or ways of perceiving the world – have their attitudes, values or positions on certain issues changed in any way? Have they found new friends, useful contacts, or potential partners for collaboration? They can draw or list these in their backpack.

After a while (particularly if some participants are done and others are still busy), suggest that they also draw or list things they wish to leave behind OUTSIDE of the backpack; things such as bad habits, old ideas, difficult moments in the training, an exercise they didn't enjoy, fatigue, feeling distracted or frustrated at times etc.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 10-20 MIN

Invite participants to show their drawings and share about their backpacks if they would like to. Emphasise that all sharing is voluntary!

Thank participants for sharing and for their active engagement during the training. Wish them well on their journeys through life!

Source

Adapted from the [Human Rights Education Toolbox](#), Danish Institute of Human Rights, (2012).

TIP! If there is a traditional or particular kind of bag that has more cultural relevance in your context, why not swap the backpack for that?



Head, heart, hands 25 min

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

REFLECT AND SHARE
INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any.

PURPOSE

To enable participants to reflect on what they have gained from the training.

DESCRIPTION

A simple personal evaluation exercise for participants, using the imagery of head (knowledge), heart (attitudes) and hands (skills, action).

Instructions

RESOURCES

- One 'head-heart-hands' [handout](#) per participant.
- Pens

Find the handout at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/head-heart-hands-handout.

This exercise and the accompanying handout are available in multiple languages as part of Session 9 of the Local Changemakers Course: www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-languages.



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Explain that participants are going to do an evaluation exercise to think about what they, personally, are taking home with them from the course.

Give each participant a handout and pen. Be clear about whether the sheets will be gathered in to help you evaluate the course or whether they can take the sheet home with them as a reminder. It is important to avoid people writing private reflections if you are collecting the sheets!

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 13 MIN

Ask participants to reflect on the following:

- Think about what you have gained in terms of knowledge and ideas. Write your thoughts in the head.
- Think about what feelings, new discoveries about yourself, or new attitudes you have, and write this in the heart.
- And think about what skills you have practiced, what ideas you have for taking action or doing something differently. Write this down in the hand.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Depending on your group size, either go around the group asking each person to share one thing or ask participants to get into pairs to share and reflect.

Thank participants for sharing and for their active engagement during the training.

**ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY**

Draw a head, heart and hand on three separate flipchart sheets. Ask participants to respond to the questions above on post-it notes and stick them to the flipchart sheets. Discuss the results in plenary. Document the responses after the session as qualitative data to inform your overall evaluation of the training.

Source

Local Changemakers Course, FORB Learning Platform, www.forb-learning.org/changemakers. Adapted from UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Equitas, [Evaluating Human Rights Training Activities](#): A handbook for human rights educators (2011).



'Head, heart, hands.'



Letter to myself 20 min

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

REFLECT

INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any.

PURPOSE

To enable participants to reflect on what they have gained from the training and to encourage them to implement planned follow-up actions.

DESCRIPTION

A very simple personal reflection exercise in which participants write a letter to themselves in their mother tongue, which is then scanned and emailed to them 1-3 months after the training.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Sheets of paper and a pen for each participant.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 3 MIN

Explain that participants will now do a reflection exercise in which they think about what they have gained from the training and what they want to do as a result of it.

Hand out sheets of paper and a pen to each participant and explain the following:

- Participants are to write a letter to themselves with all the recommendations and ideas the course has given them for their lives and their work, based on what they have learned.
- Ask them to include three specific follow-up actions they want to implement as a result of their learning. These can be personal or work-related.
- Ask participants to write their email address at the top of the letter. Tell them that you will scan and email the letter to them in (be specific) 1–3 months as a kind reminder to themselves of all the ideas they had and the follow-up actions they would like to implement.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 15 MIN

Give participants 15 minutes to write their letters. Encourage them to write the letter in a personal style, 'Dear xxx', and to write in their first language. The letter is for their eyes only, not for the facilitator or management, or others.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 2 MIN

Remind the participants to add their email address at the top of the letter, then gather in the letters. Thank the participants and say you hope they enjoy reading their letters in 1-3 months' time!

FOLLOW-UP

Within the promised timeframe, attach the letter to an email from you thanking them for their participation in the training and expressing hope that they have had the chance to work with all the good ideas they had.

Why not take the opportunity to include an impact evaluation form in the email to find out how participants have used what they have learned in practice? This format can include questions regarding the use of the tools and knowledge acquired during the course and will give the participants the chance to reflect upon how they have put this into practice.

Source

Adapted from the [Human Rights Education Toolbox](#), Danish Institute of Human Rights, (2012).

Ripples of change 2 h 20 min



EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

REFLECT AND DISCUSS

MULTI-FORMAT EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

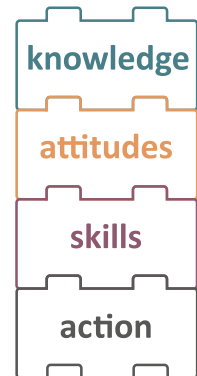
Any. Particularly helpful for civil society organisations, human rights defenders and faith leaders.

PURPOSE

To help participants identify positive changes that a training has contributed to, six months to a year after the training took place.

DESCRIPTION

A reflection and discussion based participatory exercise for longer-term evaluation of the difference a training has made at the levels of the individual, organisation, and wider community.



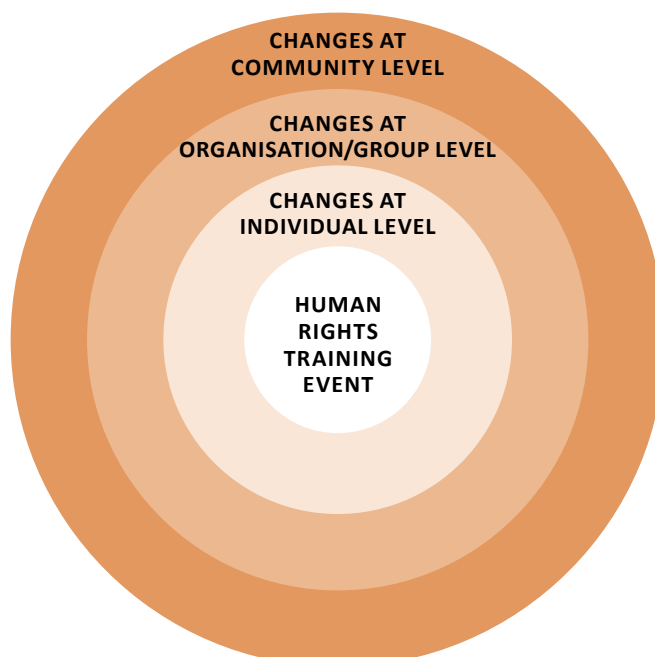
Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheets and marker pens.
- Post-it notes or cards in three different colours.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Stick two flipchart sheets together and draw the 'ripples of change' model below.
- Prepare some simple illustrative examples of how a human rights training might contribute to change at each level, relating these to the training session the participants attended and to the organisation and local context.
- Prepare flipchart sheets with the two sets of guiding questions written up (see below).



HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Explain that participants are going to take part in an exercise to help evaluate whether the training they attended has made a difference in any way. Display the 'ripple of change' model and explain the following:

- When we gently throw a stone into a pond, ripples spread out across the water. Today we are going to use this image to help us think about change. In this case, our 'stone' is the human rights training event we took part in.
- The first 'ripple' or level of change is individual. How have I changed as a result of the training, in terms of my attitudes, skills, thinking and doing? Give an illustrative example that is relevant to the training and the local context.
- The second 'ripple' or level of change is at the organisational or group level. What has changed in terms of organisational/group values, thinking, priorities and activities? Provide an illustrative example that is relevant to the training, the organisation/group and the local context. For example, increased attention/changed approaches to working for freedom of religion or belief, increased use of participatory approaches, improved capacity to train others, etc.
- The third 'ripple' or level of change is at the community level. Have changes at the individual and organisational levels had any effects on the wider community? Give an illustrative example relevant to the training, the organisation/group and the local context. For example, changes in the level or nature of contact/dialogue between groups/communities, changes in the attitudes/behaviour of other actors, increased collaboration on freedom of religion or belief advocacy.
- In this exercise, we're going to work together to create a visual representation of change that we can link back to the training and analyse the results.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 2 H 15 MIN

- **INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION** (20 MIN)

Give each participant three sets of differently coloured post-it notes (e.g., blue, yellow and orange) on which to write their reflections – one reflection per post-it. Point to the following guiding questions:

- Individual-level changes: What changes can you observe in the way you work, in your attitudes, your skills and your knowledge that can be associated with the training you attended last year? Write your reflections on the blue post-its.
- Organization/group-level changes: What changes have been made to the work of your organisation/group that may be associated with your participation in the training? Write your reflections on the yellow post-its.
- Community level changes: What changes can you observe in the broader community that you can reasonably connect to the work of your organisation and your participation in the training? This could be among the direct target audiences for your work or indirectly in the community more widely. Changes could relate to knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours or to systems and rules or life situations more generally. Write your reflections on the orange post-its.

- **PLENARY FEEDBACK** (40 MIN)

One at a time, invite participants up to stick their post-it notes on the 'ripple of change' model and ask them to share their most important reflections with the group. Allow 2 min per participant for this.

Reflect on any commonalities and differences within the group.

- **GROUPWORK** (30 MIN)

Divide participants into small groups to discuss the following questions. Ask the groups to develop a common list of their findings and to appoint a spokesperson to present these back to the plenary.

- Discuss changes at the organisational level – do you have a common understanding of what has changed within your organisation? To what extent are the changes identified a result of the training? What other factors have contributed to them?
- Discuss changes at the community level, thinking about the people your organisation works directly with and about the wider community. Do you have a common understanding of if and how the training has contributed to change at this level? Are there plausible connections between the changes identified and the training session? What other significant factors have contributed to the changes?

- **PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION** (45 MIN)

Invite each spokesperson to present their group's findings to the plenary (5 min/group). Discuss the findings.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Conclude the exercise by thanking everyone for their thoughts and engagement in the discussion, celebrating positive changes that have been identified and encouraging everyone to keep working for change.

Source

Adapted from UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Equitas, [Evaluating Human Rights Training Activities](#): A handbook for human rights educators (2011), p233.

TIP Record all the findings, which can be used to complement other data collected about longer-term results from the training.

Index of exercises

Exercises are listed in alphabetical order.

Exercise	Purpose	Type of exercise	Page
A closer look at limitations	Participants analyse if examples of limitations are legitimate.	Analyse	83
Action planning with the gender integration continuum	Participants learn a tool for ensuring gender aware approaches to FORB programming.	Groupwork	190
A FORB map of our town	Participants create a FORB context analysis for their community.	Mapping exercise	144
Article 18 pronoun swap	Explores attitudes to FORB and gender equality	Reflect and share	102
Bystanders and healers	Helps participants identify what motivates them to take action.	Reflect and discuss	166
Challenging pillars of power	Combines context, power and actor analysis with action planning.	Analyse	186
Change chairs	Explores attitudes to conflict.	Game	141
Changemaker stories	Buzz-groups discuss inspirational stories.	Storytelling	165
Children and FORB – rights and responsibilities	Develops knowledge on children’s rights and analytical/problem solving skills.	Role-play	94
Complete the statements	Participants evaluate the training by completing sentences.	Feedback exercise	201
COVID-19: legitimate limitations?	Participants apply knowledge to analyse cases.	Case studies	88
Different dangers	Explores the gendered nature of FORB violations	Sorting exercise	105
Dimensions of FORB	Develops and applies knowledge of FORB.	Watch and discuss	57
Emoticons	Participants express feelings about learning.	Energiser	25
Fist fight/Push and pull	Illustrates conflict management.	Energiser	22
FORB and family law	Participants discuss brief cases relating them to family law issues in their contexts.	Case studies	110
FORB and gender equality	Participants analyse case studies identifying the rights violated and roles played.	Case studies	108
FORB around the world	Develops knowledge on violations and attitudes on FORB for all.	Case studies	75
FORB in my day	Enables reflection on how we use our right to FORB in daily life.	Think – pair – share	61
Head, heart, hands	Participants identify the knowledge, ideas, attitudes, skills and action ideas they have gained from the training.	Reflect and share	204
Human rights – human needs	Links needs to rights.	Reflect and discuss	35
Human rights squares	Opening exercise for sessions on rights.	Walk and talk	40

Exercise	Purpose	Type of exercise	Page
Human rights timeline	Develops knowledge on human rights law.	Brainstorm	42
Know your rights	Helps facilitators identify participants knowledge levels.	Walk and talk quiz	78
Letter to myself	Encourages participants to implement planned follow-up actions after a training.	Reflect	206
Match the SDGs	Links the UN Sustainable Development Goals to FORB.	Sorting exercise	122
My backpack is full of...	Participants identify what they have gained from a training.	Draw and share	203
Once upon a time	Participants reflect on whether they value the things FORB protects.	Storytelling	50
One step forwards	Illustrates discrimination.	Role-play	64
On target	Participants evaluate how 'on target' the training has been.	Feedback exercise	199
Our change journey	Participants develop action plans with an easy visual tool.	Groupwork	178
Our social identities	Participants explore their many identities.	Think – pair – share	67
Paradise island	Participants imagine an ideal society.	Draw and discuss	32
Pass it on	Introduces the topics of misinformation and hate speech.	Warm-up game	124
Pass the basket	Sets ground rules.	Ground rules	14
Penny for your thoughts	Participants identify things they have in common.	Ice-breaker	16
Persuasion or coercion	Explores the legal boundaries for religious persuasion.	Scenarios	91
Pot luck	Highlights solidarity.	Warm-up game	19
Reforming family law	Participants discuss case studies, reform needs and do action planning.	Groupwork	194
Research teams	Participants research FORB in their context.	Analyse	154
Rights and regulations	Helps participants process learning.	Quiz	85
Ripples of change	Helps trainers evaluate the impact and outcomes of training, some time after it has taken place.	Reflect and discuss	208
Saara the student journalist	Explores blasphemy laws, social hostilities and codes of conduct for duty bearers.	Role-play	130
Self-portraits	Enables participant to introduce themselves.	Draw and discuss	17
Speaking of religion	Explores the relationship between FORB and freedom of expression.	Think – pair – share	126
Talking about tactics	Participants discover the range of tactics that can be used to promote rights.	Brainstorm	170
Tell all!	Reminds participants of previous learning.	Warm-up game	21

Exercise	Purpose	Type of exercise	Page
The barometer	Explores knowledge of and attitudes to FORB.	Game	53
The clifftop	Links rights to responsibilities.	Draw and discuss	37
The dots	Illustrates inclusion and exclusion.	Warm-up game	47
The double diamond	Structured brainstorming process for developing action ideas.	Brainstorm	182
The expert advisors	Participants develop recommendations to governments on issues related to FORB and gender.	Role-play	112
The forcefield	Actor analysis exercise identifying allies and opponents.	Brainstorm	161
The hate speech barometer	Helps participants explore the factors that determine what constitutes hate speech.	Game	133
The heart of FORB	Tests what participants have understood.	Brainstorm	59
The president's advisors	Participants apply knowledge and explore attitudes to FORB for all.	Role-play	81
The problem tree	Participants identify the root causes and the consequences of a FORB (or other) problem.	Analyse	158
The soup of life - human rights gallery	Links needs to rights.	Reflect and discuss	29
The traffic lights	Explores knowledge of and attitudes to FORB.	Quiz	55
The triangle of violence	Deepens understandings of FORB violations in participants contexts.	Watch and discuss	151
The web of good	Helps participants recognise the good things in their communities.	Game	139
The widows of Kandhamal	Illustrates the importance of all human rights for achieving FORB.	Analyse	116
Three phases of persecution	Participants do FORB context analysis focusing on disinformation, discrimination and violence.	Analyse	148
Touching points – FORB and development	Illustrates the many peace, development and democracy issues connected to FORB.	Sorting exercise	118
Trapped in the spiderweb	Participants explore the causes of early/ forced marriage and identify preventative strategies.	Game	156
Two minute FORB mini-dramas	Develops skills in identifying violations.	Drama	71
Walk and stop	Physical, fun energiser.	Energiser	24
Water pitcher	Helps introduce participatory learning.	Ice-breaker	12
What's the difference – Sex and gender	Introduces the concepts and helps participants reflect on societal norms.	Game	98
What's the problem?	Participants choose problems to develop action plans for.	Think – pair- share	175
Who am I?	Participants identify their personal networks.	Draw and share	168

PART 2



Case studies, scenarios and quizzes

In this section, you can find resources to accompany the exercises from Part 1.



Overview of part 2 contents

Here you can find resources to accompany the following exercises.

- [The traffic lights](#) – annotated statements
- [Two-minute FORB mini-dramas](#) – annotated scenarios
- [FORB around the world](#) – case studies
- [Know your rights](#) – quiz questions and answers
- [The president’s advisors](#) – role-play scenarios
- [Rights and regulations](#) – quiz questions and answers
- [COVID-19: legitimate limitations?](#) – annotated case studies
- [Persuasion or coercion](#) – annotated scenarios
- [FORB and gender equality](#) – case studies
- [FORB and family law](#) – case studies
- [The expert advisors](#) – case studies and role-play scenarios
- [The widows of Kandhamal](#) – annotated article
- [Speaking of religion](#) – case studies
- [Saara the student journalist](#) – role-play scenario

The traffic lights



QUIZ

Annotated statements for facilitators

The following statements are designed for use with the [‘The traffic lights’](#) exercise on page 55 but could be used as the basis for a variety of other ‘barometer style’ games or quizzes, or as the basis for buzz-group discussions.

Beside most statements you can find tips for short videos that explain the right to freedom of religion or belief which might help you give feedback to participants. Find all the films here www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb.

Suggested statements for exploring participants’ knowledge

STATEMENT 1:

Freedom of religion or belief protects all religions.

FALSE: This is something of a trick question. Freedom of religion or belief does not protect religions in and of themselves, in the sense of protecting beliefs or deities – it protects people. People have the right to believe and practice in accordance with their conscience. There are also collective rights for communities of believers.

TIP! Connects to [film 1](#) (Introduction to FORB).

STATEMENT 2:

Freedom of religion or belief gives everyone the right to leave their religion or belief system, without fear of punishment or discrimination.

TRUE: Coercion to have or to change a religion or belief is not permitted.

TIP! Connects to [film 2](#) (Right to have or change your religion or belief).

STATEMENT 3:

Freedom of religion or belief gives you the right to protection from offensive statements related to religion or belief.

FALSE: Freedom of speech is essential to freedom of religion or belief. When one person states what they believe to be true – for example ‘Jesus is the son of God’ or ‘There is no God’ - they are by definition implying that some other people’s beliefs are not true. Obviously, beliefs can be expressed peacefully or violently. Violence and incitement to violence are not permitted. But some people find the peaceful expression of beliefs other than their own offensive. Without the right to say what we believe, regardless of if others find it offensive, we cannot have freedom of religion or belief. Blasphemy laws tend to be implemented in a highly discriminatory manner – protecting majority communities from offence while increasing the vulnerability of minorities. In some countries accusations of blasphemy can lead to imprisonment or even the death penalty.

TIP! Connects to [film 8](#) (Limitations to freedom of religion or belief).

STATEMENT 4:

Freedom of religion or belief gives religious leaders/institutions the right to determine the family laws applied to their members.

FALSE: Freedom of religion or belief gives believers the right to follow their religion and participate in the life of the belief community. It does not give religious authorities the right to force followers to retain their beliefs or to practice them in particular ways in their daily lives. If religiously-based laws violate for example women’s rights, imposing them on people regardless of whether individuals want to follow them or not, this is a violation both of women’s rights in general and of women’s right to freedom of religion or belief.

STATEMENT 5:

Freedom of religion or belief gives women the right to disobey their husbands in matters of religion.

TRUE: Wives have the same rights as their husbands to choose their religion and how they want to practice it. Human rights do not discriminate between men and women.

STATEMENT 6:

States have a duty to stop private employers from discriminating on the basis of religion.

TRUE: States have a duty to work actively to prevent discrimination and to provide access to remedy for those affected by discrimination. Legislation banning discrimination should be in place.

TIP! Connects to [film 5](#) (Protection from discrimination).

STATEMENT 7:

Freedom of religion or belief gives religious leaders the right to require their members to practice their religion in a particular way (e.g., to wear religious clothing, fast, pray, attend worship) and to enforce their obedience.

FALSE: Everyone – including leaders of religious or belief communities – has the right to state what they consider to be the right way to follow a particular religion or belief. It is up to the individual to decide what they think of this and to act on their decision in their daily lives. Coercion is not permitted in matters of religion or belief.

TIP! Connects to [film 3](#) (Right to manifest religion or belief) and [film 4](#) (Protection from coercion).

STATEMENT 8:

Freedom of religion or belief bans coercion in the choice and practice of religion.

TRUE: This is protected by article 18 paragraph 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.

TIP! Connects to [film 2](#) (Right to have or change) and [film 4](#) (Protection from coercion).

STATEMENT 9:

States are allowed to limit which religions may be followed in the country if allowing them would cause social tensions.

FALSE: The right to have a religion or belief may never be limited. Blanket bans on all forms of practice public and/or private practice of a religion are NOT permitted. Limitations must be non-discriminatory and necessary to protect public health, safety, order, morals or the rights and freedoms of others.

TIP! Connects to [film 3](#) (Right to manifest) and [film 8](#) (Limitations).

STATEMENT 10:

Freedom of religion or belief gives us the right to tell others about our faith in ways that are non-coercive.

TRUE: This is protected both by freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression. Coercion in the form of violence or threats, including the threat of withdrawal of rights and benefits, is not permitted. Many people feel that religious persuasion (often called proselytism or evangelism) is immoral. Human rights law takes no stance on the morality of religious persuasion.

TIP! To explore these issues more see the exercise 'Persuasion or coercion' on [page 91](#).

Suggested statements for exploring participants' attitudes

STATEMENT 1:

Blasphemy should not be a criminal offence – it's a moral matter.

See response to knowledge statement 3 above.

STATEMENT 2:

People from minority groups or with non-traditional views, should have the same rights as people who follow the traditional or majority religions.

This statement is in accordance with the right to freedom of religion or belief. If people do not agree with it encourage discussion about the suffering caused by legal and societal discrimination and ask what rights they would want to have if they were in a minority.

TIP! Connects to [film 1](#) (Introduction), [film 3](#) (Right to manifest), [film 5](#) (Protection from discrimination) and [film 8](#) (Limitations).

STATEMENT 3:

Religions that are bad should be banned OR

Religion/Atheism is a dangerous force in society - it needs to be controlled.

Regardless of what religious or non-religious beliefs you hold, somewhere in the world there is a place where majority public opinion or the state think your beliefs are bad/dangerous. Discuss who gets to decide what is 'bad' and how much power the state should have over citizens' beliefs. Connect the discussion to knowledge about FORB: the right to hold beliefs is absolute and it is important that limitations are in line with international law. Religious and belief practices are only permitted if they are given in law, necessary to protect public order, health, morals or the rights and freedoms of other people and are non-discriminatory and proportionate to the problem they address.

TIP! Connects to [film 8](#) (Limitations), [film 2](#) (Have or change) and [film 3](#) (Manifest).

STATEMENT 4:

Everyone should be allowed to change their religion.

This is in accordance with the human right to freedom of religion or belief.

TIP! Connects to [film 2](#) (Have or change).

STATEMENT 5:

Christians should be allowed to propagate their faith without restrictions.

The right to tell people about what you believe is part of both the freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief, but coercion is of course banned. In practice, restrictions on the right to tell others usually target minorities making them vulnerable to arbitrary accusations, violence and criminal procedures. This often connects to hostility towards the right to change religion. (Repeat this statement replacing Christians with Muslims.)

TIP! Connects to [film 8](#) (Limitations).

STATEMENT 6:

My religion or belief holds the absolute truth so I can't believe in FORB.

Agreeing with freedom of religion or belief does not mean compromising on truth claims, it means accepting that other people have the right to hold different truth claims and practice their beliefs, even if you don't agree with them.

STATEMENT 7:

Freedom of religion or belief is not as important as other human rights OR Freedom of religion or belief is a special interest for religious people!

Freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief is what gives each person the right to decide for themselves what they believe and to live their lives on the basis of their beliefs instead of being forced to hold or follow the beliefs of others. It is a fundamental pre-condition for the enjoyment of many other rights including women's rights. Violations of FORB and discrimination on the basis of religion or belief affect every area of life and many other human rights including rights to education, employment, housing, justice, private life, marriage rights and child custody rights. FORB is not just about what happens in places of worship – although this is important too!

TIP! Connects to all the films, but particularly to [film 1](#) (Introduction) and [film 2](#) (Have or change).

Two-minute mini-dramas



DRAMA

Annotated scenarios for facilitators

On these pages you can find the scenarios proposed for the [‘Two-minute FORB mini-dramas’](#) exercise on page 71. Each scenario includes three violations of FORB and there are five scenarios to choose from.

Scenario: On the street and at work

A woman is on her way to work. She is wearing clothes that reflect her minority religious identity. A passerby starts to harass her because of what she is wearing. No one helps her. She sees a police officer and calls for help. The harasser runs off but the police officer does not help in any way. She gets to her office and is met by a junior colleague who is celebrating his promotion. Once again, she has not been considered for promotion.

CHARACTERS

Essential characters: woman, harasser, police officer, passerby, colleague
Additional characters: additional colleagues and passersby

VIOLATIONS IN THIS SCENARIO

This case focuses on harassment and discrimination based on a person’s religious identity and the failure of the authorities to do anything about it.

- Social hostilities: harassment/hate crime.
- Government failure to protect: the police officer does not help.
- Social hostilities: discrimination – glass ceiling for minorities at work.

Scenario: Places of worship

A religious minority group has bought a piece of land and has received permission from the authorities to build a place of worship. They start building, but the building site is regularly vandalised. They contact the police and the local authorities, who claim to be able to do nothing about it. They finally get the place built, but every time people go there to worship, they face harassment and heckling from members of the majority community.

CHARACTERS

Essential characters: two minority group members, police officer, local authority representative, two majority group members
Additional characters: additional minority and majority group members

VIOLATIONS IN THIS SCENARIO

This case focuses on social hostilities based on religion and on the failure of authorities to do anything about it.

- Social hostilities: vandalism of the building site.
- Government failure to protect: authorities take no action.
- Social hostilities: harassment outside the place of worship.

Scenario: FORB in school

A 12 year old boy from a minority community goes to a government run primary school and today is a normal school day. The day begins with prayers in the majority religious tradition, in which he is required to take part. After the prayers, he goes to a history lesson where the teacher reads from a textbook that speaks about the boy's minority religious community in derogatory terms. In the break after the lesson, his classmates bully him because of his religious identity and exclude him from their games.

CHARACTERS

Essential characters: boy, a teacher to hold prayers/the history lesson, two classmates
Additional characters: additional teachers and classmates

VIOLATIONS IN THIS SCENARIO

This case focuses on institutionalised violations of FORB carried out by state actors (the educational body that approves textbooks, the school, the teacher) and how this contributes to social hostilities.

- Government violations: forced participation in prayers of the majority religion.
- Government violations: discriminatory texts in schoolbooks.
- Social hostilities: bullying by classmates.

Scenario: FORB in the family

A 17 year old girl wants to go to university to train to become a teacher. Her parents are refusing to allow this. Instead, they want her to marry to protect the family's honour. They argue that their religion does not promote education for girls, as the role of wives is to be in the home. The girl does not agree with these beliefs and wants to take her own decisions. Afraid of being forcibly married, she runs away to stay with an older female friend in a different town. Her family reports her missing to the police. When they find her, the police return her to her parents against her will. The following day she is married to a man she has not met and is not allowed to leave her home.

CHARACTERS

Essential characters: girl, her mother and father, friend, police officer, girl's husband
Additional characters: additional family members, people attending the wedding, additional police officers

VIOLATIONS IN THIS SCENARIO

This case highlights the intersections between women's rights and FORB.

- Social hostilities (violations in the family): refusal to allow education of daughter. This is a violation of the daughter's right to education. It is also a violation of her right to decide for herself what she believes (e.g., about God's views on girls' education) and to act accordingly. In this way, it is a violation of her right to education and of her right to FORB.

VIOLATIONS IN THIS SCENARIO

- Government failure to protect: police return girl to her parents against her will and despite her being vulnerable to forced marriage.
- Social hostilities (violations in the family): forced marriage and restricted freedom of movement.

NOTE

According to international law, parents have the right to bring their children up in accordance with their beliefs, but parents should also respect the growing capacity of the child to take decisions for themselves regarding religion or belief (and other aspects of life).

Scenario: Speaking up – corruption and violence

A female university student at a state-run university reports sexual harassment by a professor to the student newspaper. A student journalist interviews the university principal about the case. The university wants to cover up the story, so they spread a rumour on social media saying the student journalist has criticised religious beliefs and religious leaders. A violent mob gathers to demonstrate at the university, accusing the student journalist and newspaper of blasphemy. The university use this as an excuse to shut down the student newspaper. The police arrest the journalist on suspicion of blasphemy.

CHARACTERS

Essential characters: student, journalist, university principal, two members of the mob, police officer

Additional characters: members of the mob

VIOLATIONS IN THIS SCENARIO

This example highlights intersections between freedom of expression, association and FORB and the links between violations of human rights and corruption.

- Government violations: use of religious accusations by (state-owned) university to cover up a crime.
- Social hostilities: violent mob.
- Government violations: police arrest the student journalist.

Additionally, shutting down the student newspaper is a violation of the rights to freedom of association and expression.

FORB around the world

The following case studies are designed to enable participants to reflect on violations of FORB in different contexts. Eleven case studies from Algeria, Brazil, Myanmar, Central African Republic, China, India, Iran and Malaysia are included. They are designed for use with the ‘[FORB around the world](#)’ exercise on page 75 but could be used in many other ways.

You can find handouts of the case studies at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/forb-around-the-world-handout.

Minorities and freethinkers in Algeria

THEMES:

Legislative restrictions, blasphemy, proselytization, places of worship

In 2021, religious freedom conditions in Algeria continued to get worse. Algerian authorities convicted and sentenced individuals for blasphemy and proselytization, maintained the closure of dozens of Protestant churches, and charged religious minorities with gathering illegally, despite providing no legal means for them to worship collectively. Many groups are affected, including Protestant Christians, Ahmadiyya Muslims, and freethinkers.

In February 2021, for example, a court sentenced Said Djabelkhir, an expert on Sufism and advocate for a progressive interpretation of Islam, to three years in prison for “offending the precepts of Islam.”

In June, a court in Oran ordered the government to physically seal three churches despite an ongoing appeal by the Protestant community against the order for their closure. Since 2017, the Algerian government has ordered the closure of 20 Protestant churches under Ordinance 06-03, which prohibits non-Muslim organizations from establishing places of worship without authorization. The Evangelical Protestant Association (EPA) applied for authorization but the National Commission for Non-Muslim Religious Groups, which reportedly never meets, has not adequately responded to the request. In November 2021, the Algerian government summoned the president of the EPA to court for practicing non-Muslim rites without permission.

Algerian authorities also continued to prosecute Ahmadiyya Muslims and Protestants for gathering without authorization. The Algerian government insists the Ahmadiyya Muslim community register with the Commission for Non-Muslim Religious Groups, while Ahmadis, who consider themselves Muslim, believe that to be in violation of their conscience as Muslims. At the end of 2020 over 200 Ahmadiyya Muslims were facing such charges.

Source

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom
<https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/2022%20Algeria.pdf>



CASE STUDY

Persecution of Afro-Brazilian traditional religions

THEMES:

Social hostilities, hate crimes

In Brazil, followers of traditional Afro-Brazilian religions are facing violent attacks from neo-Pentecostal neighbours and gangs who consider their religion to be demonic and evil. In 2017, hate crimes against practitioners of Umbanda and Candomblé in Rio de Janeiro represented 90% of the cases reported to the state of Rio's public complaints hotline. Reported cases of religious discrimination nationwide had increased 4960% in five years.

Regular attacks on worshipers began approximately one year after Father Márcio Virginio opened a Candomblé house in northern Rio de Janeiro. Stones were thrown from the neighbouring building, breaking parts of the roof and an image of Caboclo, an orixá worshipped in the house. "When we find a broken image of a spirit it makes me sad, because it is the home of our sacred entity." Father Márcio put a tarpaulin over the courtyard to prevent people from being hit by the stones being thrown during religious ceremonies. "My house has a lot of old people, people who come in wheelchairs. People already arrive in fear."

Father Márcio reported the assaults to the police when they became more frequent. He says he went to the station at least 20 times to make more complaints. "They did nothing," he says. Advocates of religious freedom see a link between police inaction and prejudice.

The rise in violence appears to be linked to a rise in neo-Pentecostalism among members of criminal gangs, with drug traffickers attempting to banish traditional religions from the drug territories they control. In September 2017, the terreiro of the priestess Carmen de Oxum was attacked in Nova Iguaçu. In a cell phone recording of the attack a trafficker can be heard giving orders to destroy the sacred objects: "Break everything, put out the candles, for the blood of Jesus has power... All evil must be undone in the name of Jesus."

Source

Rio on watch, <https://riononwatch.org/?p=40117>



CASE STUDY

Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar

THEMES:

Persecution, genocide, citizenship, statelessness, refugees

In 1982 a law was introduced which denied citizenship to most Rohingyas. For decades, Rohingya people have been subjected to arbitrary taxation, land confiscation, forced eviction, house destruction and restrictions on marriage and freedom of movement.

Both the military and Buddhist nationalists have committed repeated acts of violence towards the Rohingya community. The most extreme violence occurred in August 2017, following separatist attacks on police outposts. The military backed by local Buddhist mobs burnt down hundreds of villages, murdering thousands of people. A United Nations investigation found that the military had carried out mass killings and rapes committed with "genocidal intent".

According to the UNHCR, approximately 720,000 Rohingya refugees have fled targeted violence and human rights violations in Myanmar since August 2017. They join an existing group of 213,000 Rohingya refugees who fled to Bangladesh in previous years. Nearly 80% of Rohingya refugees are women and children.

In 2019, the Gambia brought a case against the State of Myanmar at the International Court of Justice, which deals with disputes between States. The Gambia alleged that Myanmar has committed genocide against the Rohingya people. Public hearings on the merits of the case are due to begin in 2023.

Sources

Burma Human Rights Network www.bhrn.org.uk

UNHCR <https://www.unrefugees.org/news/rohingya-refugee-crisis-the-facts/>

BBC News <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561>



CASE STUDY

Targeting of Muslims in the Central African Republic

THEMES:

Ethno-religious violence, security force violence

Approximately 89% of the population of CAR identify as Christian with 9% identifying as Muslims.

In 2012, following longstanding grievances about government marginalization and discrimination against Muslim minorities, predominantly Muslim militias in the north of the CAR mobilized and marched on the capital. In response, militias from predominantly Christian- and folk religion-practicing communities mobilized for self-protection and began retaliating against Muslim civilian communities. This triggered more than half a decade of political and ethnoreligious violence, including attacks on individuals based on their religious identity, on houses of worship and on religious enclaves in cities. Women have been the targets of rape and sexual slavery which have been used as a deliberate tactic of war. Muslim minorities bore the brunt of the violence, with an estimated 80 percent of CAR's Muslim population displaced in the first two years. Muslims continue to lack access houses of worship, as the civil conflict destroyed an estimated 417 of the country's 435 mosques.

Following some progress in previous years, the situation deteriorated in 2021 with an increase in targeted attacks on Muslims including arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial killings, torture and inhumane treatment. This violence was based on the assumed affiliation of Muslims to rebel groups based on their religious or ethnoreligious identity.

In February, national security forces and foreign fighters with links to Russia overran a mosque in Bambari and shot dead at least three Muslims. In May, CAR authorities arrested a Muslim shopkeeper in Kaga Bandoro and the next day his charred body was found on the outskirts of town, cut into pieces. In June, foreign fighters reportedly stormed the home of the Sultan of Kouï and insisted he and two companions accompany them. The Russian-linked fighters returned a few hours later and told the Sultan's family that he and his companions had been killed by a landmine. A United Nations (UN) human rights investigation found that they had in fact been shot. A few months later, foreign fighters reportedly raided the home of the second most influential Muslim cleric in Kouï, the imam of Kouï central mosque, and disappeared him after harassing him for weeks to stop teaching children in the Quranic School.

Sources

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom www.uscifr.gov

Human Rights Watch <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/10/05/central-african-republic-sexual-violence-weapon-war>



CASE STUDY

State control and genocide in China

THEMES:

State control, legislative restrictions, genocide

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), whose members are banned from believing in or practicing any faith, is increasingly hostile toward religion. Buddhism, Catholicism, Islam, Protestantism, and Taoism are recognised but religious organisations are state-controlled, must be politically loyal to the CCP and are legally required to assist or work with the government in enforcing state laws, regulations, and policies. This includes requirements to alter religious teachings to conform to CCP ideology and policy. New legal measures are frequently introduced as part of a government campaign to rid Islam, Tibetan Buddhism, and Christianity of “foreign” influences. This includes restrictions on clergy, religious schools and religious content on the internet.

Underground Catholics, house church Protestants, Tibetan Buddhists, Falun Gong adherents and the Church of Almighty God, are vulnerable to persecution with reports of harassment, raids, detention, arrest, physical abuse, demolition of places of worship, torture and deaths in custody.

In Xinjiang province, Uighurs and other Muslims have faced crimes against humanity/genocide. Over one million ethnically Turkic Muslims are estimated to have been held in internment camps without any legal process, for example for wearing a headscarf or beard. This is the largest detention of an ethnic and religious minority since the second world war. Wearing a headscarf or a beard has been sufficient ‘religious’ activity to result in incarceration.

Arbitrary detentions continued in 2021 with former detainees reporting indoctrination, forced labour, rape, forced sterilisation and abortion, with a major impact on the birth rate of the group. As many as 880,000 Muslim children have been separated from their parents and sent to boarding schools. Thousands of mosques and cultural sites have been destroyed.

Numerous governments, research groups and the United Kingdom based Uyghur Tribunal has investigated and determined the atrocities in Xinjiang to be genocide and/or crimes against humanity. Evidence suggests that Chinese authorities have begun to implement similar repressive policies against Hui Muslims throughout China – a group the government previously tolerated.

Source

United States Commission for International Religious Freedom www.uscifr.gov



CASE STUDY

Minorities in India

THEMES:

Shrinking civic space, anti-conversion laws, social hostilities, minority rights

The Indian government is increasingly promoting and enforcing policies that negatively affect Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, and other religious minorities based on an ideological vision of a Hindu state. Both national and state levels of government are implementing existing and new laws hostile to minorities.

Laws such as the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and the Sedition Law are being used to harass, detain and prosecute government critics – not least religious minorities and those reporting on and advocating for them – creating a climate of intimidation and fear.

In 2020, the government arrested, filed complaints against, and launched criminal investigations into journalists and human rights advocates documenting religious persecution and violence, including Khurram Parvez, a prominent Muslim human rights advocate who has reported on abuses in Jammu and Kashmir. The government also broadly targeted individuals documenting or sharing information about violence against Muslims, Christians, and other religious minorities. For example, UAPA complaints were filed against individuals for tweeting about attacks on mosques in Tripura.

The government has severely limited international funding under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) which bans funding for activities “detrimental to the national interest.” Thousands of NGOs have been forced to close, including those that document violations of freedom of religion or belief and humanitarian organisations that help marginalized religious communities.

Laws in around one-third of India’s states limit or prohibit conversion, with the exception of conversion to Hinduism which is regarded as ‘re-conversion’ – a return to the ‘normal’ state of every Indian. National, state and local government officials have demonised conversion. In October 2021, Karnataka’s government ordered a survey of churches and priests in the state and authorized police to conduct a door-to-door inspection to find Hindus who have converted to Christianity. In June 2021, Yogi Adityanath, chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, warned that he would deploy a team of over 500 officials to counter those (including, by his account, children) who were carrying out conversion activities and invoke the National Security Act, which allows for the detention of anyone acting in any manner that threatens the security of state. State hostility to conversion has created a culture of impunity, with mobs and vigilante groups threatening and committing violence particularly against Muslims and Christians accused of conversion activities.

Increasingly anti-conversion laws also target or criminalise interfaith marriages, typically requiring couples to give advance ‘public notice’ of their marriage, which risks violent reprisals. Authorities also assisted nonstate actors attempting to prevent interfaith marriages by approaching couples, converts, their families, and their religious communities.

Source

United States Commission for International Religious Freedom www.uscifr.gov



CASE STUDY

Baha'is in Iran

THEMES:

Government violations, denial of social and economic rights

The Iranian government continues to systematically crack down on religious minorities, people who leave Islam, and members of the majority community who do not conform to the regime's interpretation of Islam, including women who refuse to wear head coverings and the LGBTQ+ community.

Persecution of the Baha'i community is particularly severe. The government of Iran considers the Baha'i faith to be heretical and has systematically persecuted the Baha'i community since 1979. In January 2020, Iran removed the "other" option from the religion category on national ID cards, forcing members of the Baha'i community to either deny their religion or be denied this crucial document. The government arrested scores of Baha'is across Iran in 2021. Many of those detained were denied access to communications or taken to undisclosed locations.

State persecution affects many areas of life including the right to education. Baha'is are not permitted to attend university. In 2019 alone, 22 students lost their university places after it was discovered that they were Baha'i. On some occasions the right to lower-level education is denied. On July 8th, 2020, the principal of Salam School in Tehran telephoned Adib Vali to tell him he could not enrol in seventh grade. Adib is a high achiever having received medals in robotics and Artificial Intelligence contests for his school. Vali's expulsion was a direct result of his Baha'i faith – the week before his expulsion he had filled out a student form identifying his religion.

In August 2021, officials demolished the homes of three Baha'is without warning. In November of the same year government agents closed six Baha'i businesses and in December, thirteen Baha'i farms were auctioned off by the state. The government of Iran also continued to deny Baha'is the right to bury their deceased in empty plots at the Golestan Javid cemetery outside Tehran which the community has used for decades. Instead, Baha'is are being forced to use the Khaveran mass grave site where victims of the 1988 prison massacres are buried.

Sources

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom www.uscifr.gov

National Iranian American Council https://www.niacouncil.org/human_rights_tracker/bahai-student-prodigy-banned-from-school-in-iran/



CASE STUDY

Religious law in Malaysia

THEMES:

Religious family and personal identity law

Malaysia is highly religiously diverse with a Sunni Muslim majority of 62%. The country has a dual legal system in which Muslims are required to follow Shariah laws governed by religious courts.

Blasphemy is criminalized at the federal level in Malaysia's secular Penal Code, and at least five states criminalize apostasy with fines, imprisonment, and/or detention in a 'rehabilitation' centre.

Under Malaysia's Islamic law, having Muslim parents makes one a Muslim, Muslims are not allowed to change their religion and Muslim women are not permitted to marry non-Muslims. Revathi Massosai's parents had converted from Hinduism to Islam before she was born. However, Revathi was brought up by her Hindu grandmother as a Hindu and married a Hindu man in a religious ceremony. The authorities became aware of the marriage when the couple tried to register the birth of their child. Revathi tried to change her religious registration to Hindu, but the religious court sent her to an Islamic re-education centre for six months for marrying a Hindu and refusing to return to Islam. When Revathi continued to refuse to be a Muslim, she was declared a minor and she and her daughter were placed in the custody of her Muslim parents.

In parts of Malaysia, Islamic legislation is becoming more stringent. In November 2021, a new legal code came into effect in Kelantan province containing 24 provisions that all Muslims in the state are obliged to follow. These include the criminalization of attempting to convert out of Islam, distorting Islamic teachings, and disrespecting the month of Ramadan. Penalties include imprisonment of up to three years and a fine or corporal punishment.

Sources

Forum Asia <https://www.forum-asia.org/?p=7086>

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom www.uscirf.gov



CASE STUDY

Minorities in Russia

THEMES:

Shrinking civic space, legislative restrictions, minority rights

A wide range of legislation is used to persecute religious minorities in Russia. The 1996 religion law sets strict registration requirements and empowers state officials to impede and monitor religious groups' activities. It also bans "missionary activities," defining this very broadly to include preaching, praying, disseminating religious materials, and answering questions about religion outside of officially designated religious sites. Other legislation criminalizes "extremism" without adequately defining the term, and charges of "terrorism" require no advocacy of or participation in violence, enabling the state to target a vast range of nonviolent religious activity.

On 5 April 2021, President Vladimir Putin signed amendments to this law that further expanded the state's ability to restrict religious practice, including more frequent reporting requirements for religious organizations, a mandate for all foreign-educated clergy to be recertified within Russia, and prohibitions for anyone on the government's expansive extremism and terrorism list from participating in or leading religious groups.

Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, Protestants, members of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, Falun Gong, and adherents of indigenous religions are among those affected.

Following over 400 raids on members' homes during 2021, over 100 peaceful Jehovah's Witnesses, including elderly and disabled members were convicted of 'extremism', facing prison sentences of up to eight years.

Members of the indigenous Mari religion faced hostility, with one local official instructing municipal authorities to block the Mari from worshiping on public property, which includes forests sacred to their religion.

However, peaceful Muslims comprise the majority of those imprisoned for their faith. Numerous prison sentences were given to followers of the moderate Muslim theologian Said Nursi. Crimean Tatar Muslims opposed to the Russian occupation of their Ukrainian homeland continued to receive lengthy prison sentences for unsubstantiated charges of terrorism based on their Muslim identity and alleged involvement in Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT), a nonviolent Islamist group that is legal in Ukraine and most Western countries.

Source

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom www.uscifr.gov



CASE STUDY

Hate crimes in Sweden

THEMES:

Hate crimes

In Sweden 55% of hate crimes are racist with black people worst affected, 17 % focus on religious identity with Muslims and Jews worst affected, and 13% of hate crimes target people due to their sexual identity.

Hate crimes can take place in public places, on the internet, around the home, at work and in schools. These crimes can lead to shock, fear, insecurity and depression. It can also lead people to hide their religious or sexual identity and to withdraw from public roles that place them at risk.

Threats and harassment are the most common forms of hate crime reported, along with hate speech on social media. Crimes facing religious groups range from verbal abuse, being pushed, a headscarf being pulled to threats, severe forms of violence, vandalism of religious sites and arson. Research has shown that Muslim women, particularly those who wear religious clothing, such as the hijab, are more likely to experience hate crimes committed by strangers in public spaces, while Muslim men are more likely to experience hate crimes from neighbours or colleagues.

Sylvia Bäckström, a member of the Jewish association in Umeå, northern Sweden says “Very few Jews, in fact no-one, dares to wear a kippa in central Umeå.” In the southern city of Malmö, Rabbi Shneur Kesselman had registered over 80 cases of harassment and threats to police, after only seven years living in the country.

Many hate crimes go unreported.

Sources

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention

<https://www.expressen.se/ledare/naomi-abramowicz/malmos-mest-utsatte-jude-vagar-att-fly/>

<https://www.expressen.se/kronikor/bilan-osman/antisemitismen-varken-slutade-eller-borjade-med-forintelsen/>



CASE STUDY

Authorities harass independent religious groups, Vietnam

THEMES:

State control, registration, harassment, denial of identity documents

For many years, the Vietnamese state has targeted independent religious groups – disrupting religious services, ceremonies and training and harassing, detaining and threatening members and activists. Unregistered Christian groups from the indigenous Hmong community and the indigenous Montagnard communities of the Central Highlands region are particularly vulnerable to persecution.

In 2021, local authorities harassed, detained, intimidated, and physically abused members of the Montagnard Evangelical Church of Christ in Phu Yen Province. The group has reportedly tried to register with the government but received no response in the past few years. The Protestant Church of Christ in Dak Lak Province similarly had trouble registering their religious activities and gatherings with local authorities.

Punishment for belonging to these Protestant groups has included subjecting members to “criticism sessions”, forcing them to renounce their faith in public and refusing to issue identity cards and household registration documents, often in retaliation against those who refuse to renounce their faith. This has effectively rendered people stateless, unable to access public services or vote.

Christians are not the only groups targeted. Authorities also harassed independent Hoa Hao Buddhists and Cao Dai followers who do not belong to the state-sanctioned Buddhist and Cao Dai groups. For example, in September 2021, authorities in Cho Gao District, Tien Giang Province, detained and interrogated independent Cao Dai followers and forced them to join the state-sanctioned group. Several independent Cao Dai groups tried to register their religious activities in early 2021 but received no response.

Source

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, www.uscirf.gov



CASE STUDY

Know your rights

Quiz questions and answers

The following 10 questions and answers are used in the rapid tempo quiz '[Know your rights](#)' on page 78, and help the facilitator gauge the knowledge level of the group and tailor a knowledge input to their needs. The exercise could be run in many other ways – for example with the methodology of '[The Barometer](#)' or '[The traffic lights](#)'. Find the questions and answers to print out at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/know-your-rights-handout.



QUIZ

QUESTION 1: **Planning permission**

The local council is responsible for granting planning permission for new buildings. The council is proposing to hold a public referendum whenever an application to build a place of worship is submitted. All those living within 1 kilometre of the proposed worship place will be entitled to vote 'yes' or 'no' to the application. Only applications receiving a majority 'yes' vote will be considered.

Is this proposal legitimate according to human rights?

ANSWER

This system is not legitimate. If a public vote resulted in any community not being allowed to build a place of worship, it would be an illegitimate limitation of their right to manifest religion – a rights violation.

Authorities responsible for planning permission applications are entitled to turn down applications for legitimate reasons, for example if the building planned is not fit for purpose or lacks sufficient access to parking or public transport. However, neither the government nor the population are entitled to deny people the right to collective worship and to have buildings for that purpose. Democracy without human rights leads to the tyranny of the majority.

QUESTION 2: **Public order**

A minority community has built a new place of worship. Extremist elements in the majority community have responded with violent protests every time the minority community holds a worship service. In order to protect public order and restore calm, the local authority has withdrawn planning permission for the new place of worship and barred the doors.

Are the local authority's actions legitimate according to human rights?

ANSWER

This is not a legitimate limitation to freedom of religion or belief. Public order is a legitimate ground for limitations. However, the peaceful minority community is not violating public order by holding worship services, so their rights should not be limited.

Instead, it is the duty of the government to protect the minority as they exercise their rights, to punish people who are break the law by protesting violently and to actively promote an understanding of the rights of the minority among the majority population. Giving in to violence to restore calm provides only a superficial appearance of harmony and in the long run breeds more violence.



QUESTION 3:

Public health

In order to prevent the spread of COVID the government has banned all religious meetings regardless of the size of the place of worship. There is no restriction on travel and shops are allowed to have 1 customer per 4m² of shop footage.

Is this a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

This is a question with no straight-forward answer! Public health is a legitimate ground for limiting the practice of religion and belief. Whether this particular limitation is a justifiable or not would depend on many contextual factors – both legal and cultural. For example, it might depend on the manner in which people interact at places of worship compared to the manner in which they interact at shops and on public transport. If religious gatherings involve much more close contact between people, stricter legislation may be justified.



QUESTION 4:

Public safety

At major festivals, places of worship are often overcrowded, violating fire regulations. The government has fined a religious community that allowed a dangerous number of people on the premises.

Are the fire regulations (and commensurate fines) a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

This is a legitimate limitation. Fire regulations protect public health and a fine for breaking regulations is proportionate. However, care needs to be taken to ensure that all religious communities are treated equally in terms of whether or not they are fined for breaking the rules in practice and the level of such fines. Sometimes, there is discrimination in the implementation of legislation, even though the legislation itself appears justified and non-discriminatory.



QUESTION 5:

Restrictions on worship

Members of parliament have introduced legislation that would require all religious communities to use the majority language in public acts of worship.

Is this a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

This is a clear violation of freedom of religion or belief of both individuals and religious communities. People have the right to gather for worship in whatever peaceful manner they wish, and this right can only be limited if there is a legitimate need to protect public order, health, safety, morals or the rights and freedoms of others.

The language spoken during worship does not relate to any permissible ground for limitation. This limitation would also make worship inaccessible to individuals who do not understand the majority language, for example migrants – a severe curtailment of their right to freedom of religion or belief.



QUESTION 6:

Rights in the workplace

A minority woman applying for a job working in a warehouse has been told that she won't get the job unless she changes the way she dresses to conform with majority religious norms.

Is this a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

The right to dress as you please at work is not completely clear cut. There may be legitimate reasons for not allowing some forms of clothing – for example for not allowing a nurse to wear jewellery (e.g., a cross) as part of infection control measures (public health is a justifiable ground for limitations).

Private companies may also have a company profile that they legitimately want to promote – for example, a fashion shop may wish to require staff to wear their products. However, it is unlikely that working in a warehouse would require either high levels of infection control or involve customer contact. This is probably an example of discrimination on the basis of religion.



QUESTION 7:

Women's rights to FORB

A husband is requiring his wife to wear conservative religious dress that she does not wish to wear. He is threatening to punish her if she disobeys him.

Is the husband's behaviour legitimate according to human rights?



ANSWER

The husband's behaviour is not legitimate. Women have the right to freedom of religion or belief. It is every woman's right to decide for herself how she wishes to observe her religion, just as it is every man's right.

States have a duty to protect women from domestic violence in line with every person's right to freedom from torture and cruel and degrading treatment and their right to life.



QUESTION 8:

Rights to marry

The law bans women from the majority religion from marrying men from minority religions. (However, minority women are allowed to marry majority men.)

Is this a legitimate limitation of rights?



ANSWER

This law discriminates both on the basis of religion and gender and violates the right of the individual to form a family. Whilst people are free to follow their religious and cultural norms regarding marriage within religions, the state does not have the right to hinder or punish people who don't wish to uphold such religious regulations.



QUESTION 9:

FORB in schools

A church school accepts students of all faiths but requires children of other faiths to participate in Christian worship and confessional religious education. There are no other schools offering quality education in the area. The government is introducing legislation that will enable parents/children to opt out of confessional religious activities.

Is this a legitimate limitation of the rights of the church school?



ANSWER

Children have the right to freedom of religion or belief and parents have the right to bring their children up in accordance with their beliefs. The school is effectively coercing parents and children into practicing religion with the threat of losing educational opportunities. Coercion in matters of religion is not allowed.

This is an example of clashing rights. The government legislation is an interference in the independence of church running the school, but the government can justify this. The schools practices are being limited in order to protect the right of parents and children to have their religion or belief and to protect them from coercion.



QUESTION 10:

Registration of religious communities

In order to prevent religious extremism, the government has introduced legislation that requires all religious communities to register and that bans all unregistered communities from gathering for worship.

Is this legitimate according to human rights?



ANSWER

The state has a duty to enable religious and belief communities to gain legal identity so that they can sign contracts, for example to employ staff or hold property. Registration as a religious community is one such form of legal identity. However, every person has the right to arrange gatherings for worship (e.g., in the home, a rented venue or a consecrated place of worship) regardless of any status as registered or unregistered in the eyes of the state. The right to meet for worship may not be limited as a matter of course, but only temporarily and in exceptional circumstances to protect legitimate public interests, such as protect public health. All laws that require state approval prior to religious activities taking place and punish unregistered peaceful religious activities are illegitimate. Such legislation is usually accompanied by discrimination in the granting of registration.

Source

Katherine Cash, SMC Faith in Development/FORB Learning Platform

The president's advisors



ROLE-PLAY

The following 15 scenarios are designed for use with the exercise '[The president's advisors](#)' on page 81. They vary in style from being brief requests for legislative change to fuller scenarios including background information. Choose which requests or scenarios to use depending on their relevance to participants' contexts. When choosing, please remember to take into account any risks associated in discussing specific issues in your context.

You can find handouts with the scenarios to print out at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/presidents-advisor-handouts.

Brief requests

- A request has been made to the president to amend the law, unifying the rules and regulations governing the building of places of worship place so that all religions are treated equally.
- A request has been made to the president to reform family and personal identity law in order to enable people to enter into civil marriages governed by civil laws.
- A request has been made to the president to issue a law that removes the religion statement from state ID cards in order to prevent discrimination in daily life.
- A request has been made to the president to amend the law on contempt of religions, in order to protect public morals by rendering the positive portrayal of LGBTQ+ lifestyles in any public forum or media illegal.
- A request has been made to the president to replace the current law that criminalizes contempt of religions with a law that punishes incitement to hatred, discrimination or violence.
- A request has been made to the president to initiate a transparent investigation into the killing of members of the minority community in village X. The investigations are to be run by a specially formed committee that consists only of civilians from the judiciary and HR organizations.
- A request has been made to the president to change legislation to enable the approval of a building permit for a Baha'i temple.
- A request has been made to the president to change legislation to enable Jehovah's Witnesses to be a legally recognized faith community.
- A request has been made to the president to reform personal law legislation to enable Baha'i marriage to be recognised as a legal marriage with all its benefits.
- A request has been made to the president to issue a law that reserves a certain percentage of positions in the cabinet, military, and other key positions to religious minorities (quota).



Fuller scenarios

Scenario: Building permit for minority place of worship

A minority religious community has applied for a building permit for a place of worship in a town where they have no access to a place of worship. There are no legislative hindrances for the construction of minority places of worship. Nonetheless, the provincial governor has turned down the application because of substantial fears that allowing the building might lead to riots by radical groups within the majority community. The governor is also worried that he might lose office in next year's election, losing it to more radical candidates.

The community are now appealing to the president to ensure that their right to build a place of worship is respected.

Scenario: Nationalist tensions

Amid rising religious-nationalist sentiment, a village council has held a public meeting at which the community voted to introduce a 'minority free zone'. The council has set up signs at entrances to the village declaring that minority traders may not enter and that residents may not marry members of the religious minority. Two minority families resident in the village are afraid and have complained to the Minorities Commissioner. The Commissioner tells you that similar events have taken place in around 20 villages across the country.

The president would like to know what action the State could or should take. What legislation (existing or new) could support State action on the issue?

Scenario: Teacher refuses to participate in prayer

Most of the children and teachers at School A in town X belong to the majority religion. Majority religion prayers and passages from the majority religions holy texts are read every morning as part of the school's obligatory values teaching. The headteacher has received reports that one of the teachers does not fold or lift his hands in prayers. The teacher is in all matters respected and liked by parents and students. When asked about this, the teacher responded that as he does not believe in any God, it goes against his conscience to raise or fold his hands in prayer.

The school's leadership is concerned that if a teacher does not join in the traditional prayers, it will undermine respect for national culture and tradition that the school, in line with the government's education policy, tries to convey to the students. Community leaders have been consulted and want the teacher to have his wages cut or be fired if he continues to refuse to join in with the prayer.

The head teacher doesn't know what to do, but as she is a distant relative of the president, her husband suggested that she should ask him for advice on how to manage the situation. The president has passed her question on to you.



Scenario: Parents object to prayer in school

A Christian school in a village in the northern state of Y was founded by missionaries but has been run by a local committee consisting of Christians from a minority ethnic group for several years. The school is perceived as being the best school for many miles, so some parents from the majority ethnic group, who adhere to the majority religion, also send their children to the school.

The school has a tradition of holding Christian morning assembly at which staff and children say the Lord's prayer, psalms are sung, and a short passage is read from the Bible as well as singing the national anthem. Recently some parents to children from the majority community have complained that their children are obliged to participate in Christian prayers and no alternative activity is offered.

During the last couple of weeks, the situation in the whole state has been tense following the introduction of new laws about maintaining the culture and identity of the state's indigenous majority population. Some say that tensions run along ethnic and religious conflict lines. There have been lethal attacks on people belonging to some minority ethnic groups which are primarily Christian. A few days ago, a curfew was imposed in the state in an attempt to curb further violence.

Encouraged by community leaders, parents from the majority ethnic community are appealing to the President to stop their children from being forced to participate in Christian prayers. Considering the tense situation in the state it is important that the President provides a swift response to both the parents and the school about how to best deal with the situation.

Scenario: Victims of communal violence

A group of young Muslim women who survived recent religiously motivated communal violence in city X are complaining to the President about continuing violations to their freedom of religion and conscience. Violence targeted at the Muslim minority community has forced the women to flee to relief camps.

The camps are very crowded and both rights groups and people living in the camps have accused the provincial government of failing to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance to the survivors of the violence. Food resources have been scarce, the camps are on marshland causing problems for both construction and hygiene during recent heavy rainfalls. Residents of the relief camps live in deplorable conditions and the perpetrators of the violence largely remain unpunished.

The women have complained to the President that the provincial government handed over the running of the camps to a conservative Muslim NGO. The NGO has introduced restrictions on women's freedom of movement in the camp and a conservative dress code. Against the will of the women concerned, marriages have been arranged to men from villages outside the city. The NGO says the marriages were arranged in an attempt to lessen the burden on the camps and safeguard the women's honour. According to the women, the marriages took place with the knowledge and indirect support of the provincial government.

The women want the government to take over the running of the camp and their marriages to be annulled so that they may return to their studies in the city.

Sources

Bassem Maher, Katherine Cash, Kristina Patring

Rights and Regulations



QUIZ

Facilitators answer sheet

The following 7 questions and answers are used in the '[Rights and regulations](#)' quiz on page 85, and help participants process learning from a knowledge input on legitimate limitations to freedom of religion or belief. The questions could be used in many other ways – for example with the methodology of '[The Barometer](#)' or '[The traffic lights](#)' exercises.

A handout of the questions can be found at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/rights-and-regulations.

NOTE

Please note that the following legislative proposals were proposed in 2018 by a group of parliamentarians (not the Bulgarian government) and that almost all the proposals were rejected by parliament.

QUESTION 1: **Proposed law: Language requirements**

All worship must be conducted in the Bulgarian language. Would this be a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

No. This limitation directly discriminates against those who don't speak the Bulgarian language and undermines their right to gather for worship on the same terms as Bulgarian-speaking people. Discrimination on the basis of language is prohibited under international law.

QUESTION 2: **Proposed law: Financing**

A ban on foreign financing of religious activities. Would this be a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

No. Although there may arguably be a legitimate ground to restrict foreign financing in certain circumstances, a blanket ban on all funds from abroad is not a necessary or proportionate limitation. There are other possible solutions.

QUESTION 3: **Proposed law: Theological training**

All preachers must have received their theological training in the country. Would this be a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

No. This indirectly discriminates against those religious and faith communities who do not have religious training institutions in the country. They would not be able to train their religious leaders in the country or bring leaders from abroad to serve their community. Indirect discrimination is harder to spot than direct discrimination.



QUESTION 4:

Proposed law: Registration requirements

3000 Bulgarian citizens are required as professing members in order for a denomination to be registered. Would this be a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

No. There might be small minority religious communities that are not able to reach the threshold of 3000 people, and therefore are denied the possibility to register and obtain a legal identity. When coupled with regulations that only allow religious activities on premises registered for the purpose, this would also result in restrictions on the right to manifest religious beliefs. It could also undermine the right to freedom of religion or belief for non-citizens (e.g., migrant workers, asylum-seekers, refugees).



QUESTION 5:

Proposed law: Children's participation

Written permission must be provided by both parents for each religious activity that a minor is to be involved in. Would this be a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

No. Children are minors until the age of 18. Under article 14 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to freedom of religion or belief, and parents have the right to bring their children up in accordance with their beliefs. This parental responsibility should be exercised in a manner consistent with the child's growing maturity and ability to decide for themselves. The older and more mature a child becomes, the greater freedom they should have to decide for themselves if they want to participate in religious activities.

While parental consent is needed when involving younger children in confessional religious activities, the formulation of this legislation is problematic. Note the requirement for religious communities to obtain permission from BOTH parents for EACH religious activity. Should one parent refuse to sign, religious communities would be required to deny entry to the other parent if they attempt to attend worship with their small child. This may result in the parent being denied the right to manifest their religion or belief. A significant administrative burden is placed on religious communities to check and obtain the necessary permission forms for each activity from both parents.

QUESTION 6:



Proposed law: Unregistered religious activities


A ban on religious activities outside properties registered for the purpose. Would this be a legitimate limitation of freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

No. It is illegitimate to make the right to practice religious beliefs in community with others dependent upon registration and governmental approval. For example, this law would make it illegal to hold a prayer group or a theological discussion with non-family members at home, or to gather for worship outdoors.

Authorities can legitimately require religious communities to apply for planning/building permission when building a house of worship, just as they do for other



types of building. In managing planning permission, the authorities must ensure equal treatment of each religious community in law and in practice. Many governments around the world illegitimately restrict religious activities to certain pre-approved places in an attempt to control religious and belief communities.

QUESTION 7:



Proposed law: Audited accounts

All denominations in receipt of government funding must provide annual audited accounts to the Department of Religion. Does this limit freedom of religion or belief?



ANSWER

It depends. Generally speaking, this a reporting requirement for the receipt of government funding, which is legitimate if it is applied equally to all religious and belief communities receiving government funding. However, care should be taken to ensure the details of the legislation are appropriate and cannot be misused. Legislation should not require the submission of information that could be used to target or curb the activities of a particular group, for example, if the identity details of all members or of all those who given voluntary donations to the group (regardless of the amount).

Source

Adapted from the FORB Learning Platform's online training of the trainers' course, www.forb-learning.org/tot

COVID-19: Legitimate limitations?

Annotated case studies for facilitators

The following case studies are designed to help participants analyse limitations on freedom of religion or belief in the context of the pandemic. Seven case studies from Algeria, Azerbaijan, France/ Germany, Gabon, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and the USA are included. These case studies are designed for use with the ‘[COVID 19: legitimate limitations?](#)’ exercise on page 88 but could be used in many other ways. You can find handouts of the case studies at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/covid-19-handout.

Algeria: Churches remained closed amidst pandemic

An estimated 99 percent of the population of Algeria is Sunni Muslim. The remaining 1 percent of the population is comprised of Jews, nonbelievers, Muslim minorities (including Ahmadiyya and Shi’a Muslims) and Christians (including Roman Catholics, Seventh-day Adventists, Methodists, Evangelicals, Lutherans, the Reformed Church, and Egyptian Coptic Christians).

All places of worship were closed under COVID regulations. However, in February 2021 the Prime Minister’s office announced that, “All mosques on the national territory are opened, in strict compliance with health measures and protocols for the prevention and protection against the spread of the Coronavirus, in particular the preventive support system put in place for mosques.” Restrictions were kept in place for churches, even though the same social distancing and health protocols could apply equally to churches and mosques.



CASE STUDY

FACILITATORS NOTES

This is an example of how the COVID-19 pandemic was used disproportionately and as a pretext to restrict freedom of religion or belief of minorities in illegitimate ways.

You may find the following [guidance](#) from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights helpful in relation to this case:

- Emergency declarations based on the COVID-19 outbreak should not be used as a basis to target particular individuals or groups, including minorities. Measures taken must not involve prohibited discrimination on any grounds such as race, colour, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Sources

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2022 Annual Report
www.uscifr.gov

International Christian Concern. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_COVID19.pdf

Azerbaijan: Detentions for attending religious commemorations

On August 28, 2020, authorities did not permit Shia believers to gather in mosques or mosque courtyards to mark the Ashura religious commemoration because of COVID-19 restrictions that applied to all public gatherings, regardless of the purpose. Police detained numerous individuals in Shamkir, Yevlakh, Barda, and Lankaran for trying to observe Ashura in spite of the prohibition on gatherings. Judges sentenced at least six individuals to administrative detention ranging from 10 to 30 days.

During 2020, authorities also continued legal action against individuals associated with the unregistered group MUM including through the use of COVID-19 restrictions. Authorities stated the movement mixed religious and political ideology and said they were concerned about its ties to Iran. During the year, authorities placed multiple members of MUM under administrative arrest for allegedly violating COVID-19 regulations and “resisting police.” For example, the Sabunchu District Court sentenced Samir Babayev to 30 days of administrative arrest and the Khatai District Court sentenced Hikmat Agayev to 25 days of administrative arrest.



CASE STUDY

FACILITATORS NOTES

This case focuses on the proportionality of punishments for violating public health based limitations.

You may find the following [guidance](#) from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights helpful in relation to this case:

- States should only deprive persons of their liberty as a last resort, on grounds that are established by law, and with appropriate procedural safeguards. Deprivation of liberty must be reasonable, necessary and proportionate in the circumstances, even in a state of emergency.
- States must enforce any exceptional measures humanely, respecting the principle of proportionality when imposing penalties for violations and ensure that penalties are not imposed in an arbitrary or discriminatory way.

Sources

US State Department, 2020 report on international religious freedom <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-report-on-international-religious-freedom/azerbaijan/>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_COVID19.pdf

France and Germany: Blanket bans on meeting in places of worship

In March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Government of Germany announced that, “gatherings in churches, mosques, synagogues as well as gatherings of other religious communities are to be banned.” In effect, this introduced a blanket ban on meeting in places of worship.

Similar wide-ranging restrictions were imposed by France in the form of restrictions on freedom of movement and a decree which suspended religious ceremonies which amounted to a blanket ban on meetings in places of worship. Gatherings in other types of public places were limited to 10 people.



CASE STUDY

FACILITATORS NOTES

In this case all religious communities were treated equally. This case is about whether complete bans on meeting in places of worship were necessary and proportionate. You may wish to mention the following in connection with the group’s report back to explain what happened in this case.

- In response to an appeal by a local Muslim association, which planned to hold Friday prayers during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan for a limited number of worshippers, the German Federal Constitutional Court ruled to lift the blanket ban six weeks after it was imposed. The Court held that legislation should enable exceptions to be granted in certain cases if sufficient precautions were taken.
- The highest court in France, the Conseil d'État, ruled to lift the ban two months later, in response to an appeal by twelve Catholic organisations. The Conseil held that as gatherings in public places had been limited to 10 persons, there was no reason to impose a stricter rule on religious buildings. The French Conseil d'État found that the blanket ban was “disproportionate to the objective of preserving public health”.

Sources

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, ‘OSCE Human Dimension Commitments and State Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic 2020’ report https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/e/c/457567_0.pdf

The Conversation 9 April 2020 <https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-how-new-restrictions-on-religious-liberty-vary-across-europe-135879>

Gabon: Strict regulations and police violence

When public life resumed following a 7 month lockdown, the Catholic Church in Gabon announced that churches would re-open on Sunday 25 October. On 16 October the government published new regulations introducing tight restrictions on public worship: only one service per week, no distribution of communion, and a maximum of 30 worshippers, all of whom must provide a negative COVID-19 test result and register their attendance with the government.

The church protested both the delay and the rules which made it impossible for many to attend mass, particularly poor people unable to obtain the COVID-19 tests. They also complained that shops, schools and other institutions were being permitted to operate without comparable restrictions.

On 24 October the Gabonese government deployed police patrols across the country to blockade churches and prevent early re-openings. Archbishop Jean Patrick Iba Ba of Libreville wrote to parishes informing them that security forces were starting to surround local churches but encouraged local churches to proceed with re-openings on the 25th using a shorter simpler format, without celebrating mass.

Soldiers then surrounded the Archbishop's residence, barricaded nearby roads and churches, arrested two priests in the diocese and used teargas on parishioners filming the blockades. A spokesman for the archdiocese said church re-openings would still go ahead, since shops, banks and other places were already open. "We will continue to open our churches while respecting the safety measures,".

While officiating the re-opening ceremony at St Charles Lwanga Cathedral, Bishop Jean-Vincent Ondo Eyene of Oyem and his fellow clergy were reportedly attacked by soldiers.



CASE STUDY

FACILITATORS NOTES

This case focuses on the necessity and proportionality of restrictions and the excessive use of force by police.

You may find the following [guidance](#) from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights helpful in relation to this case:

- If derogations from a State's human rights obligations are needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, all measures taken should be proportionate and limited to those strictly required by the exigencies of the situation.
- Law enforcement officials may use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty and only when less harmful measures have proven to be clearly ineffective

Sources

<https://catholiceraid.co.uk/after-seven-months-of-lockdown-police-violently-shut-down-church-reopenings-in-gabon/>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_COVID19.pdf

Myanmar: COVID-19 restrictions and punishments

In February 2020, the authorities in Myanmar designated COVID-19 as a notifiable disease under the 1995 Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law. This gave the authorities wide-ranging powers to limit freedom of movement, including confining people under strict government-controlled quarantine. Under the law, anyone who fell sick with suspected COVID-19 must report to the authorities or face a fine or jail time. People arriving in Myanmar from abroad were required to undergo quarantine for 28 days – 21 in a state facility followed by 7 days of quarantine at home. The following month, public events and gatherings of more than five people were banned, including religious gatherings.

Between March and May 2020 at least 500 people, including children, returning migrant workers, and religious minorities were sentenced to between one month and one year in prison in Myanmar for breaching curfews, quarantines, or other control orders.

Lawsuits were subsequently filed against members of the majority Buddhist as well as minority Christian and Muslim communities across the country. In one case, two Buddhists were fined 100,000 kyats (around \$75) under Article 188 of the Penal Code for organising the funeral of a Buddhist monk, which more than 200 people attended. In a separate case, a group of 12 Muslim men were sentenced to 3 months in prison for gathering in a house to pray, under the Natural Disaster Management Law Article 30(a). In a third case, two Christian pastors were sentenced to 3 months with hard labour under the Natural Disaster Management Law Article 30(a) for organising religious gatherings linked to 80 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and two deaths.



CASE STUDY

FACILITATORS NOTES

Different laws were applied to persons from minority and majority religious backgrounds. Penalties were imposed in a discriminatory way and were not proportionate.

You may find the following [guidance](#) from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights helpful in relation to this case:

- States must enforce any exceptional measures humanely, respecting the principle of proportionality when imposing penalties for violations and ensure that penalties are not imposed in an arbitrary or discriminatory way.
- States should only deprive persons of their liberty as a last resort, on grounds that are established by law, and with appropriate procedural safeguards. Deprivation of liberty must be reasonable, necessary and proportionate in the circumstances, even in a state of emergency.

Sources

Human Rights Watch <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/28/myanmar-hundreds-jailed-covid-19-violations> and Rachel Fleming

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_COVID19.pdf

Sri Lanka: Compulsory cremations

In March 2020, the government of Buddhist-majority Sri Lanka banned the burial of victims of COVID-19 and instituted a policy of compulsory cremation. The authorities cited risks to the country's water supply, even though guidelines from the World Health Organisation state that it is safe to bury victims of COVID-19.

Cremation is prohibited within Islam. By March 2021, two thirds of COVID-19 deaths were among minority communities, including Muslims. Many victims avoided seeking treatment, fearing their body would be cremated if they were to die with a COVID diagnosis. Mohammed Niyas' two-month-old baby boy was one victim of COVID and the compulsory cremation policy. At the crematorium, Mohammed and his relatives chanted a funeral prayer, overcome by the loss of the child and the added trauma of being unable to bury him according to Islamic tradition. "We are being forced to go through this trauma," said Mohammed. He called the government's policy painful and unfair but felt powerless to challenge it.

Sri Lanka ended the compulsory cremation policy in February 2021, but then required Muslim COVID-19 victims to be buried at a remote government-designated site in the absence of their families and without final religious rites. This policy was ended in March 2022.



CASE STUDY

FACILITATORS NOTES

This is an example of how the COVID-19 pandemic was used as a pretext to restrict freedom of religion or belief of minorities in illegitimate ways. You may wish to mention the following in connection with the group's report back:

- In January 2021, UN thematic human rights experts issued a statement urging Sri Lanka to end the compulsory cremation of COVID-19 deceased. They said, "We deplore the implementation of such public health decisions based on discrimination, aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism amounting to persecution of Muslims and other minorities in the country. Such hostility against the minorities exacerbates existing prejudices, intercommunal tensions, and religious intolerance, sowing fear and distrust while inciting further hatred and violence."

You may find the following [guidance](#) from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights helpful in relation to this case:

- If derogations from a State's human rights obligations are needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, all measures taken should be proportionate and limited to those strictly required by the exigencies of the situation.
- Emergency declarations based on the COVID-19 outbreak should not be used as a basis to target particular individuals or groups, including minorities. Measures taken must not involve prohibited discrimination on any grounds such as race, colour, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Sources

Washington Post 12 February 2021 https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/sri-lanka-cremations-covid/2021/02/12/b97719a6-6562-11eb-bab8-707f8769d785_story.html
United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_COVID19.pdf

USA:

Megachurch pastor ignores public health regulations

Over a million people died from COVID-19 in the United States of America. By April 2020 every state in the United States had issued guidelines or orders limiting social interaction in an effort to slow the spread of the disease. Most states set out some exemptions for religious gatherings in their directives with the aim of balancing religious freedom with the need for social distancing practices.

Then Vice President Mike Pence said that churches should not host groups bigger than 10 people, in line with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendation that gatherings of more than 10 people be cancelled and that small gatherings maintain social distancing measures of 6 feet between participants. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia specified in their orders that religious gatherings could take place, but only if limited to 10 people or fewer. Around a third of states allowed religious gatherings to continue without any limit on their size. However, many religious leaders chose to either cancel, limit, or move worship online to comply with the CDC guidelines, despite state-level exemptions.

Florida was one of the last states to issue a state-wide stay-at-home executive order, which deemed religious worship services 'essential' and therefore exempt. Based on infection rates at the local level, some counties in Florida had previously introduced county-level restrictions. Rev. Rodney Howard-Browne, the pastor of a Pentecostal megachurch in Florida, chose to ignore one such stay-at-home order issued by Hillsborough County. He continued to hold worship services for up to 500 people at a time with no social distancing measures in place, ignoring pleas from local officials. He was subsequently arrested and charged with a misdemeanour.



CASE STUDY

FACILITATORS NOTES

This case highlights the need for religious communities and leaders to be aware of when the external dimension of the right to freedom of religion or belief, including the right to assemble for worship, may in fact be limited legitimately by the state. Ignoring public health emergency measures entirely puts vulnerable community members at risk during a pandemic. At the same time, a blanket ban on gathering for worship with no exceptions is disproportionate.

Sources

Pew Research Centre 27 April 2020 <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/04/27/most-states-have-religious-exemptions-to-covid-19-social-distancing-rules/>

Associated Press 5 April 2020 <https://apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-us-news-ap-top-news-freedom-of-religion-politics-2932726091de722fa3e4a5bf41c84d0c>.

Persuasion or coercion?



SCENARIOS

Annotated scenarios for facilitators

The following scenarios are designed to help participants reflect on when protected religious persuasion becomes prohibited coercion. The scenarios are designed for use with the '[Persuasion or coercion](#)' exercise on page 91 but could also be used in a variety of other ways. Find handouts of the scenarios at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/persuasion-or-coercion-scenarios.

Scenario 1: Discrimination as a source of coercion

A man from a Christian-majority community converted to Islam. After he converted, he could no longer secure work as a casual labourer in his community. Local employers refused to hire him because he was a convert to Islam. After six months out of work, he reconverted to Christianity. Within one month he was able to secure work.

FACILITATORS NOTES

This is an example of social hostilities. In this case, the convert to Islam experienced discrimination from within his community. Discrimination and coercion are often connected. This man was denied employment as he was a convert; this is a form of coercion to change his beliefs from his community.

Scenario 2: Risks for coercion in humanitarian provision

Following an earthquake in a Muslim majority country, a Muslim charitable organisation provided food aid to one of the worst-affected communities. The area was predominantly Muslim, but there was also a small minority of Christians. The charity used the local mosque as a food distribution point as it was one of the few buildings left intact. One of the charity workers felt moved to give da'wah (making an invitation to Islam) by what he saw around him. Because of this, some Christians believed they could not accept the food aid unless they converted to Islam and went hungry.

FACILITATORS NOTES

This is a complex scenario. On the one hand, the charity worker was exercising his right to manifest his beliefs by giving da'wah. However, context is important. In doing so, he risked violating the rights of others. Coercion can include the exploitation of situations of particular vulnerability. In the context of humanitarian disasters when people are in urgent need of humanitarian aid, linking the provision of aid to any expectation of conversion amounts to coercion. The charitable organisation should have a clear code of conduct in place for its workers, including ethical guidelines to ensure that the delivery of humanitarian aid is not linked to actual or perceived expectations of conversion.

Scenario 3: Children and coercion in schooling

A Catholic school offered free education to children from poor families. The school accepted children from any religious background. Every morning, the children were required to participate in Catholic worship, regardless of their own religious beliefs. If a child refused to participate on more than three occasions, they lost their place at the school. A state school was available in the area but offered a much poorer quality of education.

FACILITATORS NOTES

Religious communities who run schools (especially those run with private financing) may have confessional elements in school life in line with their institutional identity and independence from the state. For vulnerable minorities this can be an important part of the preservation of minority culture and traditions. However, children may not be forced to participate in confessional religious instruction against their parents' wishes and as children mature their own wishes should increasingly be taken into account. In this case, the school accepted students of all faiths without providing exceptions. States have a duty to ensure that children can get exemptions to confessional religious instruction not just in theory, but in practice. In this case, no alternative option is offered. There is also a threat to withhold something of value: access to quality education. This is a coercive practice.

Scenario 4: Legislative coercion and children

A Christian couple in a Muslim majority country had two sons. Following the couple's divorce, the children were brought up by their mother. Their father subsequently converted to Islam and the now teenage sons were re-registered by the authorities as Muslims against their will and against the will of their mother. The boys refused to take confessional religious classes in Islam in school and were thereby prevented from getting a school leaver certificate.

FACILITATORS NOTES

Law is by definition coercive, as citizens are compelled by the authority of the state to follow it. This is an example of legislative coercion to convert and violates the absolute ban on coercion to have or to change a religion or belief. Education regulations have also resulted in coercion through the denial of educational qualifications.

Scenario 5: Coercion in the provision of humanitarian assistance

Officials from the state-funded 'Rural Buddhist Mission' in a Buddhist-majority country visited a Christian minority area during a food crisis. They offered Christian families sacks of rice and promised to take care of their children by providing them with a government-funded place at boarding school if the children converted to Buddhism and changed their religion on their national identity card.

FACILITATORS NOTES

This is a clear case of coercion by a state-funded body. States have a responsibility to ensure that State institutions/state-funded bodies do not use the authority and resources of the state to coerce people to convert, especially in situations of particular vulnerability like a food crisis. Some states encourage religious persuasion activities on behalf of the State's preferred religion, while at the same time restricting the rights of people from other religions or beliefs to engage in religious persuasion.

Scenario 6: Punishment of legal persuasion

A local Christian pastor visited an indigenous community as part of his evangelistic work. One family in the community had recently converted to Christianity from the majority religion and he wanted to provide spiritual support and encouragement to them. While he was there, he visited four other families, shared his beliefs with them and invited them to pray with him. Two of the families decided to convert to Christianity. The local authorities were unhappy and reported the pastor to the police. The pastor was charged with 'forced conversion', found guilty and sentenced to one year in prison.

FACILITATORS NOTES

The pastor has a right to approach people with the purpose of talking about his beliefs. Those he approaches have the right to choose to listen or to ask him to leave, to choose to pray with him or not and to choose to convert or not. In this case two families chose to convert and two did not.

The conviction of the pastor is a violation of his rights and indicates that the authorities do not recognise the freedom of indigenous community members to change their religion or belief. 'Anti-conversion' laws have been widely adopted in India, Myanmar, Bhutan and Nepal. The laws appear to assume that it is unlikely that anyone wants to convert of their own free will and consent, instead treating all converts as passive recipients of external, unwanted pressures that they lacked the capacity to resist. As such, all religious conversions are seen as suspicious and liable to investigation and prosecution. Although prosecutions are relatively rare, these laws make converts and communities vulnerable to accusation, attacks and arrests.

Scenario 7: Social hostilities towards non-believers

A Muslim woman in a Muslim-majority country was threatened with physical violence by her community after she expressed agnostic beliefs in a social media post online. She publicly recanted her agnostic beliefs and stated that she is a Shia Muslim.

FACILITATORS NOTES

This is an example of social hostilities. In this case, the woman experienced coercion in the form of threats of physical violence from her community.

Scenario 8: Destruction of ceremonial artifacts to achieve 'salvation'

A group of evangelical Christians visited a remote area of Southeast Asia as part of their missionary work in the region. Communities in the area practice animist beliefs. Log drums are an important ceremonial element of the traditional belief system, used to announce important events. The evangelical group destroyed a log drum with a chain saw, telling the community concerned that this was a necessary part of saving their souls.

FACILITATORS NOTES

The right to freedom of religion or belief not only extends to followers of the world's major religions. In this case, the group of evangelical Christians violated the rights of those holding animist beliefs. This type of violation is as significant as destroying a Christian cross or desecrating a Muslim or Jewish burial ground, for example.

Scenario 9: Development assistance and coercion

A Catholic charity in South America was operating a clinic serving an indigenous community in the Amazon area. The community practiced traditional animist beliefs. The charity indicated to the community that they could provide other amenities such as drilled wells for a clean drinking water supply, if the community agreed to convert to Catholicism. The community elders convened a meeting with the whole community. They collectively agreed to convert to Catholicism. As soon as the charity had finished drilling the wells, the community collectively reconverted back to their traditional animist belief system.

FACILITATORS NOTES

Coercion to convert can include the exploitation of situations of particular vulnerability. When humanitarian aid or basic service provision is linked to an expectation of conversion it amounts to coercion. Here there was a promise of humanitarian assistance in exchange for conversion. The Catholic charity should have a clear code of conduct in place, including ethical guidelines to ensure that charity work or delivery of humanitarian aid is not linked to expectations of conversion. In this case, the community understood that this practice was coercive and pretended to comply!



Scenario 10: Legislative coercion to adopt/retain a religion

A young Muslim woman in a Muslim majority country met and fell in love with a Christian man and the couple wanted to marry. National legislation does not permit Muslim women to marry non-Muslims. The young man decided to convert to the majority religion in order to be able to marry his soulmate. He was ostracised by his family and community following his conversion. The psychological stress caused contributed to the marriage failing. Following his divorce, the man wished to return to his community, but legislation does not allow people to leave the majority religion.

FACILITATORS NOTES

Law is by definition coercive, as citizens are compelled by the authority of the state to follow it. In this example the couple's right to form a family is made conditional upon conversion. This is an example of legislative coercion to convert to and retain the majority religion and violates the absolute ban on coercion to have or to change a religion.

Source

Rachel Fleming

FORB and gender equality

The following case studies are designed to enable participants reflect on the multiple vulnerabilities that women and girls face based on their gender and their religious identity. Seven case studies are included from the UK, Nepal, India, Pakistan, China, Africa (several countries) and Indonesia. They cover a range of topics from employment discrimination to harmful traditional practices to extreme societal or governmental violence, including sexual violence.

The case studies are designed for use with the '[FORB and gender equality](#)' exercise on page 108.

Handouts are available for the case studies, and PowerPoint or video resources are available to illustrate some cases. Find all resources at www.forb-learning.org/exercies/gender-equality.

An 8-year-old nomad girl's story – India

THEMES:

Gender-based violence, social hostilities, corruption, equality before the law

In India, violence against women is a systemic problem creating vulnerabilities for all women. In 2016, 10 women were kidnapped per day in the Delhi area alone, largely for the purposes of forced marriage, forced prostitution or rape. Muslim women and scheduled caste/Adivasi women and girls are particularly vulnerable due to impunity for majority and higher caste perpetrators.

In 2018, an eight-year-old Muslim nomad girl taking horses to graze was abducted by eight people. She was taken to an isolated Hindu temple, heavily sedated, gang raped by at least three men over the course of four days and starved. Her body was found three weeks later, dumped in the forest.

Police report that the crime was pre-planned and rooted in a plot by a retired government revenue officer to strike fear in her Muslim nomadic tribe, the Bakarwal, and drive them from the rugged Himalayan region where they live as shepherds.

The case ignited religious tensions. Dozens of Hindu women organized hunger strikes and threatened to set themselves on fire if the case against the men proceeded and a mob of Hindu lawyers physically blocked police officers from entering a courthouse to file charges against the men. Two ministers of the ruling Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) expressed support for the accused.

In 2019, three men were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment for rape and three police officers were sentenced to five years in jail for tampering with evidence.

Sources

India Today <https://www.indiatoday.in/mail-today/story/10-women-are-kidnapped-in-delhi-everyday-1268826-2018-06-25>

BBC News <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-48552354>

Al Jazeera <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/6/10/india-court-jails-three-for-life-for-rape-murder-of-kashmir-girl>



CASE STUDY

Vasha and Ayesha's stories – UK

THEMES:

Employment discrimination, religious clothing

Muslim women in Britain are three times more likely to be unemployed than women in general. Women who wear the hijab bear the brunt of discrimination. An analysis of meta-data in the UK has also shown that the likelihood of Muslim women who wear the hijab being hired is 40% lower than for Muslim women who do not wear the hijab. This religion-based discrimination effect was deemed hugely significant in human, public health and policy senses. The data suggests that millions of Muslim women in the west are likely to have experienced employment discrimination over the past generation, with millions more likely to suffer if the status quo remains. The relatively greater employment discrimination experienced by Muslim women who wear the hijab is due largely to potential employers' prejudicial reactions to the hijab itself and perceptions of women who wear it.

Ayesha is a qualified legal professional, who wears a hijab. "I have a very good academic record and experience that surpasses many of my peers who are of a similar age. I have had interviews with five big household name companies for the role of in-house lawyer in the last year alone. After four consecutive rejections I decided to walk into my fifth job interview without my hijab. Bingo, I got the job. I now feel I have betrayed my principles for a job I could do just as well with my hijab on. I do not know if I would still have got this job had I worn the hijab in the interview. I wish I had the guts to start wearing it again. Hopefully, one day I will have the courage and my employers won't batter an eyelid."

Vasha had similar experiences, "As a young female Muslim woman who wears a headscarf and also as a working mother, I do feel in the past I have faced some discrimination when job hunting. This usually happened once I've passed the application stage and have been offered an interview. As soon as I walked into some interviews, I felt I already knew I was not going to be successful – I can see the disapproval on the interviewers' faces as they quickly glance up and down at what I am wearing. This knocked my confidence and made me feel like no matter how much experience I have and how good my education is, there are just some jobs I won't get. I have been completely put off from applying for any corporate jobs where I just know the culture does not support a Muslim lifestyle. I now work part-time for a university, which is an excellent employer, and where I feel completely welcome and I am seen as an individual, not judged on my race, colour or religion."

Sources

Employment discrimination faced by Muslim women wearing the hijab: exploratory meta-analysis, Sofia Ahmed <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15313204.2020.1870601?journalCode=wecd20>
BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-37042942>



CASE STUDY

Sofalta’s story – Nepal

THEMES:

Menstruation, harmful traditional practices, legitimate limitations, health

In parts of Nepal, traditional beliefs based in Hinduism lead women to be considered dirty, impure and bad luck during their monthly menstruation and immediately after childbirth. At these times women may not touch their husbands, water sources, fruit trees or livestock. It is believed that allowing women inside the family home during menstruation will infuriate the gods with dire consequences for the family and wider community.

Beliefs around menstruation are so deeply held that families take extreme risks, isolating menstruating girls and women in cowsheds or menstruation huts in the centuries-old tradition of Chhaupadi. In these huts, women are exposed to extreme temperatures and unsanitary conditions, resulting in risks of pneumonia, diarrhoea and respiratory tract infections. Each year a number of women die – from suffocation, hypothermia or snakebites for example.

Sofalta, 16, was terrified to tell her parents once she started menstruating. “It would mean staying in the cowshed, and I didn’t know if I could do it. I feel horrible here – the cow dung smells and the animals step on us. The dirt and hay get stuck all over my body. I wish that I didn’t have a period.”

Gita Rokaya, another woman from Sofalta’s mountain village in the western district of Jumla says “If we stay in the house [instead of the shed], we get ill because our deities don’t approve of it. We don’t want to live like this, but our gods won’t tolerate it any other way.”

Although the supreme court of Nepal banned the practice in 2005 and criminalised it in 2017, it is still widespread in western parts of the country, where low development rates, gender inequality and illiteracy contribute to its continuation. In these areas, the tradition is often supported by community elders, family members, traditional healers, and priests who have a profound influence in the community.

You may wish to show the following short video related to this case.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/video/2016/apr/01/menstruating-nepalese-women-confined-to-a-cowshed-video>

Sources

The Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/apr/01/nepal-bleeding-shame-menstruating-women-banished-cattle-sheds>

The BBC <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-47112769>



CASE STUDY



FILM

Maira's story – Pakistan

THEMES:

Forced conversion and marriage, rape, equality, religious personal identity law

In Pakistan, it is estimated that around 1,000 Christian and Hindu girls and women are abducted, forcibly converted to Islam and married each year. Many are sexually abused, and the police are often reluctant to pursue justice. This is Maira's story.

In April 2020, 14 year old Maira Shahbaz was abducted at gunpoint by three men and forced to convert to Islam and marry one of her abductors. A falsified marriage certificate claimed that she was 19 and her 'husband' insisted that she had married him and chosen to convert to Islam of her own free will.

Her parents went to court to get her back. A local court ordered that Maira be sent to live in a women's shelter until the High Court ruled. Despite her parents producing a birth certificate showing her to be 14 years old (below the age at which marriage is permitted) and despite the Grand Mufti of a local mosque declaring the marriage certificate produced in court to be false, the High Court ruled that Maira be returned to her abductor's custody.

Leaving Islam is banned in Pakistan, and non-Muslim parents cannot have custody of Muslim children, contributing to the vulnerability of girls to these crimes.

Two weeks later Maira escaped. Maira reports having been repeatedly raped. She also claims that her abductor and his family threatened to kill her family should she fail to support his version of events in the High Court. Maira now lives in hiding and is fighting to have her marriage annulled and her legal status changed back to Christian.

Sources

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom www.uscifr.gov

UK Parliament, <https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/57474/maira-shahbaz-and-child-abduction-forced-conversion-and-marriage-in-pakistan>

India Today <https://www.indiatoday.in/mail-today/story/10-women-are-kidnapped-in-delhi-everyday-1268826-2018-06-25>

New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/10/world/asia/india-muslim-girl.html>



CASE STUDY

Qelbinur's story – China

THEMES:

Sexual and gender-based violence, torture, arbitrary detention, inhuman treatment, forced sterilisation, genocide

Read out the following introduction and play either a four-minute or seven-minute film from The Guardian in which Qelbinur tells her story.

The Uyghurs are an ethnic and religious minority. The majority of Uyghurs are Muslims. Around 11 million Uyghurs live in the northwest province of Xinjiang in China, where the practice of Islam and of Uyghur culture are severely repressed. Any independent religious activity is deemed extremist. The Chinese government has punished women for wearing headscarves and men for growing beards. Up to 1.8 million Uyghurs and members of other Muslim-majority ethnic minorities have been sent to concentration camps for 're-education'. The Chinese government has also enforced systematic sterilisation policies on girls and women between the ages of 18 and 59 years old in an attempt to suppress population growth. This has had a dramatic effect on the birth rate for this group.

Listen to Qelbinur Sedik, a Uyghur woman who has been living in the Netherlands since 2019, waiting for her asylum application to be processed. Qelbinur has seen these camps first-hand and felt the government policies on her own body.

Find the 4-minute film here: <https://youtu.be/wtIQ-CGKh0E>

Find the 7-minute film here: <https://youtu.be/qc4hwH0TmSo>

NOTE

Both videos contain graphic descriptions of sexual violence against Uighur women and girls. Make sure you explain this to your participants before showing the video – give a trigger warning.

Sources

FORB Learning Platform online on-demand course FORB and gender equality - enemies or allies? A bird's eye view on FORB and women's rights module. www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender

The Guardian



CASE STUDY



4-MIN FILM



7-MIN FILM

Hajia's story – Ghana/Sub-Saharan Africa

THEMES:

Witch hunts, violence, harmful traditional practices, gender-based violence, economic incentives

In at least 36 countries, many of which are in Africa, people continue to be persecuted due to accusations of witchcraft. Women make up the majority of those targeted, although other groups, including albinos, children and sometimes men, are also victims. In 2014, 700 women were killed following accusations of witchcraft in Tanzania alone.

Yvette Valérie Banlog, the founder of an NGO working in 6 Central African states reports that women accused of witchcraft are usually elderly. Eighty percent of the women are widows and have no children living close by. Women whose appearance is 'unappealing' as a result of hunger, disease, disfigurement or a disability are the main targets, with most charges being made in rural villages. These women are considered a burden.

"How can someone like me be sitting in her house and you come to tell me I have spiritual powers? I don't know anything. I only recite my Quran every day." says Hajia Barichisu, a 60 year old woman from Poloyafong district in northern Ghana where many women have been accused of practicing witchcraft. Fortunately, Hajia's children were with her. Her accusers wanted her to confess but her children refused to bring her out. Gunfire then erupted.

Although elderly women are worst affected, children and young women are also at risk. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, children who have been raped or born out of wedlock are sometimes labelled "children of witchcraft" and rejected by their families. There is also a growing trend of accusations against young women when their husbands die. Young women who defy social norms by being financially independent, demanding the right to speak freely, choose a spouse, plan pregnancies and be active outside of the home are most likely to be accused. In the context of increasing pressures on land, accusations of witchcraft form a means for in-laws to recover the property of the husband who died.

You may wish to show an excerpt of one of the following documentaries

Journeyman Pictures <https://youtu.be/6cc11qj88kg>

Channel 4 <https://youtu.be/e3RvEaUeBuk>

NOTE

Both videos contain graphic descriptions of violence against women. Make sure you explain this to your participants before showing the video – give a trigger warning.

Sources

<https://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/witchcraft-accusations-perpetuate-womens-oppression-sub-saharan-africa>

<https://www.dw.com/en/witch-hunts-a-global-problem-in-the-21st-century/a-54495289>

<https://www.dw.com/en/ghana-witchcraft-accusations-put-lives-at-risk/a-35988061>



CASE STUDY



JOURNEYMAN



CHANNEL 4

Andin's story – Indonesia

THEMES:

Forced exorcism, transgender rights

For two decades, Andin's family has subjected her to harassment and abuse in an attempt to 'save' her from being transgender. She has been held in a locked room for days and bombarded with Koranic verses, as well as being drenched in icy water by an imam promising to rid her of the 'gender disease'. But the exorcism impacted her most profoundly.

Andin was taken against her will to a religious guru close to her hometown. Holding up a burial shroud used to cover the dead, he prayed over her and gave her the choice of giving up life as a woman or going to hell. "It's traumatising – the horror of that memory stays in my head," she says.

Forced exorcism is a common occurrence for gay and transgender people in Indonesia. Homosexuality is legal everywhere in Indonesia except in Aceh province which adheres to strict Islamic laws. But throughout the country it is widely believed that being gay or transgender results from being possessed by evil spirits and that religious ceremony and prayer are needed to exorcise the spirits.

In 2020, conservative Islamic lawmakers tabled a so-called "Family Resilience" bill. Among other measures the law would have forced gay and transgender people to undergo 'rehabilitation' to rid people of sexual deviancy. Given that exorcisms are widely used to 'treat' mental illness, Usman Hamid, executive director of Amnesty International Indonesia considered exorcism to be "the most likely option to be taken by officials in Indonesia when doing 'rehabilitation'".

The 'Family Resilience' bill was rejected by parliament. Andin doubts that things will get better. Her family keeps trying to cure her – most recently by sacrificing a goat. "Twenty years later, they still want me to be different", she says.

Sources

Bangkok Post www.bangkokpost.com/world/1914080/forced-exorcisms-touted-as-cure-for-lgbt-indonesians.

Andin's name has been changed.



CASE STUDY

FORB and family law

In this section, you can find links to three brief case studies from Palestine, Malaysia and India looking at religious personal identity/family law. These case studies are available in video or PowerPoint format on the links provided. An exercise using these case studies can be found on page 110.

Religious family/personal status laws in Palestine

Judge Scarlet Bishara, of the Ecclesiastical Court of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, shares a short description of legal and procedural problems concerning family law for Christian women in Palestine.

Find the film here: <https://youtu.be/-69Q3MYhzOE>



FILM

Religious family/personal status laws in Malaysia

Suri Kempe, a human rights activist, presents a short comparative description of gender-based discrimination in religious personal law in Malaysia, illustrating differences between Malaysia and other Muslim majority contexts.

Find the film here: <https://youtu.be/MQ9pekI0mdk>



FILM

Religious family/personal status laws in India

Use this brief PowerPoint presentation to touch upon discriminatory provisions in Hindu and minority personal status laws as well as problematic elements in the civil code concerning inter-caste and inter-religious marriages.

Find the PowerPoint here: www.forb-learning.org/exercises/family-law

Sources

All three cases are taken from the FORB Learning Platform's online on-demand course 'FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies? See the sub-module on 'The challenges with religious family law'. www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender.

The expert advisors

Here you can find two more in-depth case studies looking at issues of FORB and gender. They focus on the abduction and forced marriage of minority girls in Pakistan and religious personal status laws in Egypt. The case studies are designed for use with ‘[The expert advisors](#)’ exercise on page 112.

Find handouts of the scenarios at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/expert-advisors-scenarios.

Religious personal status laws, FORB and discrimination against women in Egypt



CASE STUDY

BACKGROUND


Personal status laws (PSL), also called family laws, are a complex matter and regulate rights and responsibilities within the family, like marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody. In many parts of the world these laws are based on religion, cultural practices and traditional values. In many countries different religious communities, (and sometimes different denominations within the same religious group), have their own legal systems and courts administrating these laws. The impact of personal status laws extends well beyond the private sphere, and often they have considerable influence over matters concerning for instance women’s economic empowerment, such as their ability to open a bank account as well as land and property rights. Religious PSL are often problematic both from a gender equality perspective and a FORB perspective for the following reasons:

- Laws often reinforce discrimination based on religion or belief, since they grant women different rights and degrees of legal protection depending on their religious affiliation.
- Women outside recognized religious groups fall outside any legal system in these matters.
- Laws often pose restrictions on women’s right to marry freely and raise their children in accordance with their religion or belief.
- Laws can coerce women to convert, e.g., in order to obtain a divorce more easily, or to refrain from conversion, in order to not lose custody over their children.
- Laws often reinforce discrimination against women by giving men more rights in family related issues.

PERSONAL STATUS LAWS IN EGYPT

In Egypt, Baha’is are not an officially recognised religious group and do not have an own personal status law. Their marriages are therefore not legally recognised, causing a lot of obstacles for Baha’i couples as well as their children. There is no civil marriage in the country and most religious authorities are strongly opposed to the concept. In relation to key aspects of their lives, Egyptian citizens are treated differently based on their perceived religious identity – often in ways that fail to guarantee equality in family issues and personal matters.

Laws that govern matters relating to marriage and family relations of the majority Muslim population provide a marital framework based on ‘reciprocal’ or ‘complementary’ rights rather than equal rights between spouses. Muslim family laws are a key domain of law where women face inequalities. Yet, as these



laws govern the majority of the population in Egypt, they have received more public attention than family laws providing for religious minorities in the country – whose laws are often based on colonial rulings from the 19th century.

A Muslim woman is not allowed to marry a non-Muslim man. In an interreligious marriage, where the man is Muslim and the wife is a Christian or a Jew, Muslim family law governs the relationship. Personal status laws for Christians only apply to Christian couples if they both belong to the same denomination. If spouses belong to different Christian denominations, they are subject to the personal status law for Muslims. For instance, if a Catholic woman marries a Coptic Orthodox Christian man, Islamic personal status law automatically applies to their marriage unless she converts to the Coptic Orthodox Christian denomination.

DIVORCE

Religious family laws in Egypt contain various very different regulations and restrictions when it comes to divorce. Under Muslim family laws, men have the unilateral right to divorce without legal proceedings. Muslim women have to apply for divorce through court action. If she does not provide evidence for harm or the incapability of the husband to provide for her, she will have to return her dowry and won't receive any alimony. Each Christian denomination has different regulations for divorce. Catholic personal status laws in Egypt forbid divorce entirely whilst Protestant and Coptic Orthodox personal status laws only allow divorce on certain grounds, like adultery or conversion of a spouse to another religion. In 2012 the Coptic Orthodox Christian churches added physical abuse and absence as acceptable grounds. Yet, due to lengthy legal proceedings and high fees, Christian women may be trapped in abusive marriages. As the process of seeking a divorce can take several years, it has often deterred women from seeking divorce. Sometimes women convert to Islam to obtain divorce more easily – but then face problems to re-convert back to Christianity.

CHILD CUSTODY

The legal provisions for custody in personal status laws are problematic and do not take into consideration the best interest of the child. For instance, in Muslim family law, physical custody of children is automatically transferred to the father at the age of 10 for boys and 12 for girls. For Coptic Orthodox Christians, the spouse responsible for the divorce cannot get custody of the children. Also, if a divorced Coptic mother gets remarried, she is deprived of the custody of her children. A divorced woman's entitlement to reside in the marital home or receive support to live elsewhere is solely dependent on her custody of the children and the current Coptic law can render divorced women homeless.

REFORMING PERSONAL STATUS LAWS

Reforming these personal status laws in Egypt has been challenging as they reflect customs and beliefs in society that are reinforced by traditional and religious authorities. Given a discriminatory wider context in which Sharia is seen as the main source of law (including civil law), the Coptic Orthodox church considers personal status laws to be a crucial part of the Church's right to institutional autonomy, guaranteeing minority rights. None the less the State always has a duty to ensure that any legislation enforced on its territory respects human rights, meaning this autonomy cannot be total.

The Coptic Orthodox, Evangelical and Catholic churches have recently worked together to draft a new unified personal status law for all Christians. The draft new personal status law would for instance create gender-equal inheritance

rules and extend the justified grounds for divorce. It is currently (2022) pending approval at the Cabinet.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN EGYPT

The Constitution of Egypt includes numerous articles protecting the rights of women, preventing discrimination and providing equal opportunities. For instance, Article 53 of the Constitution states that all citizens are equal before the law and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (amongst other factors). Egypt has also ratified CEDAW but maintains reservations to Article 16 (equality in marriage and family life) based on the provisions of Islamic and Egyptian law under which husband and wife have different rights and duties.

Scenario

Your team works for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights based at the regional office in Beirut and you are on an official visit to Cairo. You have recently met women’s rights activists who raised concerns about the discriminatory nature of religious personal status laws in Egypt. One of the activists, Miriam, told her own story to highlight the multiple challenges with the personal status law.

Both Miriam and her husband are Coptic Orthodox Christians. They have been married for 10 years and have two daughters. Miriam’s husband is abusive and after years of enduring in a difficult marriage, she feels like the only safe option for her is to seek divorce. Yet, she is facing a challenging situation. As a spouse seeking for a divorce, she would likely lose the custody of her daughters. Also, if she lost the custody of her children, she would also lose her entitlement to stay in the family home or receive support to live elsewhere - which would add a real risk of rendering her homeless as she has been financially dependent on her husband. Seeking to remarry would also not be an option as this would deprive her of the custody of her children as well. She could convert to Islam since it is slightly easier to gain divorce under Islam but is hesitant to do so since she knows it is really difficult to reconvert back to her Christian faith. Furthermore, the legal process for divorce is lengthy, often expensive as well which is also making Miriam unsure about the feasibility of this option. Yet, she fears to stay in the marriage which is draining her emotionally and physically.

You are aware of the current reform process to create a unified personal status law for Christians and after meeting Miriam and other activists, your team wants to take action. You have approached your contacts at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Egypt and a meeting between your delegation and their team has been secured for next week to discuss the religious personal status laws in the country.

Sources

FORB and gender equality: Enemies or Allies, www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender



ROLE-PLAY

Abduction, forced conversion and forced marriage targeting religious minority girls and women in Pakistan



CASE STUDY

BACKGROUND

Women face systematic challenges in Pakistan, including high prevalence of different forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Women and girls from religious minority backgrounds – Christians, Hindus, Hazara and Ahmadi – are disproportionately targeted with specific forms of SGBV and gender-based discrimination such as ideologically motivated sexual grooming, abductions, forced conversions and forced marriages. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, around 1000 cases of forced marriages and abductions of religious minority girls were reported in the province of Sindh alone in 2018. Most of the victims come from economically marginalized backgrounds. The cases of abduction, forced marriage and forced conversion illustrate how gender, class, socio-economic status and religious affiliation are deeply entangled.

Convictions of perpetrators of these crimes are rare. The police regularly fail to act in response to complaints from parents, even if the girls are under-age. The police might claim that the girl has chosen to elope of her own free accord, and therefore it is not something for the police to investigate. This emboldens the perpetrators to threaten the families of the girls with more violence if they do not refrain from searching for their daughters. The marginalised position of the families of the girls might also make them unable to challenge the case in court. If the case is taken to the court, perpetrators sometimes provide falsified marriage certificates and confirmation of the conversions from imams. The perpetrators often have support from religious groups who are well-connected to those with political power. Girls may also be forced to confirm that the marriage and conversion was voluntary from her side and lie about her age. This makes the judge unable and/or unwilling to challenge the forced conversion and marriage. Even if the marriage is dissolved, it is still difficult to legally reverse a conversion to Islam.

Evidence gathered by the Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development (CREID) shows that there is a pattern of girls and women being targeted for sexual grooming, not only out of sexual predation but as a wider political project to hurt the religious minority and create a religiously homogenous society. The act of ‘acquiring’ of women from the religious minority is intended to symbolise the superiority of the religion of the majority. At the same time, it is also intended to humiliate the religious minority by bringing about shame. The loss of women is equated with the loss of honour, since women’s bodies are in many ways perceived as representing the community’s honour.

The right to freedom of religion or belief is set out in Article 20 of the Constitution of Pakistan. Supreme Court judgement from 2014 broadened the scope of this article and directed the Government to take concrete actions to address discrimination, including developing school curricula that promotes religious harmony and setting up a taskforce to address religious intolerance. Article 25 of the Constitution further states that all citizens are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of law, and Article 35 of the Constitution assumes responsibility to protect the marriage, the family, the mother and the child. The Pakistan Penal Code Section 364A criminalises kidnapping and abduction of girls and women as well as forced marriages (Section 365B). There is no specific federal law prohibiting domestic violence.

Pakistan has adopted several international instruments to eliminate child, early and forced marriage. It ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990 which sets the minimum age of marriage at 18 and it has also ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which guarantees free and full consent to marriage.

Former Prime Minister Imran Khan made repeated commitments to protect religious minorities in the country. In February 2020, he said: “I want to warn our people that anyone in Pakistan targeting our non-Muslim citizens, or their places of worship will be dealt with strictly. Our minorities are equal citizens of the country.” Yet, there are allegations of him in 2019 hosting at his residence one of the main clerics behind the campaign of forced conversions in Sindh. Furthermore, the respect for the right to freedom of religion or belief was promised to Pakistan’s religious minorities by the country’s founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah in 1947: “You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the state.”

Religious minorities in Pakistan continue to be marginalised in multiple ways and they face hate speech, violent attacks and persistent discrimination. Blasphemy laws continue to be used to target religious minorities who are disproportionately accused under these laws. In 2020, despite criticism from human rights organisations, Pakistan was elected as a member of the UN Human Rights Council, the most important intergovernmental body within the UN system responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe. The members of the Human Rights Council are expected to uphold the highest standards of human rights.

Scenario

In March 2021, Kavita Oad, a 13-year-old Hindu girl was abducted, forcibly converted and married in Sindh province. On 8th of March, five men, some carrying pistols, entered Kavita’s family house and dragged her into a vehicle before driving away. The next day, a video was released of Kavita sitting on the floor, surrounded by hundreds of men singing maulood (praise for the Prophet in Sindhi language). When the family attempted to seek justice through filing a case, they were faced with pressures from the abductors to withdraw their case and their house was set on fire by thugs, her younger brother injured, and their valuables were stolen. The family already belonged to a financially marginalized class. The perpetrators are still free even though their identity is well-known.

Your team works for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, and you are on an official visit to Pakistan. You have been alerted to the issue of forced conversion and abductions of religious minority girls in Pakistan during a meeting with a local women’s rights NGO. The case of Kavita Oad has received some coverage in the international newspapers as well and you have discussed the case with your colleagues. You all agree that your delegation should talk to your contacts within the Government to raise the concerning case of Kavita Oad within the wider context of abductions, forced conversions and forced marriages of religious minority girls. You have approached your contacts at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and a meeting with their team has been secured for next week.

Source

FORB and gender equality: Enemies or Allies, www.forb-learning.org/courses/forb-and-gender



ROLE-PLAY

The widows of Kandhamal

Annotated version for facilitators

The following article can help participants identify many ways in which FORB and other human rights are limited, by analysing a concrete case of communal violence in India. It is designed for use with the exercise of the same name on [page 116](#).

The following annotated version can help you identify a range of rights violations together with participants. Violations of the following 13 articles of the UDHR are identified: 2,3, 4, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26.

A handout of the article for participants is available at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/kandhamal-handout.

The widows of Kandhamal

Asmita's husband Rajesh was buried alive in a muddy riverbank in the remote Kandhamal district of India's Odisha (Orissa) state, just over four years ago.

He is not enumerated in the official death toll of the anti-Christian pogrom which began in August 2008, because police did not find his body. In fact, they did not look for it.

Asmita has no death certificate, because you don't get one here if the body hasn't been found and identified. She doesn't get a widow's pension since, officially, she isn't a widow. Either for want of resources or inclination, her husband's family no longer cares for her.

She has sent her two young daughters to hostels for their safety and education, but they are 300 miles apart because that is where spaces could be found for them.

Other widows of the 2008 violence have equally desolate stories. Their husbands are among over 90 killed during the wave of anti-Christian attacks that followed the assassination of local radical Hindu nationalist leader, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, by Maoist insurgents. One widow said her husband was cut up and burnt inside a church, and the case was never brought to trial. Another, whose husband was murdered inside the church he oversaw, said her future was simply "full of sorrow".

The widows of Kandhamal may have among the worst tales to tell, but in a way, these are a metaphor for the wider community of victim-survivors of that terrible violence four years ago: broken by tragedy, let down by the system, and struggling to cling on to any hope that their lives can be pieced together again. It is hard to escape a nagging feeling that the worst sting of the 2008 pogrom was not necessarily in the violence itself, but in the long months and years afterwards, as the unresolved suffering of its victims is gradually forgotten about.

The sting is in the miserable failure of the justice system, which lets down the victims at every turn. Catholic Archbishop Raphael Cheenath started writing letters to the state government in the 1970s, warning that sporadic episodes of targeted violence against Christians in his diocese were building up to something bigger in the future, and urging that justice be done to safeguard against this. His warnings were tragically vindicated.



ANALYSE

TIP! Article 3: Right to life, liberty and security

TIP! Article 18: Freedom of religion or belief.
Article 28: Right to peace and order.
Article 8: Right to remedy by a competent tribunal.

TIP! Article 22: Right to social security.
Article 25: Right to an adequate standard of living.
Rights denied as a result of failure of police to investigate.

TIP! Article 26: Right to education.
Article 3: Right to safety.
Article 16: Right to family life.
The family cannot live together due to the lack of security and the lack of safe access to education.

TIP! Article 3: Right to life, freedom and safety.
Article 18: Freedom of religion or belief.
Article 2: No discrimination.
The state has failed in its duty to protect citizens, despite warnings of the problems over many years.

The 2008 violence was devastating – many of the 90 who were murdered died in terrible circumstances, and over 56,000 fled from their destroyed homes.

But hundreds of complaints were never filed properly by police. Of those that were filed, many more – such as Asmita's – received cursory investigation and did not result in conviction.

The justice system has made little effort to accommodate the needs of victims and witnesses. Many are uneducated and need patient help to get their statements straight, while nearly all of them fear reprisals from the accused if they testify against them, and the state provides little or no protection. When perpetrators have been convicted, they have often been bailed in non-bailable offences, such as state assembly member Manoj Pradhan, out on bail despite receiving a seven year prison sentence for rioting and causing grievous harm in one of the fourteen cases against him.

A girl who was raped on account of her uncle's Christian faith is terrified for her life, as the rapists are on bail after a superficial investigation and continue to threaten her. She, like many, has lost all confidence in the justice system.

The sting is in the poverty of the victim-survivors, many of whom now struggle to survive. A terribly haphazard compensation programme left many in want of their basic needs, including food and shelter. The state effectively devolved its own responsibility to charities and churches to meet these needs.

The extremist Hindu nationalists who stoked the violence in the first place have worked hard to manufacture antipathy between people along religious lines, and now the Christian survivors, many of whom worked as daily wage labourers, do not get any work from Hindus.

Charities have built houses for many victims, giving the impression they live in reasonable conditions - but when you go inside, you find they are boiling pumpkin leaves to survive, because they can't afford rice. Some collect leaves from sal trees in the forests and sew them together into plates; they need to work for eight hours to make 120 plates, which would earn enough (15 rupees, about 17p) to buy a kilogram of the lowest-quality rice.

It is in the way the local administration has bowed to the hard-line Hindu nationalist groups, the Sangh Parivar. Their infrastructure in this region surpasses that of any other institution, including the state itself, particularly through a network of formal and informal schools which covers almost every village, and they have an immense influence over the local administration.

This is the result of its decades of activity in the area, creating a strong Hindu nationalist mindset among local people, while promulgating hate against Christians (the largest religious minority here), positioning themselves as a bulwark against violent Maoists, and putting about propaganda to the effect that Christians and Maoists are in cahoots with each other and pose a common threat.

Now the local administration seems to have outsourced some of its welfare provision to the Sangh Parivar. The configuration of welfare benefits here is complicated, but anyone (of any religion) who belongs to a "Scheduled Tribe" is eligible for a range of benefits, including school scholarships, jobs, and land ownership. However, the local administration is routinely telling tribal (Adivasi) Christians that they must obtain Scheduled Tribe certification from the Sangh Parivar groups; and these groups insist the Christians convert to Hinduism first.

TIP! Article 3: Right to life, liberty and security
Article 17: Right to own property.

TIP! Article 8: Right to remedy by a competent tribunal.

TIP! Article 7: Right to equality before the law
Victims are not assisted, whilst influential convicted perpetrators are freed.

TIP! Article 5: No cruel or degrading treatment.
Article 3: Right to security.
Article 8: Right to remedy by a competent tribunal.

TIP! Article 8: Right to remedy by a competent tribunal.
Article 25: Right to an adequate standard of living.

TIP! Article 2: No discrimination.
Article 23: Right to work.

TIP! Article 25: Right to an adequate standard of living.

TIP! Article 19: Freedom of expression
Failure of the state to implement the required limitations to freedom of expression – namely the ban on the advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. Note that these limitations are expressed in the ICCPR article 20.2, rather than the UDHR so it is unlikely participants will identify this. Inform participants of these limitations.

TIP! Article 2: No discrimination
Article 22: The right to social security.
Article 18: Freedom of religion or belief.
Right to social security denied based on religion.
Access to social security used to coerce people to convert.

This is against the law, but it continues, and it locks the Christian community into a spiral of ever-worsening poverty.

It is in the way community has been shattered. Efforts to address the material needs of all the impoverished people in this region have been seriously hampered: a tribal welfare centre in Paburia village was burnt down because it was run by a Christian, and with no compensation and continued opposition, it has now been swallowed up by the jungle.

Thousands of victim-survivors have simply migrated elsewhere, some of them falling into the hands of traffickers along the way.

TIP! Article 4: No slavery or servitude. Trafficking.

Hope has not flickered away entirely, thanks in large measure to bold human rights activists who help keep it alive among the victims. An appeal to the Supreme Court is being prepared, to reopen over 30 murder cases which were dismissed without proper investigation.

The National Human Rights Commission has been approached to secure a comprehensive package of compensation more in line with that which victims of 1984 anti-Sikh violence and 2002 anti-Muslim violence eventually received. And on 30 August, around 5,000 victim-survivors held a rally in the district town to build solidarity among themselves, and to march for justice, security and livelihood.

TIP! Article 2: No discrimination
Differences in levels of compensation given to different groups of victim. (Although other groups also had to struggle to get that compensation.)

Nobody, though, has a deeper resolve than the widows on behalf of their children - that they will live lives of freedom and security, and honour the memory of their fathers. But for that to happen, they will need all the help they can get. Is anyone listening?

Sources

David Griffiths, The Huffington Post UK, November 2012. Used with permission.

Speaking of religion

The following case studies are designed to enable participants reflect on the intersections between Freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression. There are three case studies from Nigeria, Pakistan and Myanmar. They are designed for use with the '[Speaking of religion](#)' exercise on page 126 but could be used in many other ways.

You can find handouts of the case studies at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/speaking-of-religion-handouts.

Mubarak's story - Nigeria

Mubarak is an outspoken atheist in a deeply religious country. His alleged crime: posting blasphemous statements online. He has already spent almost two years in pre-trial detention – the maximum secular court sentence for blasphemy charges. Mubarak was held incommunicado in police custody for eight months. His wife Amina feared that he was dead.

Mubarak grew up Muslim but declared he was an atheist in 2014. His family reportedly checked him into a psychiatric hospital. After he re-emerged into public life, he became president of the Humanist Association of Nigeria and championed the rights of the nonreligious on social media.

Prosecutors in the northern state of Kano cited posts on Mubarak's popular Facebook account as evidence for charging him in June 2021 in secular court. He faces many charges, including "insulting the religion of Islam, its followers in Kano State, calculated to cause a breach of public peace," according to court documents.

After 600 days in detention, his wife Amina said she hoped her husband of two years can come home soon but thinks Nigeria could be a dangerous place to build their lives. She worries about the emotional effect on their son, who was born six weeks before Mubarak's arrest. "He has a lovely son that barely knows him," she said during a recent visit to Mubarak's prison. "My neighbours are home. They are with their husbands and their children. I feel like, 'Why is mine not like them?'"

In April 2022, Mubarak was sentenced to 24 years in prison, convicted on 18 counts.

Sources

Associated Press 18 December 2021 <https://apnews.com/article/africa-religion-nigeria-ce936d8627ca1c233e479961ac440944>
USCIRF <https://www.uscirf.gov/religious-prisoners-conscience/mubarak-bala>



CASE STUDY

Shafqat and Shagufta’s story – Pakistan

On 3 June 2021, Christian couple Shafqat and Shagufta were acquitted of blasphemy, after spending seven years on death row. Imprisoned since 2013, the couple were convicted and sentenced to death in April 2014. Shagufta worked as a caretaker in a Christian school, whilst her husband Shafqat is partially paralysed. They faced execution for allegedly sending ‘blasphemous’ texts to a mosque cleric, from a phone containing a SIM card registered in Shagufta’s name. The couple have consistently denied the allegations and believe Shagufta’s National Identity Card was purposely misused to obtain the card and send the messages following a minor dispute with a neighbour.

Their appeal was due to be heard in April 2020, six years after they were sentenced, but it was postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The couple’s four children remained in hiding throughout the delay, since the blasphemy accusations could lead to extremist attacks against them. The couple faced death threats after the news of their acquittal broke. The family have since sought refuge in another country.

Sources

Amnesty International

BBC World News 3 June 2021 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-57347604>



CASE STUDY

Htin Lin Oo’s story – Myanmar

In December 2014, Htin Linn Oo, a prominent writer and information officer for the National League for Democracy in Myanmar led by Aung San Suu Kyi, was charged under sections 295(a) and 298 of the Penal Code for “insulting religion” and “wounding religious feelings”. The charges were brought against Htin Linn Oo following a speech he gave at a literary event in October 2014, in which he promoted religious tolerance and criticised members of the Buddhist clergy (the Sangha) for misusing Buddhism as a basis to incite religious hatred and discrimination against minority religious groups.

Since 2012, waves of anti-Muslim violence had been spreading throughout Myanmar, linked to ultra-nationalist sentiment and anti-Muslim propaganda circulating on social media. Groups such as 969 and the Organisation for the Protection of Race and Religion (known by the acronym Ma Ba Tha) led by prominent monks, delivered sermons on the ‘existential threat’ that Islam posed to Buddhism in Myanmar and called for boycotts of Muslim-owned businesses.

In June 2015, Htin Linn Oo was convicted of “insulting religion” and sentenced to two and a half years in prison with hard labour. He was later released under a Presidential pardon on 17 April 2016, along with other 82 other prisoners.

Sources

PEN America

International Commission of Jurists



CASE STUDY

Saara the student journalist



ROLE-PLAY

The following fictional scenario is designed to help participants explore both the intersections between FORB and freedom of expression and the roles legislators, officials, religious and social actors can play in preventing and resolving the types of problems illustrated in the scenario. It accompanies the exercise of the same name (see [page 130](#)).

You can find a handout of the scenarios to print out at www.forb-learning.org/exercises/student-journalist-handout.

Saara's story

Saara lives in a conservative, deeply religious society, with strict blasphemy laws. She is a journalism student. Through her volunteer work for a progressive student newspaper, she discovered that a professor was demanding sexual favours in exchange for grades. She began documenting students' stories anonymously and managed to interview a staff member at the university's personnel department. Following the interview, word about the coming article began to spread among the staff. Before her article was published, an old post from her Facebook page came to light in which she criticised religious leaders who use religious arguments to justify gender-based violence. This old post together with an accusation that she is an atheist agitator began to be shared among some conservative students at the university. An extremist social media network got hold of the story, shared the accusations and it went viral.

The viral post now included details of the identity and address of Saara's family. Protestors began to gather outside her parents' house and at the University. At the university, a high-profile politician and an extremist preacher held speeches in which they accused her of being an apostate blasphemer and likened her journalism to a disease that is invisibly infecting young people and must be eradicated by whatever means necessary. They accused the University of allowing students to be morally corrupted by allowing the student newspaper to operate independently.

Saara's parents called the police and their religious leader for support. The police came but stood some distance from the house, watching. However, the religious leader gathered a group of other respected local religious leaders who came to talk to the crowds. They attempted to calm the crowds, saying the matter would be fully looked into and that they should not jump to conclusions. The police felt obliged to defend the religious leaders and eventually the crowds dispersed. Her parents were then moved to a safe location by an NGO working on blasphemy issues.

Meanwhile a riot developed at the university and the offices of the student newspaper were burnt down with several people injured. The city police arrested Saara, charging her with blasphemy and disrupting social harmony. Following this, protestors at the university dispersed. The university closed down the student newspaper as its work was leading to public order concerns. No other arrests were made.

Sources

Katherine Cash, SMC Faith in Development/FORB Learning Platform

Index of case studies by country

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Vietnam	Authorities harass independent religious groups	State control, registration, harrassment, denial of identity documents	232

PART 3



Guidance and tools

In this section, you can find a range of additional resources to help you prepare and run trainings.

- Tips for planning workshops and trainings
- Sample learning objectives for FORB trainings
- Tips for facilitation
- Responding to tricky questions
- Find ready made knowledge inputs
- 50 messages for presentations on FORB
- Key human rights commitments relating to FORB
- Find information about FORB in your country
- Further resources and courses from the FORB Learning Platform

Tips for planning workshops and trainings

When developing a programme, it is important to consider the following elements:

The building blocks of human rights training

Human rights training is about enabling learners to understand and embrace the principles of human equality and dignity and commit to proactive work to respect, claim, defend and promote rights. By sensitizing people to human rights in everyday life, human rights training can lead people to recognize injustices and discriminations that they were previously unaware of or accepted in their own communities, and to respond to these. The ultimate goal of human rights training is empowerment, equipping people to take action for change. It does not stop at the level of raising awareness.

Human rights training focuses on learning objectives in four main areas: knowledge, attitudes, skills, and action. These four elements form the building blocks of human rights training.

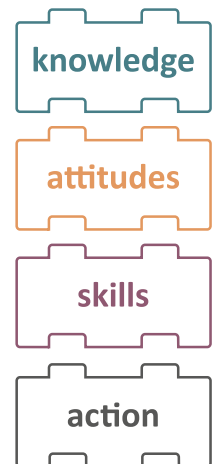
KNOWLEDGE: The knowledge building block relates to the objective of building knowledge and understanding, but it's not just about learning facts. It involves critical thinking and reasoning – the ability to apply a human rights 'lens' to all sorts of situations and recognise when and how human rights are being violated or protected.

ATTITUDES: The attitudes building block relates to the objective of transforming attitudes. It focuses on the values, beliefs, and emotions that motivate a person to care about and act for human rights and on creating interpersonal connections.

SKILLS: The skills building block relates to the objective of empowering people with the skills needed to promote, claim and defend human rights.

ACTION: The action building block involves providing a supportive learning environment for participants to practice using the knowledge and skills they have learnt to take action, a critical part of experiential learning.

Try to include exercises that cover all of the building blocks in your training. To help you do this, you will find one or more of the above building block icons next to each of the exercises in this toolkit. You'll notice that a single exercise may contribute to several building blocks. Although early sessions of a training tend to focus more on attitudes and knowledge with a greater focus on skills and action coming in later sessions, the four building blocks tend to be woven together throughout the training.



How to write learning objectives

Learning objectives state the intended outcomes of a training in terms of the new knowledge, attitudes, skills or actions a learner can demonstrate after completing the learning experience. Learning objectives provide focus for the design, implementation and evaluation of training – they are the starting point that influences all other decisions. By making sure you have an objective for each building block you can ensure your training is balanced. When writing learning objectives, remember to think both about what you want to achieve through the training (e.g., attitude change, behavioural change) but to also put yourself in the participants' shoes and consider:

- What is their learning goal or their 'job to be done'? Why (from their perspective) do they need this training?
- What do they need to know to be able to create change – what level of knowledge do they need?
- What skills do they need in order to take action to create change?

TOOLS FOR FORMULATING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Here is a handy formula for creating learning objectives that are measurable:

"AFTER THE TRAINING, PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO [DO - ACTION VERB] + [WHAT] + [WHERE/WITH WHOM]".

This formula requires you to use action verbs. Below you can find a tool that helps you choose action verbs for your learning objectives. You may notice that some common words are missing from the list - for example know, learn, feel, think, believe, understand and improve. These words are not included because they're impossible to measure directly. How do you know that your participants understand their rights at the end of the training? Action words like 'describe' are more helpful. Can participants describe their human rights for one another? That's something you can check!

TIP! Use our compendium of sample learning objectives for FORB trainings on [page 280](#) to develop your own.

ACTION VERB EXAMPLES



KNOWLEDGE: Define, list, describe, summarise, give examples, explain, identify, recognise, memorise, repeat, report, translate



ATTITUDES: Show(e.g., empathy, commitment), express, verbalise, share, acknowledge, display



SKILLS: Analyse, interpret, apply, relate, compare, distinguish, critique, defend, demonstrate, plan, organise, use




ACTION: Organise, implement, support, defend, criticise, oppose, take care of, investigate, document, report, design, develop, test, revise, write, publicise

When formulating your learning objectives remember to think about evaluation. What evidence will you look for to know if participants have understood a new concept, changed attitudes, mastered a new skill or developed actions?

Adapting to your audience

Target audiences for training to promote human rights and freedom of religion or belief include:

- People directly affected by violations who could be empowered to claim their rights.
- People who could act in solidarity with those affected.
- People or institutions that are part of the problem and need to be challenged.
- Duty-bearers who need to be motivated and equipped to use their power in constructive ways.



In the context of freedom of religion or belief, it's important to remember that these groups are not necessarily distinct from one another. For example, a faith leader may be directly affected by violations of FORB, and at the same time contribute to FORB problems within their own faith community or in relations with other communities. As a faith leader they are also a moral duty bearer who could use their power in constructive ways.

Whatever your target audience, when planning the contents of a training to meet their needs and fulfil the learning objectives it is useful to consider these questions:

EXPERIENCE: What sensitive issues are there? How does the issue impact them? Do they bring with them historic or current experiences, events and traumas?

KNOWLEDGE: What do they already know, and what are the gaps in their knowledge?

ATTITUDES: How do they see freedom of religion or belief related issues? Are there deep-seated values that can help or hinder?

SKILLS: What skills do they already have? What are the gaps?

ACTION: How can they practice using the skills needed?

Reflecting on your answers to these questions will help you determine the focus of your training at the macro level – the topics to cover and issues to tackle. It is also important to think through the micro level. How can you adapt exercises to ensure participants get the most out of them?

Most of the exercises in this collection use methodologies that draw upon the experiences of participants, rooted in their own context. However, there are additional easy ways to tailor exercises to the context – for example, revising role-play scenarios to better fit local realities, adapting case-studies and including stories from your shared context as you present or conclude exercises.

Integrating gender perspectives

Freedom of religion or belief violations are gendered. Women and girls have different experiences of violations than men and boys. Violations affecting women and girls are usually more hidden than those affecting men and boys – particularly when sexual violence is involved, but also because these violations may occur within the faith community or family. Often, religious communities are represented by men, and it is the experiences of men and the interests of religious institutions that are highlighted. Regardless of the context you are working with, gender dynamics will affect your participants' experiences and the way they relate to one another in the group.

Make conscious decisions to include exercises that enable you to explore the gender dynamics of freedom of religion or belief with your participants and to ensure that the voices of women and girls are heard throughout.

TIP! You can find a selection of exercises focusing specifically on FORB and gender on [page 96](#).

Sample learning objectives for FORB trainings

Writing learning objectives that are learner focused and SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-limited) is not easy. This document provides sample learning objectives for FORB trainings developed by participants in the FORB Learning Platform's training of the trainers course (www.forb-learning.org/courses/tot). Looking through them may provide help and inspiration as you develop your own learning objectives tailored to your audience.

The learning objectives are divided into four categories according to the 4 building blocks of human rights education: knowledge, attitudes, skills and action. To some extent, they each use the standard formula for learning objectives: "After [learning experience] the participants will be able to [DO – action verb] + [WHAT] + [WHERE/WITH WHOM]".

KNOWLEDGE

After the workshop, participants will be able to:

- EXPLAIN concepts of human rights to people around them.
- DEFINE/DESCRIBE freedom of religion or belief, what it encompasses and what it does not.
- DESCRIBE the main challenges to/restrictions upon FORB in their context.
- EXPLAIN how FORB relates to other human rights.
- IDENTIFY local and international laws protecting/governing FORB.
- IDENTIFY human rights institutions and mechanisms through which recourse could be sought.
- IDENTIFY when FORB is made instrumental for illegitimately limiting other rights and vice versa.

ATTITUDES

After the workshop, participants will be able to:

- DESCRIBE why human rights and FORB are important to them.
- CRITIQUE prevailing majoritarian narratives.
- EXPRESS recognition of the rights of religious minorities.
- EXPRESS empathy towards people from other groups who are facing FORB violations.
- EXPRESS solidarity with victims of violence and discrimination.
- EXPRESS the importance of promoting and protecting FORB for all.
- EXPRESS commitment to speaking about the importance and universality of human rights in their community.
- EXPRESS a sense of encouragement, empowerment and inspiration to persevere.
- DESCRIBE the positive role they can play as FORB advocates.

SKILLS

After the workshop, participants will be able to:

- RECOGNISE violations of human rights in their context.
- DIFFERENTIATE between religious interests and freedom of religion or belief as a human right.
- ANALYSE the human rights/FORB situation in their context, including the root causes and effects of FORB violations.
- INVESTIGATE whether their own behaviour/practices/traditions are discriminatory.
- ARGUE constructively for revisions/changes to discriminatory practices.
- DIALOGUE with decision makers to lobby for changes.
- EXAMINE/IDENTIFY the causes of inter-religious clashes and proffer solutions.

- IDENTIFY and APPLY the correct law to a specific situation.
- STRATEGIZE and IMPLEMENT interventions for the promotion of human Rights and FORB in the local context.
- USE conflict resolution skills to RESOLVE conflicts in their areas.
- DOCUMENT violations of human rights clearly.
- ANALYSE their networks and IDENTIFY potential allies and avenues for relationship building and collaboration.
- CONSTRUCT strategies for nonviolent action to promote FORB in their community.

ACTION

After the workshop, participants will:

- IMPLEMENT an action plan for FORB advocacy in their organisation.
- MAKE FORB an integral part of their organisation's agenda.
- USE practical skills acquired to ADVOCATE for human rights at the local and international level.
- CONDUCT needs and context assessments that are FORB sensitive.
- DESIGN and IMPLEMENT activities to tackle FORB issues in their local context.
- MOBILISE their respective faith communities to stand up for human rights and FORB.
- COLLABORATE across political, religious and geographic borders.
- COMMUNICATE and PUBLICISE human rights in their work and personal environment.
- EXPOSE the negative implications of religious intolerance.
- RAISE AWARENESS of the benefits of FORB.
- TEACH and TRAIN others facing similar challenges.
- ESTABLISH small networks that connect activists and communities.

Audience specific learning objectives

Below you can find some examples of learning objectives for particular target audiences developed by participants in our online FORB [training of the trainers](#) course. The more specific the role of your audience the easier this is.

After the training, asylum centre managers will be able to:

- IDENTIFY and EXPLAIN the importance and relevance of FORB in their work as asylum centre managers.
- DEMONSTRATE EMPATHY and COMMITMENT to FORB through their actions.
- PUBLICISE AND COMMUNICATE the value and importance of FORB to their colleagues and all asylum seekers
- APPLY their knowledge of FORB to implement structures to effectively INVESTIGATE, DOCUMENT and REPORT claims of harassment and intimidation from asylum seekers.

After the training journalists will be able to:

- WRITE articles that demonstrate their knowledge/understanding of the rights to freedom of expression, FoRB, and equality and non-discrimination
- QUESTION/challenge authorities when they use language that may be intolerant and/or discriminatory against religious minorities
- REPORT responsibly on religious and ethnic conflict without stirring religious and/or ethnic sensitivities.
- FORMULATE positive strategies to tackle hate speech when they encounter it in journalistic work of the media concerns they are affiliated to or among their peers.

Tips for facilitation

What is a facilitator?

DEFINITION

To facilitate: to make an action or process easy, easier or possible

A facilitator helps make the process of learning, exploring attitudes and gaining new skills easier for participants.

A FACILITATOR:

- uses participatory methods to help participants engage and interact with each other and the issues in fun, serious and inspiring ways.
- creates an environment of trust, openness and mutual learning, where differences of opinion are respected, for example helping the group establish ground rules.
- recognises and addresses power imbalances in the group, ensuring that everyone feels included and has an opportunity to participate.
- provides a structure for learning and leads participants through the process.
- makes sure the 'housekeeping' is done – preparing the session, setting up the meeting space, notifying participants and so on.

The resources of this toolkit are designed to help you do these things. The exercises include a clear structure for the learning processes and clear guidance on how to prepare for the sessions.

A FACILITATOR IS NOT:

- a teacher or lecturer – in participatory learning processes a facilitator is a peer to the participants and guides a learning process to which everyone contributes.
- necessarily an expert – although the facilitator prepares each session, some participants may know more about the subject than the facilitator! Everyone's knowledge is drawn upon.
- the centre of attention – a good facilitator speaks less than other participants, drawing them into the discussion.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE about facilitating human rights education on FORB? Apply for our free online FORB Training of the Trainers' course. Priority is given to those actively engaged in providing human rights education on FORB in contexts of serious violations.

FORB TRAINERS COURSE

Read about our online TOT [here](#).

General facilitation tips

PREPARE YOUR SESSIONS WELL AND BE FLEXIBLE!

The better prepared you are, the more confident you will be. Adapt the activities to your group in advance and be flexible during sessions as you see what exercises need more or less time.

PROVIDE AN OPEN-MINDED FORUM

Attitudes are transformed in processes where we have the space to hear other voices, think and develop without feeling forced to take positions we are not ready to take. Allow opportunities for participants to disagree and to arrive at positions that are different from your own. Avoid arguments that aim to establish winners and losers.

AVOID SIMPLE ANSWERS TO COMPLEX QUESTIONS

The causes of rights violations are usually complex, involving many factors such as cultural norms and power structures. Be cautious about oversimplifications, especially of reducing responsibility for the denial of rights to one or two causes, e.g. religious identity. Encourage participants to analyse the various factors that contribute to their experiences.

STRIVE FOR PRECISION OF LANGUAGE AND DISCOURAGE STEREOTYPES

Resist the temptation to generalise and help participants to avoid generalising e.g., “Muslims are...”, “Hindus think...” or “Women don’t...”. Remind participants that even if many members of a group share common experiences or beliefs, generalizations need to be qualified (e.g., “sometimes”, “in many cases”).

AVOID COMPARISONS OF PAIN

Encourage solidarity and empathy between individuals and groups rather than comparison, competition or argument as to who has it worst.

DON'T HESITATE TO SAY I DON'T KNOW

Remember that a facilitator is also a learner! When you can't answer a question, ask if anyone else can. Resist the urge to try to answer all questions yourself, especially if the question involves an opinion (e.g., “What is the best way to respond to hate speech?”). Instead, ask the group how they would answer the question and open up for differing ideas.

WORK IN A TEAM AND KEEP A RECORD

Facilitators learn from experience and from each other! Try to work in a team of 2-3 facilitators who plan, run and evaluate trainings together. Note what happened at each session, including adaptations and changes to plan, new ideas, successes and difficulties. This will help you plan future workshops.

Common challenges facilitators face

FACILITATION CHALLENGE: POWER DYNAMICS

There are systematic power imbalances in society – between men and women; racial, ethnic, or religious groups; adults and children/young people; physically able people and people with disabilities; educated people and people lacking education. These imbalances affect how participants relate to each other and to the facilitator. The participation of religious leaders in FORB trainings influences group dynamics, as does discussions of issues that women are not expected to have opinions on according to local cultural norms, (e.g. theology). Power dynamics are often hidden, and facilitators need to monitor and manage them to ensure a positive space for learning.

Here are some tips on managing power dynamics:

- Be observant! Be aware of how dominant or quiet participants are, where they are sitting, their posture and how they are relating to each other and to you.
- Use your own power as a facilitator to subtly challenge and modify negative power dynamics, for example by referring to ground rules or emphasising that you welcome all participants' opinions and ideas.
- Use participatory exercises and small groups to get participants moving around and engaged. Try to ensure that the same people are not always working together.

- Lead discussions, being systematic about inviting everyone to speak and ensuring everyone is listened to.
- Encourage shy participants to speak, especially if they seem to be on the verge of saying something (hand tentatively raised or nodding head, for example). Use your own body language, for example moving closer to them or encouraging them through eye contact.
- Use praise generously but avoid being patronizing.
- Give responsibility to people whose voices are not heard – for example appointing them to report back from groupwork.
- Never allow comments that denigrate others, convey a sense of superiority or arrogance, or that are harmful, cruel or discriminatory to go unchallenged, especially if these are aimed directly or indirectly at other participants. Refer to the ground rules or ask the “offending” participant(s) to explain why they said what they did and invite other participants for their opinions on the situation.
- Depending on the context, it may be easier (and in some cases, necessary) for girls and women, and boys and men to talk separately before sharing within the whole group. This also applies to different age, religious or cultural groups.

FACILITATION CHALLENGE: SENSITIVE ISSUES

Human rights engage our values, feelings and opinions, and can challenge our world views and preconceptions. Some participants may feel that the subject matter contradicts or threatens their values, beliefs and customs, and trauma may influence the responses of participants who have experienced human rights violations.

If participants become irritable, withdrawn, sabotage discussions or become aggressive, this can be a sign that they feel threatened by sensitive issues.

As a facilitator, your role is to manage the discussion and group dynamic by maintaining a safe environment for everyone including yourself, providing a non-judgmental forum for mutual learning and keeping the discussion relevant to human rights/FORB.

Here are some general tips on dealing with sensitive topics and tensions:

- Think through the session in advance, identifying sensitive issues, and thinking through how to handle situations that might arise.
- Don't hurry through a process to avoid controversial discussions. Allow people to ask awkward questions.
- Don't get drawn into arguments. You are the facilitator not a debating partner.
- Remember that human rights education involves building skills to discuss issues we disagree on. The group doesn't have to agree on everything!
- Prepare the ground – spend time developing ground rules and doing exercises that develop empathy and trust.
- Use personal contributions that draw on your own experiences to stimulate participants to open up and participate more fully.
- Refer to the ground rules when tensions appear and remind participants of the importance of listening and respecting different views.

- Acknowledge objections to human rights. Explain that we all benefit from understanding and working through conflicts of values and ideas.
- Welcome resistance! Use it as a tool to facilitate dialogue, asking group members to share thoughts, reactions or worries about the issue. Negative attitudes need to be talked about openly in a group setting in order for transformative learning to take place.
- Acknowledge and address tensions. Pause the process, say you can feel tensions in the room, ask participants to identify the differing opinions and ask whether it is okay to disagree. Ask the group's opinion about how they want to handle the topic. They may, for example, want to discuss the issue in small groups or a separate session, or they may want to stop the discussion. Express any personal reservations you have. For example, you could suggest postponing a particular topic until the group has got to know each other better and established mutual trust and understanding.
- If disagreement risks derailing the session and damaging relationships, then 'park' the discussion and refocus on issues where consensus can be built.
- Don't expect too much! Work gently to build dialogue on issues of disagreement. People are very unlikely to immediately and publicly change their minds in relation to deeply ingrained stereotypes and norms. However, being exposed to alternative points of view and building relationships of empathy makes participants more likely to reconsider their views over time.

FACILITATION: DIFFICULT INDIVIDUALS

Sometimes an individual, intentionally or unintentionally, obstructs the solidarity and effectiveness of the group, for example by dominating conversations or by focusing on their phone. Solutions are as varied as individuals and situations, but the following strategies can help.

- Use tact and humour when a participant has spoken for too long. For example, quickly interrupt them between points, with a comment such as: "That's a good point, thank you! What do others think?" or point to your watch and smile.
- Give a domineering participant a task, for example writing up the ideas of the group on a flip chart. This may diffuse their need to dominate others.
- Acknowledge when group dynamics aren't working well and remind people of the ground rules. Make sure that points like no interrupting, all discussions are confidential, no phones, and everyone's opinion is respected are included in the ground rules. Emphasise that enforcing the ground rules is everyone's responsibility and allow group pressure to solve the problem.
- If necessary, speak to a participant who is overly dominant or disrespectful on a one-to-one basis, for example in a break. Convey that you value their participation, point out the challenges, ask for solutions and discuss ways they can help improve the learning environment.
- As a last resort a participant can be asked to leave the group. The bad feelings evoked by such a step must be weighed against the bad feelings they create in the group.

Source:

The 'Tips for facilitation' section is adapted from ['The Human Rights Education Handbook'](#), Nancy Flowers et al., published by The Human Rights Resources Center and The Stanley Foundation. Used with permission.

Responding to tricky questions

As you run trainings on freedom of religion or belief, you might encounter tricky questions about human rights from participants. Here we have compiled some potential questions and objections you might encounter and ideas for responding to them. Every audience and context is different, so not every objection or response will be relevant for you. Nonetheless, we hope this compilation will help you prepare for difficult conversations.

When you respond to objections, remember to affirm any truth to be found in the objection and any personal experiences it reflects. Remember that it is ok to respond to by saying that you don't know and that hopefully the training process will help you explore the answer together! Processes of attitude change are usually slow and gradual. Aim to gently sow and water seeds of change rather than expecting immediate changes of opinion.

For factual questions about what FORB involves and when it can be limited, please watch our series of [short films](#) on the topic.

Many tricky questions relate to HOW to tackle a particular problem for FORB and make change. The exercises in the '[Action planning for FORB](#)' section on page 163 can help your group explore the answers to such questions.

**WATCH
THESE FILMS**
to help you answer
factual questions
on FORB.

---- RISK AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS ----

Strong objections to human rights, and in particular religious objections, may be a warning sign of risk. In difficult contexts, frank discussion about rights and violations may result in existing tensions within the group becoming accentuated, or in risks to the safety of you or your participants. If discussions move in a direction that could lead to risk, break the discussion off, acknowledging the sensitivity of the topic. Divert discussion to areas of mutual agreement and spend some time focusing on relationship and trust building exercises in the group.

NOTE

To challenge or to listen?

It can be tempting to challenge people and say 'your attitude is bad' or 'you've got that wrong' in response to some statements. It may indeed be necessary to stop some discussions and remind people of the ground rules, particularly if others in the group feel attacked or demeaned. However, changing mindsets often necessitates listening and appreciative reasoning – a sensitive conversation in which both the facilitator and person raising objections try to find common ground, however small. One to one discussion in breaks or after sessions may be a useful approach, especially if the person with the objection is dominating discussions or contributing to a negative atmosphere within the group.



Theme – Majorities versus minorities

OBJECTION: The majority should have more rights! They have the right to decide in a democracy.

OBJECTION: Minorities should take on board our beliefs and lifestyle if they want to live here, it's our country.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- In a democracy the political party that gets the most votes is invited to form a government. But for a democracy to be sustainable and healthy, that government needs to protect everyone's interests. Without equal rights for all citizens, democracy can become a tyranny of the majority – rather like two wolves and a sheep voting on what to have for dinner!
- If your government can deny rights to minorities and if minorities here must conform to majority beliefs and lifestyles – what does that mean for people of your faith who live as minorities in other countries? Is it ok for their governments to do the same thing and deny them rights?
- Democracy is dependent upon human rights. Free and fair elections are impossible without rights such as freedom of speech and of information, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of the press, and the universal right to vote. Without these rights citizens can't form political parties, form an informed opinion about who to vote for or vote safely.
- Diversity of cultures and traditions enriches society in many ways, for example through the arts and food.

OBJECTION: Human rights are only important for minorities.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- Human rights are important for people who belong to all kinds of minorities because they often face greater risks, for example of discrimination. Nonetheless, human rights are for everyone. Human rights seek to protect everyone from the abuse of power and promote everyone's welfare. No one wants to be arrested for no reason, tortured or discriminated against and no one wants their children to be denied an education. Regardless of whether we belong to a majority or minority, we all want to live in societies where we are protected from these things – societies where our human dignity is protected by right.
- We have multiple identities. I might be part of a religious or ethnic majority but belong to another kind of minority – for example through having a disability.



Theme – Western values and plots

OBJECTION: Western powers use human rights to put down and harm the standing of other countries, even though they don't respect the standards themselves. Human rights are just a tool for political power games.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- Any tool, however good, can be misused. Human rights are sometimes used in political power games. It's also true that no country has a perfect record on human rights (although some have far better records than others). Some governments commit blatant violations of rights while accusing others of the same. But that doesn't mean that human rights are unimportant for us – the rightsholders. They are about our freedom, safety and well-being.
- A lot of human rights abuses happen in the community – for example through discrimination and hate crimes. Even if governments fail, we as citizens can contribute to making human rights a reality in our communities. We can also join together to stand up for one another's rights and challenge government failures to respect rights. When we do this, it becomes harder for governments (western or otherwise), to continue to commit human rights violations. The question is not if governments play political games, but what we can do to make human rights a reality for ourselves and our communities.

OBJECTION: Human rights are foreign, Western values and cultural imperialism.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted by representatives from many parts of the world with different religions and beliefs. Those representatives emphasised that human rights are about human dignity and the needs we all have in our daily lives. Almost all countries in the world have signed up to human rights – agreeing to respect, protect and promote them.
- Human rights are about how we should be treated and treat others in our schools, farms, workplaces, homes and neighbourhoods. They aim to protect us from abuse by those who have power over our lives – landlords, employers, teachers or even family members, and from abuse by the authorities. That matters to us all.
- Look at the rights formulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and pose questions. Do any of them relate to things we consider to be human needs? Which specific rights do you think are 'foreign'? Are there any we don't want for ourselves?

OBJECTION: Human rights are individualistic. In our culture, collective duties and relationships are more important than individual rights. The fabric of our society will fall apart if everyone claims their rights without regard to their responsibilities.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- It is true that human rights take their starting point in the rights of the individual. It's important that individuals have rights – because as individuals we can be vulnerable to abuses, for example by corrupt officials or abusive family members. When that happens, we should have access to justice and help.

- Even if human rights take their starting point in the individual, many human rights protect the things we do together. For example, we have the right to form a family, freedom of assembly gives us the right to meet in groups, and freedom of religion or belief protects our right to belong to a community of believers, form religious organisations and worship together. There are also some group rights protecting indigenous peoples and minorities.
- Human rights also involve responsibilities. Everyone has the responsibility to accept and respect other people's rights – to treat people well and to work for a society where no one is subject to the abuse of power. The fabric of society would be much stronger if everyone took that responsibility on board.

Theme – A toothless tool and an irrelevance

OBJECTION: States violate human rights repeatedly and no one stops them. They fail to protect people. What's the point? Human Rights are just words on paper.

OBJECTION: Human rights might work for people in the West or people in the cities, but they have no impact on village life.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- There is no international police force to stop governments that violate human rights. The international community often fails to stop severe human rights violations. And when governments enact laws and policies to enshrine human rights, these sometimes have little impact at the grassroots level. Nonetheless, human rights are not pointless.
- Human rights can't be achieved from the outside. Making human rights a lived reality for ordinary people is a process that we create within our communities and nations. The process is often painfully slow, demanding patience, bravery and good strategies – especially when those in power don't want things to change. The journey towards change is often long and made up of small steps. Many things may be unrealistic to achieve in the short term, but the journey is worth it.
- Good laws, regulations and policies are important at the international, national and local levels, but the next step is vital too – building institutions that function. That means making sure the rules are well known and followed by everyone with responsibility for them. This involves building awareness, skills and systems of accountability at every level – from the rural village to the supreme court.
- Many rights abuses take place in the community. Achieving human rights relies on raising awareness of rights and transforming attitudes, values and behaviours among ordinary people at the grassroots level.
- There have been many achievements! Campaigns to abolish slavery, to gain the right to vote for all, to enact laws that protect women from domestic violence or to ensure households in marginalised areas gain access to public services like healthcare and electricity – these are just a few examples of how human rights work has made life better for ordinary people all over the world. It's easy to forget how many rights we have gained through the struggles of past generations.

Theme – Religious objections to human rights

NOTE

Religious objections touch upon complex, sensitive issues and religious interpretations and reasoning are highly contextually varied. The suggested responses below provide basic general advice and do not include discussions of particular religious teachings.

If you anticipate that these issues might be difficult to handle in your group, consider inviting a resource person who shares the faith tradition of those with objections to help you run a session. Are there religious organisations or leaders that work for human rights in your context that you could approach?

The motivation of the person asking questions/objecting is also important to consider in order to assess risk – are they genuinely curious, wanting to know if they can be both true to their faith and work for human rights, or actively trying to be divisive?

Remember that it is ok to say you don't know and to suggest that participants keep thinking about how their faith relates to the topics discussed throughout the course.

FORB AND THEOLOGY

Find resources for several religions [here](#).

OBJECTION: Human rights are a human creation. We follow the divine will and law. Our religion provides all the answers we need – we don't need human rights!

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- Human rights are a human creation. Nonetheless, within every religious tradition there are many scholars, leaders and members who believe that the contents of human rights broadly reflect core teachings of their religion about human dignity, justice and responsibility. Perhaps as we explore human rights together, we'll discover elements of common ground with our faith traditions.
- Human rights fulfil a different function to religious teachings. In a world where people of many faiths and none live side by side, human rights give us a common language to talk about the kind of society we want to build together. They also provide a legal framework we can use to hold governments to account – to make sure they respect human dignity and justice.
- Representatives of many religions and beliefs were involved in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the drafts were intensely debated by all the members of the United Nations. Some of these debates were about how the rights proposed relate to religious and humanistic values. The goal was to develop a declaration that would be truly universal – to define rights that everyone can agree on, regardless of religion or ideology.

OBJECTION: I can't work for human rights and/or FORB because they are not acceptable in my religion.

Trainings can easily be derailed by discussions of particular rights or ways of implementing rights that people disagree with. Ask what specific rights the objector is concerned about. Unless agreement on that particular right is key to achieving your aims, try to refocus on areas of agreement and gradually widen the area of consensus for us.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- Ask whether there are human rights/aspects of FORB which reflect the values of the objector's faith tradition and if there are human rights problems that they would like to see tackled. Point out that the purpose of the training is not that we should agree on everything but to become stronger changemakers, tackling problems in our communities.

- Try to give examples of the concrete impact violations of the right concerned have on individuals, groups and society. How does the harm created relate to messages of human dignity and love to be found in our religions?
- Perhaps limiting rights through laws is not the best method for promoting ethics and morals.
- Ask the group what their religion(s) says about the right they object to and what should happen to people who exercise it. Is there only one relevant text or interpretation? Are there texts, values or interpretations that support the right in any way? Have teachings changed over time?
- Countries with the same type of religious majority handle human rights and FORB very differently. There is not one Muslim, Buddhist or Christian way to legislate on human rights.

TIP! Ask a religious leader or theologian who is committed to human rights to help lead discussions like this!

QUESTION: Doesn't accepting equal rights for other religions imply that I think all religions are equally true? Do I have to give up thinking that my religion is the only true religion to work for FORB for all?

OBJECTION: Why should we give equal rights when our religion is superior?

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- Freedom of religion or belief protects your right to believe that your religion is the only true way. It also protects other people's right to believe their religion or belief is the only true one. It's not the place of human rights or international law to pass judgement on questions of religious truth. Human rights focus on people, based on ethics of human dignity. They create a safe space in which we can live side by side with all our differences, by establishing minimum standards for how we should treat each other with respect and dignity.
- Most religions highlight the importance of human dignity and include some version of the golden rule – that we should treat others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Ask participants if their religion has a golden rule and to share teachings that relate to this. Ask if it is possible to live up to the golden rule if people don't have equal rights?
- Treating people equally in relation to the minimum standards of human rights is not the same as saying that we approve of their beliefs. We can fundamentally disagree with people's beliefs without resorting to discrimination, violence or denying rights. Limitations to the right to practice religion are only allowed when the practice concerned threatens other people's rights and freedoms, public health etc.
- Are there rights we want for ourselves, but think should be denied to others? If we deny other people these rights, how can we be sure there won't come a time the government thinks it's ok to deny our rights? Unless everyone has rights, no one has rights. What we have then are legal privileges which the state has temporarily granted us and can remove whenever it suits the state's purposes.
- Human rights are what protect people of our same faith who live as minorities in other countries. If we say that the majority or the state in our country can decide who has rights and who doesn't, then we are saying that it is ok for other states/majorities to deny people of our same faith their rights.

Theme: Freedom and control

QUESTION: Those people practice religion in a way that doesn't fit well with our culture. Not everyone from that religion practices in that way so it's obviously not essential. If it's not essential, we should be able to forbid it.

QUESTION: If religious authorities say that a religion should be practiced in one way, why should we allow people to do it differently?

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- Religions are enormously internally diverse. There are different ways of doing things within any given faith and there is rarely one religious authority that is accepted by all believers. In an increasingly mobile world people with diverse ways of doing things live alongside each other.
- Imagine you had to flee to another country. How would you feel if that society denied the right to practice in ways that you hold dear or forced you to practice religion in a way that went against your conscience?
- People don't have to prove that their practices are essential to their religion in order to be allowed to practice them. We should be free. In order to restrict our freedom to practice religion, the state has to show that the limitation proposed is necessary, for example to protect public health or the rights and freedoms of others. Replacing freedom with unnecessary restrictions leads to resentment and social tension, puts excessive and arbitrary power in the hands of the state and moves society away from democracy and towards dictatorship.

Theme: Offence and harmony

QUESTION: Is there a right to be protected from being offended?

OBJECTION: Allowing minorities/freethinkers to talk about/practice their religions freely risks undermining our values and social cohesion.

OBJECTION: No one should offend other people's religious feelings. We should ban blasphemy and other offensive speech and behaviour. This is how we can maintain harmony and protect the sacred.

OBJECTION: We should be protected from our religion being portrayed in negative ways – it results in discrimination.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES:

- According to international law, everyone has the right to believe, practice and express their beliefs freely, so long as that practice does not harm the rights and freedoms of others. International law does not protect us from having to see and hear things we disagree with or from critique of the things we value. There is no human right to protection from feeling offended.
- It can seem logical and moral to ban offensive speech and behaviour, in order to protect social harmony. It is, however, impossible to define what is offensive. Some people are offended by the mere existence of ideas other than their own. According to international law, the speech that should be banned is hate speech that incites hatred and violence. Laws on blasphemy, apostasy and 'protecting social harmony' are usually much broader than this. They tend to:
 - be vague making it hard to know what is considered illegal.
 - define offence from a majority perspective (in practice if not in theory).

- be open to abuse and false accusations – it’s hard to prove you didn’t say something.
 - encourage violence by supporting the idea that we should punish people who peacefully express beliefs that the majority don’t like.
 - result in people who peacefully express their beliefs being blamed for social tensions. People who react to peaceful expression with hatred and violence should bear that responsibility.
- It may seem right to ban the ridicule or critique of religions and religious institutions in order to protect the sacred. However, external and internal critique plays an important role in making religious institutions stronger and more faithful. Religious institutions are staffed by people and people sometimes get things wrong. It is only possible to deal with problems when we can talk about them without fear. Recent scandals concerning child abuse in religious institutions illustrate the importance of this freedom.
 - Might ‘harmony’ built upon minorities and freethinkers keeping quiet about their beliefs and identities be a pretence that is only experienced as harmony by the majority? Will we have a stable, peaceful society in the long term if only the majority feel there is harmony and cohesion?
 - There is no human right to protection from feeling offended. In fact, critique and the tolerance of diverse and contradictory opinions are vital for a healthy society. However, when the state, the media and/or majority communities engage in the systematic negative and antagonistic portrayal of minority religions, discrimination and violence towards followers of that religion results. This is the case even when the individual statements being made do not amount to hate speech or incitement to violence. Respect for human rights and the stability of society are dependent on the state and the media behaving ethically and impartially. Work to promote ethics in politics, the media and public discourse and prompt responses to hate speech and incitement are of enormous importance.

“These tips have helped participants in the FORB training of the trainers course to build their confidence in facilitating conversations on sensitive topics. It helps them recognise that there is more than one ‘right’ way to handle tricky questions. Attitude change can take time - it’s so helpful to have gently thought-provoking responses at hand”

RACHEL FLEMING, FORB TOT FACILITATOR

Find ready-made knowledge inputs

The FORB Learning Platform has ready-made knowledge inputs on a range of topics in the form of short explainer films and PowerPoint presentations with scripts. On this page you can find links to the resources available. Please note that many of the resources are available in multiple languages.

Don't forget that you can also find short presentations in some of the exercises in this toolkit and in the three information sheets provided on specific topics – see an overview below.

Ready-made PowerPoint presentations and scripts

The following presentations are designed for grassroots level audiences with little previous knowledge of human rights, but work well with most non-expert audiences too. They form part of the Local Changemakers Course and are available in [several languages](#). Find all the presentations at www.forb-learning.org/changemakers-presentations.

- Human needs – human rights – human responsibilities
- The songs of the flute and the drum – a FORB storytale that introduces the right indirectly
- Introducing freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- Identities and stereotypes
- Understanding violations of freedom of religion or belief
- How things get worse, and better (presents Candelin's three phase model of persecution)
- Tactics for promoting human rights
- Our Change Journey – a visual tool for action planning

FIND PRESENTATIONS from the LOCAL CHANGEMAKERS COURSE [here](#).

Films

Short 'explainer' films can be a great way to introduce a topic. The FORB Learning Platform has a wide range of short films to help you, in multiple languages. Find all our films at www.forb-learning.org/films or our YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@freedomofreligionorbelief>.

INTRODUCTORY LEARNING PACKAGE (AVAILABLE IN OVER 20 LANGUAGES)

- Freedom of religion or belief – an introduction
- The right to have or change religion or belief
- The right to manifest religion or belief
- Protection from coercion
- Protection from discrimination
- Rights for parents and children
- Conscientious objection
- Limitations to freedom of religion or belief

TOOLKIT FOR PRACTITIONERS (ENGLISH ONLY)

- Three phases of persecution – a tool for context analysis
- The triangle of violence – a tool for context analysis
- Six lenses for looking at religion (religious literacy)
- Five principles for human rights education

ACCESS TO JUSTICE (ENGLISH ONLY)

- Access to justice – an introduction
- Access to justice at the local and national level
- Access to justice at the global level
- Access to justice – the Universal Periodic Review

Other resources to help you create knowledge inputs

The following brochures provide very useful contents for preparing FORB presentations:

- A quick guide to religious freedom: What freedom of religion or belief involves and when it may be limited. (Available in English, Arabic, French and Swedish at www.forb-learning.org/forb-library.)
- Freedom of religion or belief for everyone. Published by Stefanus Alliance international. (Available in 12 languages at www.stefanus.no/english/forb-booklets.)
- Freedom of religion or belief for everyone: Women in focus. (Available in English and Arabic at www.stefanus.no/english/booklets.)

Several exercises in this toolkit include useful contents for knowledge inputs as part of the comments suggested for the facilitator or in an accompanying information sheet. (English only.)

- [COVID 19 – legitimate limitations?](#) (Topic: public health grounds for limitations)
- [Different dangers](#) (Topic: the gendered nature of violations)
- [Speaking of religion](#) (Topic: blasphemy laws)
- [The hate speech barometer](#) (Topic: hate speech, Rabat threshold test)
- [Change chairs](#) (Topic: introducing conflict)
- [Challenging pillars of power](#) (Topic: power analysis, non-violent resistance)
- [Action planning with the gender integration continuum](#) (Topic: integrating gender in FORB programming)
- [FORB and gender – information sheet](#)
- [FORB and religious family law – information sheet](#)

The FORB Learning Platform's on-demand online courses '[FORB for all](#)' and '[FORB and gender equality – enemies or allies?](#)' also provide useful contents for the development of knowledge inputs.

TIP! Look for resources in your language in the FORB library, by entering the name of your language (in English) in the search field. www.forb-learning.org/forb-library.

50 messages for presentations on FORB

The following table can help you reflect on and choose messages for sessions that you plan. Choose the messages suited to your context and your audience's existing knowledge level and role.

TOPIC	POSSIBLE MESSAGE
Who is protected?	Just like all other human rights, FORB protects people, not religions or beliefs in themselves.
	FORB protects people who identify with, believe in or practice old religions, new religions, religions that are traditional in a country and religions that are not traditional in that country. It also protects people with serious non-religious beliefs about fundamental questions, like atheists, humanists and pacifists. Freedom of religion or belief even protects people who don't care about religion or belief at all.
What is protected?	FORB is guaranteed by Article 18 of the United Nations International <u>Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</u>
	The heart of FORB is the freedom to have, choose, change or leave a religion or belief and the freedom to practice or manifest a religion or belief.
	FORB also provides the right to protection from coercion and discrimination in matters of religion or belief, the right for parents to bring up children in accordance with their beliefs, the right to conscientious objection to military service.
General points	Freedom of religion or belief is in everyone's interests. Violations of freedom of religion or belief threaten peace, stability, economic development and people's access to other human rights such as health, education, employment, the freedom of expression and association. If these things are important to us then FORB is important too.
	People of all religions and beliefs are affected by violations of the right to different degrees and in different ways in different places. Somewhere every group faces intolerance, discrimination and persecution.
	There are three types of problem for FORB - government restrictions on religion, government favouritism of one or more groups over others and social hostilities. These three problems tend to reinforce one another and contribute to a vicious cycle of discrimination and violence.
The right to have or change religion/belief	The right to freely have, keep, change or leave your religion or belief is an absolute right which means that, according to international law, this right may never be limited by anyone, anywhere.
	Many people are denied this absolute right and punished or attacked for their religion or beliefs, by governments, by family members or by groups in their community.
	In many countries, religious identity, national identity and the identity of the state are seen as closely intertwined. This can lead to religious minorities and people who leave the majority religion, including atheists, being seen as disloyal to the nation or a threat to national security.
	Government restrictions can include bans on particular religions or beliefs (eg Falun gong in China, Pentecostals and Shia Islam in Eritrea) or bans on leaving the majority religion (eg Pakistan, Saudi Arabia). Punishments can include the death penalty, imprisonment, loss of employment or the annulment of marriage and loss of child custody.

TOPIC	POSSIBLE MESSAGE
	<p>Social hostilities include hate crimes where individuals are attacked because of their religious identity or beliefs, mob violence, forced conversion or terror attacks.</p> <p>There are significant problems in many Muslim majority countries (eg Egypt) but not all (eg Sierra Leone). Problems are not limited to countries with Muslim majorities (eg forced conversion of Muslims to Christianity in Central African Republic, legislation requiring converts to seek government permission in parts of India).</p> <p>Converts, atheists, dissenters and people who criticize religious ideas, or the relationship between religion and the state are particularly vulnerable to violations.</p> <p>The freedom to change religion or belief is very controversial at the international level.</p>
<p>The right to manifest religion or belief</p>	<p>Everyone has the right to manifest their beliefs in teaching, practice, worship and observance. To manifest means to express faith or beliefs in words and actions. International human rights law gives people the right to manifest publicly or privately, alone or together with others.</p> <p>This right may be limited in some circumstances (see limitations below).</p> <p>Both individuals and communities have rights. However, religious and belief communities do NOT have human rights over their members, (rights to demand allegiance/practice) but rights in relation to the state. One of the most important rights for communities is the right to gain a legal identity if they want to, so that they can hold bank accounts, employ people, own buildings and run institutions.</p> <p>UN experts have provided plenty of examples of activities that are protected by FORB, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To come together for worship, celebrate festivals and observe days of rest. • Wear religious clothing and follow special diets. • To have places of worship, cemeteries and to display religious symbols. • To play a role in society, for example by forming charitable organisations. • To talk about and teach religion or belief, and train or appoint leaders. • To write, publish and spread literature about your beliefs • To collect voluntary donations • and communicate about faith issues at the national and international levels.
<p>What about when people/governments use their religion/beliefs/power to do bad things to others?</p>	<p>See ICCPR article 5.</p> <p>Article 5 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights bans the use of one right to destroy other rights. So freedom of religion or belief does not give the state, any person or group permission to repress people, incite violence or carry out violent acts. Of course, a lot of governments and groups do use force or repression. But freedom of religion or belief doesn't give them the right to do so. On the contrary, it exists to protect those affected by repression and violence.</p>

TOPIC	POSSIBLE MESSAGE
Legitimate limitations to manifestations of religion or belief	<p>See ICCPR article 18 para 3.</p> <p>The right to have or change your religion or belief is absolute and may never be limited.</p> <p>Sometimes limitations to the manifestation of religion or belief ARE necessary.</p>
	<p>The right to manifest religion or belief may ONLY be limited when the following criteria are fulfilled:</p> <p>The limitation has to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided for in law (so that it is not arbitrary) • necessary to protect other people – that is to protect public health, safety, order or morals, or the rights and freedoms of others • non-discriminatory (it should apply to everyone) • proportionate to the problem it seeks to address <p>These rules are really important. Without them, governments could limit any and every group or practice that they do not happen to like. Limitations are meant to be a last resort, not a tool for state control.</p>
	<p>An example of a legitimate limitation to manifestation of freedom of religion or belief is the ban on Female Genital Mutilation which some Christians and Muslims claim is a part of their religious practice.</p> <p>Another example is providing blood transfusions to seriously injured Jehovah’s Witness children against the wishes of their parents. Here the child’s right to life is protected rather than the parents FORB.</p>
Illegitimate limitations	<p>Often governments ignore the above rules for limitations and limit a far greater range of activities.</p> <p>For example, bans on un-registered worship and limitations to the right to register (eg Kazakhstan), bans on talking about religion to others, censorship (eg Russia), raids and deportations eg Saudi Arabia), blocking access to places of worship (eg Vietnam), bans on or requirements to wear religious clothing (eg Iran, France), and bans on religious slaughter (eg Sweden).</p>
	<p>Social hostilities in the form of hate speech, hate crimes and targeted attacks on places of worship limit people’s ability to manifest their religion by creating risk and fear.</p>
Discrimination	<p>See ICCPR Article 2.</p> <p>Discrimination is when some people are not treated as well as others because of who they are. One of the main rules within international human rights law is that states are not allowed to discriminate on any grounds, including those of religion or belief. The state may not discriminate and is required to act in an efficient way to prevent and stop discrimination in society.</p>
	<p>Discrimination is probably the most commonly experienced violation of freedom of religion or belief and affects every religious and belief group.</p>
	<p>Discrimination can take lots of forms, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State favouritism of one religion over others, for example discrimination in the allocation of state funding to different groups. - Denial of rights, for example when some groups are denied the right to legal identity or to build places of worship.
	<p>Discrimination on the basis of religion or belief doesn’t only affect religious activities. It can affect every area of life including marriage, child custody or access to employment, housing, welfare services or justice.</p>
	<p>In many countries, a person’s religion is stated on their ID card. This makes minorities vulnerable to discrimination every time they have to show their ID.</p>

TOPIC	POSSIBLE MESSAGE
	<p>Often people are discriminated against for more than one reason, for example on the basis of both religion, and ethnicity, gender or class. In human rights language, this is called intersectional discrimination. This makes some groups even more vulnerable to violations of freedom of religion or belief, for example women, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, the LGBT community, migrants and refugees.</p>
<p>Coercion</p>	<p>See ICCPR article 18 para 2.</p> <p>Coercion is when someone uses force or intimidation to make you do something. A core dimension of freedom of religion or belief is that everyone has the right to have or to change their religion or belief. Another way of putting this is that religion or belief and their expression are voluntary. This means that no one, not the state, religious leaders, family members or any other person or group, has the right to force their beliefs or practices on others. States are barred from coercing people and have a duty to protect people from threats or violence that they face from others in society.</p> <p>Around the world, we see examples of coercion in the form of threats, violence or punishments such as fines or imprisonment. Coercion can also be more subtle, like offering jobs in exchange for conversion, or stopping people’s access to health and education if they leave or refuse to adopt a religion or belief.</p> <p>Coercion can come from the state or from violent nationalist or extremist groups who coerce people to change their religion or beliefs or from the family/community.</p> <p>Although the ban on coercion formally applies to people’s ability to have, adopt or change their religion or belief, many people also experience both state and societal coercion in relation to the practice of religion. For example, some countries legally require women to wear religious clothing, while others ban women from doing so. Women can face harassment from people outside their faith community if they wear religious clothing and from people within their own faith community if they do not.</p> <p>In many countries, people whose religious ideas or practices differ from state ideology or from the social norm are affected by coercion. Minorities, atheists, converts or people with religions considered ‘foreign’ to the context are often affected. And within religious groups, people considered to be heretics, blasphemers or considered to be failing to practice their religion properly can be affected by coercion to change their beliefs and practices, coercion that comes from the state, their family or community.</p> <p>Discrimination and coercion are often connected, for example, Baha’is in Iran are banned from going to university and from employment in the civil service. This discriminatory law is coercive. When a student or employee is discovered to be a Baha’i they face the choice between converting to Islam, and losing their position.</p>

TOPIC	POSSIBLE MESSAGE
Children and Parents	<p>See article 18 ICCPR and article 14 Convention on the Rights of the Child. Parents and legal guardians have the right to give their children religious and moral education, and to organise family life in accordance with their beliefs. Children have the right to freedom of religion or belief, for example the right to be part of the life of a religious or belief community and participate in religious festivals or worship. The practice of a religion or belief may not harm the physical or mental health or development of a child.</p> <hr/> <p>As children mature their own wishes regarding religious belief, education and practice should increasingly be taken into account by parents and schools.</p> <hr/> <p>Examples of violations include states that forbid children from practicing religion (eg Tajikistan), and states that force majority religious instruction on minority children (eg children to Alevi, Baha'i and atheists in Turkey). Religiously profiled schools that require students from a different faith (minority or majority) to participate in confessional their religious instruction also violate the rights of children and parents.</p>
Conscientious objection	<p>See General Comment 22. Freedom of thought and conscience are protected by article 18 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, alongside religion and belief, so the right to conscientious objection is part of freedom of religion or belief. Conscientious objection means refusing to do something you are required to do, because doing it would violate your conscience or religious belief.</p> <hr/> <p>Examples of things people claim a right to refuse to do include compulsory military service, taking oaths, receiving blood transfusions or participating in some medical procedures.</p> <hr/> <p>The right to conscientious objection to military service is protected in international human rights law. Many countries recognize this right, but some imprison conscientious objectors.</p> <hr/> <p>Many states also recognise other forms of conscientious objection at the national level such as the right of health care staff not to participate in abortions. However, these rights are controversial and international law on the topic is not fully developed.</p>
FORB does NOT protect the following	<p>Religious/belief leaders may not control the lives of members or materially/physically punish them for not following religious norms.</p> <hr/> <p>Husbands and male relatives may not control the religious beliefs and practices of women in the family. Women have the same rights and freedoms as men.</p> <hr/> <p>FORB does not give anyone the right to incite hatred and violence or to violate other people's rights in any other way.</p> <hr/> <p>FORB does not protect religions or beliefs from criticism.</p> <hr/> <p>FORB does not mean that the public sphere should be free from religious expression. On the contrary, it protects the right to manifest both in public and in private. Religious and non-religious beliefs and practices may be visible and expressed in public.</p>
My own points	

Key human rights commitments relating to FORB

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 18

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.
2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.
4. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Article 14

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

NOTE

Human rights declarations are politically binding international commitments while covenants, conventions and treaties are legally binding commitments under international law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is, however, so broadly accepted that it is now regarded as customary international law.

See also

General Comment 22 of the Human Rights Committee which provides expert guidance on the interpretation of Article 18 of the ICCPR.

<https://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/general%20comment%2022.pdf>

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/religionorbelief.aspx>

The Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomOpinion/Articles19-20/Pages/Index.aspx>

You can find a full compendium of international human rights standards relating to freedom of religion or belief on the following link to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights:

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomReligion/Pages/Standards.aspx>

You can find information on the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief here:

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomReligion/Pages/FreedomReligionIndex.aspx>

Learn more

Watch the FORB Learning Platform's eight short films on what freedom of religion or belief involves and when it may be limited.

www.forb-learning.org/films/films-on-forb



FILMS

Find information about FORB in your country

General advice on choosing information sources

It is advisable to do some reading about the situation for FORB and for human rights more broadly in your country before leading a FORB training. This will help you ensure that national-level legal issues and the experiences of a range of groups in your country are integrated into learning and discussions.

Try to find national sources of information, for example, from independent NGOs and complement this with information from reliable international sources.

When you look for information, remember that it is impossible to understand the situation of one group without understanding their wider context, including how other belief groups are affected. There are no countries where the rights of only one belief group are violated. In all cases, multiple groups are affected, in different ways and to different degrees. This doesn't mean that you should disregard reliable sources that focus on one group – but that you should read more than one source about more than one group.

THINK CRITICALLY!

When reading information, be aware of the risk of propaganda and bias. Some governments obstruct human rights monitoring and reporting, using disinformation, intimidation and coercion. Information from national governments about their own country situation may therefore be unreliable.

Sometimes information provided by foreign governments or religious and civil society actors can be biased or misleading. Sometimes there is intentional political bias. Often a misleading impression of the situation as a whole is the unintentional result of focusing on one group alone. Use a variety of sources, cross check your facts and think critically!

International sources of information

Here are some valuable sources of information. Browse through them to find sections relating to your country.

The US State Department – Annual report on the state of freedom of religion or belief in almost every country in the world.

www.state.gov/international-religious-freedom-reports

The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) - Annual report on FORB in countries with serious violations of the right.

www.uscifr.gov/annual-reports

Pew Research Centre – Data on government restrictions and social hostilities related to religion around the world.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/topic/religion/religious-freedom-restrictions/>

Minority Rights Group International – Directory of country information about minorities and indigenous communities.

<https://minorityrights.org/directory>

UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief – Thematic and country visit reports.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/freedomreligion/pages/freedomreligionindex.aspx>

Forum 18 - Monitoring and analysis of FORB violations in Central Asia, the South Caucasus, Russia, Belarus, Crimea and Turkey.

www.forum18.org

Reports on hate crimes, including those based on religious identities in the OSCE region (Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia, North America)

[OSCE - ODIHR | Hate Crime Reporting](#)

Aid to the Church in Need – 2021 report on religious freedom in the world

<https://acnuk.org/our-campaigns/religious-freedom-in-the-world-report-2021/>

REPORTS FOCUSING ON PARTICULAR BELIEF GROUPS

Anti-Semitism Worldwide – Annual reports from the Kantor Center.

<https://cst.tau.ac.il/annual-reports-on-worldwide-antisemitism/>

Countering Islamophobia/Anti-Muslim Hatred to Eliminate Discrimination and Intolerance Based on Religion or Belief: Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, 2021.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/ahrc4630-countering-islamophobiaanti-muslim-hatred-eliminate-discrimination-and>

Freedom of Thought Report – Annual report from Humanists International.

<https://fot.humanists.international/>

Persecution of Ahmadis Worldwide – Report to the UN from the International Human Rights Committee, an NGO working for Ahmadi rights.

<https://ihs.smc.global/wp-content/uploads/documents/Report-Persecution-of-Ahmadis-Worldwide.pdf>

The Global Persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses – Issue report from USCIRF.

<https://www.uscirf.gov/publication/issue-update-global-persecution-jehovahs-witnesses>

World Watch List – Annual report on persecution of Christians from Open Doors.

<https://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/>

RESOURCES ON DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS BROADLY

IDEA International monitor the state of democracy, including freedom of religion or belief, in all countries of the world. Click on your country in the interactive map and use the left-hand menus to explore the data.

<https://www.idea.int/gsod-indices/#/indices/world-map>

CIVICUS track restrictions on 'space' for civil society action, including freedoms of expression, assembly and association – all of which are closely related to freedom of religion or belief.

<https://monitor.civicus.org/>

Freedom House – Ratings and reports on people's access to political rights and civil liberties in 210 countries and territories. Click on your country to find data.

<https://freedomhouse.org/explore-the-map>

Human Rights Watch produce an annual report on the state of human rights in over 100 countries. (For the most recent report, substitute 2021 in the link below with the current year.)

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022>

Amnesty International country profiles include freedom of religion or belief to varying extents.

www.amnesty.org/en/countries/

Further resources and courses from the FORB Learning Platform

The FORB Learning Platform and NORFORB members offer a range of resources and courses to help you deepen your learning. forb-learning.org

Learn about freedom of religion or belief (FORB) with the help of these resources and courses:

- **INTRODUCTORY LEARNING PACKAGE** A set of eight short films explaining what freedom of religion or belief involves and when it may be limited (available in over 20 languages):
 1. An introduction to freedom of religion or belief
 2. The right to have or change your religion or belief
 3. The right to manifest (practice) religion or belief
 4. Protection from coercion
 5. Protection from discrimination
 6. Rights for parents and children
 7. Conscientious objection
 8. Limitations to freedom of religion or belief
- **FORB FOR ALL** An online on-demand course introducing the human right to FORB
- **FORB AND GENDER EQUALITY – ENEMIES OR ALLIES** An online on-demand course exploring the nexus between FORB and gender
- **PRACTITIONERS TOOLBOX** Short films presenting tools for context analysis, religious literacy and human rights education.

Develop your skills as a FORB facilitator with the help of these additional resources and courses:

- **THE LOCAL CHANGEMAKERS COURSE** A facilitators' guide and accompanying resources provide everything needed to run a series of nine 2-hour workshops, which are designed to enable groups of adults and young people to learn about, value and promote FORB for all in their communities (available in several languages)
- An online facilitated FORB **TRAINING OF THE TRAINERS' COURSE** to develop both knowledge about FORB and skills in FORB facilitation

Join our network! [Sign up](#) to our mailing list to receive updates about new resources, courses and networking opportunities and visit our [youtube channel](#) and subscribe!

NOTE

Further resources from the ForB Leadership Network can be found on this link: <https://forbln.net/resources>

FIND OUT MORE
via our website:
forb-learning.org



Feedback and permissions

Share your feedback and suggestions!

We would love to hear about how you are using these resources and if and how the resources contribute to people taking action for change! What works well and what should we improve? Share your feedback and stories with us here: www.forb-learning.org/feedback

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MAY I TRANSLATE AND PUBLISH THE FACILITATORS GUIDE AND ACCOMPANYING RESOURCES IN MY LANGUAGE?

We believe in the importance of making learning resources on FORB available to people in their own language. You may translate and use parts of the contents freely. Please contact us if you wish to translate the whole toolkit, using the following email address. info@forb-learning.org

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The Freedom of Religion or Belief facilitators' toolkit is a treasure trove for everyone working to raise awareness of the right. It contains:

- over 70 carefully selected participatory learning exercises
- an accompanying collection of case studies, scenarios and quiz questions
- practical tools and guidance to help you plan and deliver trainings on FORB.

Whether you are looking for one or two exercises to introduce the topic in your community, planning a thematic workshop for diplomats and religious leaders or developing a week-long training for a civil society organisation, we hope you will find the tools you need.

forb-learning.org



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