

THE MULTIPLIER APPROACH IN HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE RIGHTS EDUCATION ACTION PROGRAMME

WHAT IS THE RIGHTS EDUCATION ACTION PROGRAMME?

The Rights Education Action Programme (REAP) is a 10 year-long international human rights education initiative led by Amnesty International Norway. REAP is implemented by Amnesty International in Israel, Malaysia, Moldova, Morocco, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, Thailand and Turkey. After assessing local needs, REAP project partners select specific human rights topics relevant to their target groups and to the human rights context of the country. At the core of REAP is the training of human rights education “multipliers” – individuals who, through their roles or positions in society, are able to influence a larger audience or groups of people. Through REAP, project partners create positive human rights impacts and contribute to Amnesty International’s aim to build a human rights culture worldwide.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION MULTIPLIER APPROACH

The concept of developing human rights education multipliers is to train individuals who are able to pass on their knowledge by



reaching out to and engaging with many others. Individuals such as educators, government staff, prison officials, religious leaders, youth and students, NGO workers and others can in turn teach, train, and organize human rights initiatives. Through multipliers, REAP is able to offer opportunities for human rights activism to a wide and diverse audience, which exponentially increases the impact of Amnesty International’s human rights education work. This process has also

50,000 people take part in an Amnesty International Poland action for Darfur, Przystanek Woodstock festival, August 2007.

created formal and informal human rights education networks and increased human rights activism. An important factor in the evolution and impact of REAP is the constant and thorough assessment that is integrated into the programme, which enables it to maintain relevance to expanding human rights education networks.

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‘Our most important achievements are our multipliers, our local educational teams, our network of teachers and schools, and the results they achieve for human rights in local and school environments.’

Anna Kuczak, Amnesty International Poland

RECRUITING, TRAINING AND RETAINING MULTIPLIERS

Underlying the REAP multiplier approach is a multi-layered methodology, which starts with key trainers. These people are dedicated to passing on human rights education and putting this knowledge into action. For example, Amnesty International Poland recruits key trainers from their members, and cites this as one of their successes. These key trainers create new multipliers by conducting training which equips multipliers with the skills, knowledge and resources to run their own courses, campaigns, classes, and other human rights activities. Throughout the REAP, over 4000 multipliers in 10 countries were successfully trained. In turn, these individuals educate others who can act as multipliers themselves, creating a web of human rights educators who can reach people and inspire human rights activism in all parts of society.

Amnesty International Israel has also had success over the years in training multipliers in formal education. In Israel,

Amnesty International activists urge Polish authorities to conduct a transparent investigation into secret CIA detention centres in Poland, Warsaw, April 2009.

REAP has retained multipliers and expanded through school and youth groups and summer camps, where multipliers and youth are inspired to take action for human rights through various campaigns and activities such as the Junior Urgent Action Network (JUAN). As part of JUAN in schools, teachers and students acquire an in-depth knowledge of the situation of youth who have had their human rights violated or who are at risk of such violations. As a result, JUAN members have responded rapidly and taken collective action to successfully defend the human rights of individuals and communities worldwide. To support their work, teachers in JUAN meet regularly to share knowledge and tools, while students carry out peer-to-peer exchanges with other students.

In Poland, human rights education is integrated into the strategy of the

‘Organizations outside Amnesty International are much more familiar with Amnesty International’s vision and mission and we function as an integral part of the social society in Israel. The reputation of Amnesty International has improved dramatically, and thus we receive many more appeals to take part in different initiatives, for example, conferences about different human rights issues, open days at universities, and lobbying initiatives.’

REAP participant, Israel



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Activists from Amnesty International Slovenia commemorate the sixth anniversary of Guantánamo, Ljubljana, January 2008.

organization, helping to build capacity and develop human rights professionalism. Many staff and Board members of Amnesty International Poland began as REAP multipliers, partners or participants. Their involvement can be attributed to REAP’s innovation in training, which is embedded in a structured support methodology. In Poland, REAP began with 15 key trainers who carried out national, regional, and local workshops and trainings. Multipliers hold a joint national meeting annually to co-ordinate their work. Trainees are requested to sign contracts committing to 18 months of human rights activities after training. Amnesty International Poland also motivates multipliers by professionalizing the training and providing mentoring.

ASSESSMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

Since 2001, Amnesty International Slovenia has built a network of approximately 450 educators such as teachers and youth workers. Educators attend training courses on human rights education methodologies and on developing sustainable networks to

increase the exchange of skills, resources and experiences in order to improve the training they provide. Network members are supported with monthly emails which include updates and information about human rights issues, suggestions for activities and workshops, and regular information about human rights abuses around the world on which to take action. Regular feedback from network members is intrinsic to the continual development of the network, with advice given on how to work with target groups. Teachers promote the service to their colleagues, who become new members.

REAP project partners have carried out exchange visits to observe and learn from project activities at the local level. For example, REAP project staff from Israel and Slovenia visited each other to compare and evaluate work with both teachers and schools. An external audit of the REAP project commissioned by Amnesty International was conducted by Human Rights Educations Associates. The analysis and learning from the evaluation are being shared with all countries in which REAP has

worked, as well as project partners, so that lessons learned can be integrated into the human rights education work at national and international levels. This in turn contributes to building the capacity of Amnesty International’s networks and partners in the field of human rights education. Evaluation allows individuals, communities and organizations who have been involved in the REAP to better understand their contribution to fostering human rights for all.

‘There is evidence that impacts on the multipliers and beneficiaries have been transformational, resulting in profound changes in personal attitudes and behaviour.’

Felisa Tibbetts, Director of the Human Rights Education Associates and REAP evaluator

BUILDING A HUMAN RIGHTS CULTURE

Across all countries involved in REAP's decade-long project, the number of people taking action for human rights through joining Amnesty International has increased three-fold, from 6,010 to 19,158 members. Assessments by numbers represent one dimension of the impact of REAP work; there is also qualitative evidence of how REAP has contributed to the creation of a culture which fosters respect for and action in the defence and promotion of human rights for all.

Amnesty International Israel found that REAP offered greater opportunities for a larger number of people to participate in campaigning. This is due to successful human rights education programming in schools, and training multipliers in NGOs and in community-based organizations (CBOs). For example, before REAP, Israel was collaborating on human rights campaigns with only two other organizations and working with 20 schools. Now REAP has developed a network of 16 Israeli NGO/CBO partnerships, and is working with 83 schools and universities.

In Poland, the increase in people joining Amnesty International was directly attributed to their investment in training multipliers, which was a positive contribution to all human rights work being carried out. This is especially apparent for Poland's multipliers in schools – Amnesty International Poland had no active collaborations with schools or universities before REAP began, yet now works with 107 formal educational bodies.

'I think a person has to be very assertive and courageous to exercise human rights. Right now I am developing these skills and I am getting better and better.'

REAP participant, Poland



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As part of the Beijing Olympics campaign global day of action, activists from Amnesty International Israel form the word "שְׁפֹרוּ" (freedom), Tel Aviv, July 2008.

RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM REAP

■ **Using the multiplier approach in human rights education reaches and engages an exponentially greater number of people, and so increases impact.**

The multiplier approach is an efficient and effective way to bring human rights knowledge and new skills to people and communities. Human rights education multipliers engage and educate larger numbers of people and inspire them to action. This strengthens the involvement of people from all sections of society in realizing human rights for all.

■ **Human rights impact can be increased through the creation of sustainable human rights education networks.**

Once human rights education multipliers

are trained, creating a network is a way to support, develop and sustain their activities. Networks provide opportunities for knowledge, skills and resource sharing, and can be facilitated by using online resources and email.

■ **Assessing human rights education methodologies and impact is important to developing accountable human rights education, and to measuring success.**

Involving partners and participants in a framework for monitoring and evaluating human rights education work improves the results of assessments and integrates lessons learned into current and future work. It also allows you to recognize your achievements.

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INTERNATIONAL**



Amnesty International is a global movement of 2.2 million people in more than 150 countries and territories who campaign to end grave abuses of human rights.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion – funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

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