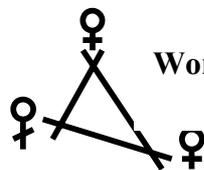


Women for Women's Human Rights – New Ways

**WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS
TRAINING PROGRAM
1995-2003**

EVALUATION REPORT

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Women for Women's Human Rights – New Ways

Women's Human Rights Training Program Evaluation Report
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PREFACE

Women's Human Rights Training Program: A Tool for Social Change (1995-2003)

When we started our work as an independent women's organization in 1993, one of our first activities was to conduct a research on violence against women in Turkey.¹ During the course of this research we came across two major facts: one of them was that women were certainly unaware of the rights granted to them by the laws and that they were helpless against the naturalized violence and discrimination they experienced. The other significant fact was that there were almost no independent women's grassroots organizing and networking other than those in the big cities of Turkey.

Research in the field has confirmed the fact that women's lives in Turkey are shaped by patriarchal practices, traditions and customs that govern all social zones, rather than the legal rights obtained on paper. Although the Turkish Penal Code recognizes "maltreatment of individuals within the family" as a crime, the research we conducted in Ankara with 155 women from various socio-economic backgrounds, revealed that 39% of the women experienced physical domestic violence and 15% of the women experienced sexual domestic violence.² None of these women had filed an official complaint and only 1% had gone to the police. Another research we conducted in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia indicated that 52% of the women had not met their husbands until the marriage and 51% of the women had been married against their wills.³ And yet according to the Turkish Civil Code, mutual consent of the spouses is required as a precondition for marriage since 1926. Unfortunately, despite the laws, it is possible to extend this list of violations of rights that women are being subjected to every day.

The first steps of the Women's Human Rights Training Program were probably the discussion groups that were formed upon the demand of women from various shantytown neighborhoods during the "violence against women" research in 1993 – 94. These discussion groups spread from one neighborhood to another, due to the huge demand and interest women had concerning their legal rights. In 1995, in cooperation with the Ümraniye Women's Center the framework of a systematic "legal literacy" program for women was built. The initial pilot studies of the program were realized in Ümraniye and Gülsuyu neighborhoods in Istanbul in 1995, and in Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep and Diyarbakır in 1997.

Without doubt, for women to actually practice their legal rights and live according to their own free will, first of all they needed to create the space for being an "individual" which is not granted them in the society and internalize the concept of "rights." Certain conditions were imperative for "rights" to become prevalent on the social level. Solidarity among women, a larger number of independent women's organizations, and women being able to

¹ The book titled *Sıcak Yuva Masalı: Aile İçi Şiddet ve Cinsel Taciz (The Myth of A Warm Home: Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse)* and a documentary film named "Artık Dur Demenin Zamanı" (It's Time to Say No) were released as a result of this research.

² Leyla Gülçür, Pınar İlkaraçan and Canan Arın; *Sıcak Yuva Masalı Aile İçi Şiddet ve Cinsel Taciz; (The Myth of A Warm Home: Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse)* Metis Publications, İstanbul, 1996.

³ Pınar İlkaraçan; "Doğu Anadolu'da Kadın ve Aile" (Woman and Family in Eastern Anatolia); *Bilanço 98: 75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*; Tarih Vakfı; İstanbul; 1998.

express their needs and demands were essential. The Women's Human Rights Training Program was developed to provide for these needs. The program aimed to enable women to actively participate in and shape the process of forming a state based on the rule of law and democratic norms in Turkey, and to supply women with the necessary equipment in order for them to benefit from the human rights protected by such a state.

While shaping the program we used a two- phase method, which we still employ as to date. First of all, a "trainers training" program was completed with a group of women who were leaders in the neighborhoods where the program was to be implemented, then these women formed groups of 20-25 women from their communities and implemented the training program at houses. In the first session of the training, participants determined the subjects that would be covered in the program by assessing their own needs. These needs assessments envisaged both that these group workshops would provide for the prior needs of the women living in the given region and that the participatory philosophy of the program was established and confirmed from day one.

Women's Human Rights Training Program was designed to enable women to form a *critical consciousness* in the face of the implementations shaping their daily lives through their own experiences in order to bring their rights to life. With this aim, the program employs a participatory approach as opposed to an information exchange sessions or series of lectures where the women were situated as "receiving" and "passive" students. Within this frame, the program was designed as a *tool* providing the necessary space and equipment for women to produce their own strategies. The learning process experienced by the participants within the program is in fact a process of becoming politically conscious and questioning. This consciousness, which is realized on the individual level, is only one of the goals of the program. Women to become able to transform the state of consciousness and the information concerning women's human rights they have acquired during the program into action and mobilizing is the long term and overarching goal of the Women's Human Rights Training Program. In short the implementation of the program is not an end in itself, but a means for a wide scope social change we believe will realized by the strengthening of women's grassroots organization.

In the program, violence against women, the constitutional, civil, economical, social, sexual and political rights of women from the human rights frame; the violations of rights they experience in the private and public spheres are discussed both on individual and social levels; the effects of written and unwritten laws in the lives of women, the kind of strategies women might create in order to practice their rights are discussed. Also, by providing them the space to determine the strategies they currently employ, ideas are being generated about how to strengthen these within the group.

In accordance with the feedback we have gathered from site supervisions, from the women attending the program and from group facilitators, one of the factors that determine the success of women in overcoming the violation of rights is that it is a lengthy program and that it supports group solidarity, and another factor is that it is implemented in a fully participatory method. The fact that the program consists of 16 group workshops means that the group of women, which usually get together once week, meet regularly for at least 3-4 months. Thus, there is the opportunity of a trusting environment formed by the group solidarity and its continuity where the acquired knowledge can be internalized and the new strategies can be experimented. This solidarity and continuity also lays the necessary ground for the women to determine their own common needs and to get organized around these needs.

During the first pilot implementations, the group facilitators were using the photocopies of handwritten notes prepared by the Women for Women's Human Rights – New Ways, a documentary film discussing violence against women and methods of struggle against it, entitled "It's Time to Say No" and the booklet entitled "We Have Rights!" which can appeal to women from various educational backgrounds. In 1998 however, in order to provide a supportive material for the group facilitators, a 330 page long "Trainer's Manual" was printed, which in a modular manner covered all the issues women brought up in all the needs assessment sessions.

The program matured as a result of these pilot implementations, which were very successful for the participants and were carried out in cooperation with independent women groups. Nevertheless, the program experienced an impasse in 1998. We were having difficulties locating women's groups that would participate in the trainers' training to become group facilitators, and the women who had attended the training could stop implementing the program due to personal reasons. In the program where issues such as violence against women, sexual harassment are discussed through the sharing of personal experiences, for those group facilitators who did not have professional work experience on such issues, the trainers' trainings sometimes remained insufficient.

At this time we were informed about the Community Centers that were being opened in various parts of Turkey by the Directorate of Social Services (SHCEK). The General Directorate of SHCEK was claiming that the community living in the area would own these centers; that these centers would develop in accordance with the demands and desires of the people of the region; and that they would be operated by a democratic, horizontal and participatory model. After a six-month long research period, we decided that the aims of the Community Centers and the aims of the Women's Human Rights Training Program might overlap, and that the implementation of this program by the social service vocational staff would offer a solution to the problems we had faced before.

As per the protocol we signed with the SHCEK in 1998, the Women's Human Rights Training Program started to be implemented in the Community Centers of SHCEK and SHCEK social workers and other vocational staff started to participate in the trainers' training to become group facilitators. Within 4 years the Women's Human Rights Training Program reached 28 cities in 7 regions of Turkey. The cooperation with SHCEK did not only help the program to be institutionalized and to become widespread, at the same time it became a successful example of cooperation between the state and the non-government. The program also had a great influence on the Community Centers, which are state institutions, to become public areas that operate in a more democratic and gender sensitive order.

The Women's Human Rights Training Program was affecting participating women's social and private lives in many ways. After the program, the women were feeling their existence as an individual and their self-confidence was increasing. They were struggling against the traditional gender roles both in the public and the private spheres and they were succeeding in changing these roles. They were bringing an end to domestic violence and were reforming the division of labor within the family, were demanding the right to participate in the economical sphere, were starting to work with pay outside the house. They were attending formal or informal education programs for self-development and were becoming "experts" or "resource persons" in their surroundings especially on legal matters. They were beginning to approach

public institutions and demand their rights, getting organized with other women around their common needs.

Up to now we have held regular supervisions and annual evaluation meetings in order to determine and discuss the results of the program's goals, the successes and problems experienced, how training is shaped and corresponds with the socio-political and economical realities of Turkey that vary from region to region, neighborhood to neighborhood, the kinds of strategies group facilitators and participants would create against the problems experienced. At the end of the 7 years when the program had matured and proved its sustainability to a degree, we decided that an outside evaluation of the program as a whole with systematic research would be beneficial for us, for the participating women, the group facilitators and for SHCEK officials and that it would shed light on the ways we could shape and develop the program in the coming years. Moreover, we thought that the external evaluation method which is still not common in Turkey might set an example for the other non-governmental organizations and the state institutions and that this evaluation research would be useful both in terms of examining the effects of the training collectively and broadly and reviewing the structure and content of the program and to develop it further where necessary. Our aim in sharing the results of this evaluation research during this meeting with you is to bring together the people who have contributed to the Women's Human Rights Training Program in different ways and also to be able to discuss the results of the research and to voice our feedback concerning the program.

We owe a great deal to everyone who has expanded their efforts in the Women's Human Rights Training Program during these 8 years. We would like to thank the evaluation research team: Nüket Kardam, Asena Demirer and Mehveş Bingöllü and all those who participated in the research: SHCEK officials, group facilitators and participants from the training program. We also thank Emel Anıl, Irazca Geray and Arzu Altınay for translating the report into Turkish; Pınar İlkaracan, Karin Ronge and Arzu Ağabeyoğlu from the WWHR – New Ways team for their contributions to the preparation and publication of this report and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) for providing the financial means to realize this research. And above all, we thank all the group facilitators who implement the program with faith and sincerity and all the women who endlessly struggle to exercise their rights. We congratulate and admire their success.

Liz Amado – Ela Anıl
Women for Women's Human Rights – New Ways
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I. Global Human Rights Norms and the Turkish Political Context

Human rights are an integral part of global norms, formally accepted by many nations through international human rights treaties, conventions and covenants. They are based on the UN Charter, which makes the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms one of the foundational bases of the UN. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the first set of formal human rights standards adopted by the UN General Assembly was further elaborated through a series of six core human rights treaties to make its implementation enforceable:

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
The Convention on the Rights of the Child
The Convention against Torture

Governments who have signed and ratified these treaties are expected to respect, ensure, and fulfil human rights as declared in the treaties. Once adopted, a treaty is “opened for signature” and each government takes the steps required under its domestic legislative and legal system to ratify the treaty, thus becoming legally bound by its terms. Each treaty contains the substantive articles outlining the rights it protects, and the basic steps (e.g. law review and reform, review of practice and policy) that the ratifying nation (or state party) must take.

Concerning women’s human rights, CEDAW is the primary international treaty. CEDAW calls for the full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination against women. CEDAW further endorses the empowerment of women and promotes positive discrimination in order to ensure gender equality. This treaty has been signed and ratified by 170 states, including Turkey. Following several global conferences, women’s human rights have become central to the global agenda as an integral part of human rights, especially in the context of freedom from gender-based violence and reproductive rights. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) condemns gender-based violence in both the private and public spheres and obliges member states to work towards its elimination.

To what extent are states held accountable for implementing gender equality and women’s human rights?¹ The globalisation process, the increased influence of global institutions, the global networking of NGOs, along with the system of treaties, monitoring bodies, and

¹ For an account of the rise and maintenance of this regime, including state accountability, see Nuket Kardam, “The Emerging Gender Equality Regime”, *International Journal*, Summer 2002.

optional protocols enabling individuals to seek remedy at international courts have rendered states more accountable than ever to international norms, including that of gender equality and women's human rights. States are now considered to have an obligation to protect their citizens from violation of rights also in the private sphere.

Global norms and treaties are not the panacea to gender based discrimination. There are limitations to the monitoring processes of global treaties, such as resistance from states, difficulty of obtaining information, and the weakness of compliance mechanisms. The lack of clear guidelines, specific measures and targets in the conventions and treaties cause impediments in holding states accountable. Nevertheless, the establishment of a "global gender equality regime" constitutes advancement towards eradicating gender based discrimination worldwide.

A. Women's Human Rights in Turkey

The adoption of the Swiss Civil Code in 1926 and the granting of suffrage to women in 1934 bestowed Turkish women with numerous rights, including the rights to divorce, to equal share from inheritance and custody over children. However, the civil code still declared man as the head of the family, and the wife as his helper. The husband was the decision-maker over where the family would live, he held the right to decide whether his wife could work, and to give permission before his wife could get a passport to travel abroad.

In the last two decades, the actions and advocacy of the women's movement has succeeded in promoting some significant legal changes in Turkey. These efforts have been reinforced by the rise of a global women's movement, greater attention to gender equality and women's human rights at the global level through United Nations conferences and treaties, as well as Turkey's EU accession process. These achievements include: the Constitutional Court's annulment of Article 159 of the Civil Code which had stated that women had to get consent from their husband to work outside the home; the repeal by the National Assembly of Article 438 of the Criminal Code (which provided for a one-third reduction in the rapist's sentence if the victim was a sex worker); and the addition of a new law to the Civil Code on domestic violence, enabling the survivor of domestic violence to file a court case for a "protection order" against the perpetrator of the violence.² Furthermore, a reformed Civil Code was passed by the Turkish Parliament in November 2001, setting the equal division of the property acquired during marriage as a default property regime. The new Code also set 18 as the legal minimum age for marriage for both men and women. Spouses now have equal right over the family abode and they have equal representative powers. In addition, Article 41 of the Constitution was amended redefining family as an entity that is "based on equality between spouses."

These achievements coincide with the establishment of global gender equality norms, the rise of global women's networks along with other rising global social movements (i.e. the environment, human rights etc.) and greater interest in human rights and democratisation around the world after the 1980s. In Turkey, processes of economic transformation and democratisation in the 1980s and beyond have afforded greater awareness of women's rights and led to an increasing diversity of women's voices.

² Women for Women's Human Rights – New Ways; *The New Legal Status of Women in Turkey*, p. 5.

The agrarian transformations experienced from the 1950s onwards had led to a rapid change in Turkish society. Large-scale immigration waves from rural to urban areas followed. The inability of the system to expand the social and economic rights of citizenship to all the incoming migrants created enclaves of marginalized people who eventually constituted the seeds of opposition to state hegemony. The first urban/middle class challenge came from the leftist movement in the 1970s and was crushed by a military coup on 12 September 1980.

The military coup of 1980 suppressed opposition by force, systematically depoliticized the masses and implemented neo-liberal economic policies. In this atmosphere of repression and fear, the first new social movement to demonstrate the courage to voice opposition and articulate its demands was the women's movement.³ Following the liberalization policies adopted by the Ozal government from 1983 onwards, Turkey's economy gradually opened up to world markets. In the political sphere, while leftists and even liberal intellectuals were censured, traditional/particularistic factions of power came on stage as new competitors asserting new "identity politics" in the public sphere. Three such competitors were easily discernable: radical religious groups, Kurdish nationalists, and 'marginal' groups among whom the feminists occupied a primary place. The radical religious groups challenged the secular principles of the state; the Kurdish nationalists challenged the unity of the state; and the feminists challenged the latent patriarchal order. Obviously, the Turkish bureaucratic secular elite could no longer dictate the terms of the gender discourse with a free hand. The previous dichotomy of traditional versus modern no longer held with the emergence of new centers of power asserting their own gender discourse. "Identity politics" created new dichotomies of legitimate images and discourses for women, Islamic versus secular being the most visible one.⁴

While the definition of women's place within fragmented, dichotomous discourses may have implied encroachment on gains made in women's human rights, the very fact of women's inclusion in the ranks and files of alternative movements nonetheless exposed them to the political domain and thus put gender politics on the public agenda. The diversification of identity formation has encouraged other groups (such as the lesbian, gay and transsexual groups, sex workers, street peddlers, etc.) to capture the opportunity of challenging the boundaries of convention. Within the dialectics of change, emerging patterns are challenging categorically determined identities for women and creating space for independent initiatives, thus rupturing patriarchal hierarchies. While the opportunities created for women's organizations in urban areas allowed them to become more vocal and to demand changes, Turkish society entered a transitional stage towards greater flexibility and tolerance of diverse groups' rights and interests.

Even though this tolerance is still hampered by fears of the threat to the secular, unitary and patriarchal character of the state, some discernable concessions were made with the recent legal changes. These include granting new rights to the Kurdish population (the right to broadcast and teach in Kurdish), and to women, such as the reform of the Civil Code and the introduction of the Law on the Protection of the Family, which provides protection orders for survivors of domestic violence. The rise of a strong women's movement after the 1980s, its success in the revision or annulment of certain articles of the Civil Code and its advocacy and lobbying on several women's human rights issues played a key role in the final enactment of

³ Pinar İkkaracan; *Women's Movement(s) in Turkey: A Brief Overview*; Women for Women's Human Rights Reports; İstanbul; 1997.

⁴ Nuket Kardam and Yakin Erturk; "Expanding Gender Accountability: Women's Organizations and the State in Turkey"; *International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior* 2 (1&2); 1999.

the Civil Code reform and its acceptance by society. The ratification of CEDAW and of the Optional Protocol (enabling individuals to file complaints at the international level), as well as the legal changes amending women's human rights to bring Turkish laws and procedures in line with CEDAW and with the Copenhagen Criteria (for accession to the European Union) became possible as a result of a very vocal and committed women's movement based in urban areas.⁵ The women's groups and organizations received political and financial support in this quest from international donors, as well as from the European Union.

However, a constitutional basis for gender equality, which goes beyond claiming no discrimination on the basis of gender to holding the state responsible, still needs to be established, *through positive discrimination*, by taking all legal and institutional measures to realize equality between women and men. Several women's NGOs have initiated a campaign, which calls for the amendment of Article 10 of the Turkish Constitution to include a clause on gender equality as the basis of law, and to hold the state accountable. Furthermore, the reform of the Turkish Civil Code has to be followed by several other reforms and measures in the legal, social and political domains to eliminate inequality between women and men. In the legal domain, the next steps should include the reform of the Penal Code, the Citizenship Act, the Labor Code, and the Social Security Code, as well as changes in various statutes and regulations.

B. The political, bureaucratic and cultural context in Turkey

Any substantial discussion of women's human rights in Turkey has to assess the issue within the following contexts:

- the extent to which the rule of law, an efficient and neutral public sector and a strong civil society are fostered;
- the extent to which the Turkish government upholds human rights, and regulates and enforces human rights protection;
- the extent to which equity, empowerment and participation have become accepted values in the Turkish democratic system.

Legal reforms are essential to initiate the elimination of gender discrimination and the violation of women's human rights. Legal reforms assume that there is rule of law in a country and that the laws apply equally and without discrimination across the board through a neutral and efficient public service in a democratic system. Furthermore, a democratic system also assumes that civil society has a "voice" and the ability to hold the government accountable for its actions. Although many positive steps are being taken, the Turkish political structure still has limitations in all of the above mentioned areas. Most recently some important legal reforms have been passed by the parliament including the abolishment of death penalty, the right to education and broadcasting in Kurdish. However, their implementations still remain on hold.

Under circumstances of perceived threats to the unity and secularism of the Turkish State, rule of law remains limited. The public service has a tradition of hierarchy and "looking down" on civil society, rather than seeing them as partners and as citizens whom it is supposed to "serve." The public service is further constrained by political appointments, bribes, partisanship that limit its claims to efficiency and neutrality. As for the civil society, the

⁵ Women for Women's Human Rights – New Ways; *The New Legal Status of Women in Turkey*; 2002.

statist traditions, along with fears of Islamist, Kurdish and the earlier leftist movements, have created a relatively intolerant environment for the sustenance and growth of civil society movements. The Turkish State, in general, has not encouraged those who want to exercise their rights to freedom of expression, to assembly and to association; all the requisite rights for a strong civil society to flourish. Furthermore, the notion of organizing conjures up fear and the possibility of police harassment due to its earlier connotation of political organizing of leftist, rightist, and Kurdish groups and the painful conflicts that have ensued. Permission to exercise the right to assembly, as well as the right to association has to be secured from police and other government units. These rights are subject to even more restriction in Eastern and Southeastern regions.

More significantly, legal and secular norms on which women's human rights are based constitute only *one* of the norms of gender equality. The competing gender norms based on local misinterpretations of Islam, or on ethnic and/or tribal and customary traditions still remain predominant in Turkish society. A good example is the resistance of the religious conservatives and the nationalists in the Turkish Parliament to the new Civil Code. They have argued that equality between men and women would create anarchy and chaos in the family and threaten the foundations of the Turkish nation. Sources of gender inequality and prospective solutions offered may differ based on one's ideological perspective. The sources of gender inequality may be variously attributed to traditions, cultures, customs, religion, or the internationalist capitalist system. Some may see no need to promote gender equality, (or the empowerment of women, or their greater participation), as they may regard male dominance in the family and in the public sphere as the natural state of affairs.

Despite the above mentioned legal reforms described, many women's lives in Turkey continue to be shaped by customary and religious practices such as early and forced marriages, polygamy, honor crimes, and restrictions on women's mobility, marriage only by religious ceremony which contradict the existing laws. For example, research conducted by WWHR-New Ways in the Eastern and Southeastern regions of Turkey indicates that 16.3% of women living in the region were married at under the age of 15, the minimum legal age for marriage according to the "old" Civil Code. One out of ten women was living in polygamous marriages even though polygamous marriages were banned by the Civil Code in 1926. More than half the women (50.8%) were married without their consent, although the consent of both the woman and the man is a precondition for marriage according to Turkish law. Furthermore, women's freedom of movement, their rights to education and to work are still restricted in many places, regardless of what the laws might say. Violence against women in its various forms, within and outside the home, continues to be a widespread violation of human rights even though it is a crime and a new law was passed in 1998 allows for protection orders.⁶

Women's opportunity to learn and implement their rights and remains constrained within the Turkish political, bureaucratic and cultural context. The Turkish State does not always uphold and enforce women's human rights effectively. Even when women know about their rights, the police, the courts and other bureaucratic mechanism may not respond neutrally and efficiently. When women attempt to organize to defend their rights, or to hold the state accountable for gender equality, their rights to assembly or association may be questioned or restrained. Or they may not even be aware of that they have these rights in the first place.

⁶ Pinar Ilkcaracan; "Dogu Anadolu'da Kadin ve Aile" in *Bilanco 98: 76 Yilda Kadinlar ve Erkekler*, IMKB, Tarih Vakfi, Istanbul, Turkey; 1998.

There is a need for various coordinated state programs and services for women, but despite pressure from the women's movement, the Turkish State has been reluctant to allow, and has even actively resisted the establishment of such programs. The Women's Human Rights Training Program was designed on the hypothesis that such a program implemented across the country would fill part of the gap caused by lack of state policies and programs that uphold and enforce women's human rights remains a very valid one. The program aims to encourage greater awareness and consciousness of discrimination against women, leading to wider implementation of legal reforms on women's human rights, as well as to grassroots organizing to hold the state accountable for gender equality.

II. Women's Human Rights Training Program

Women's Human Rights Training Program was developed by Women for Women's Human Rights – NEW WAYS through a series of pilot applications between 1995-97, first in the shantytown areas of Istanbul, then in the Southeastern region of Turkey. During this time, a number of training materials were produced, including a comprehensive 330 page trainers' manual, an illustrated brochure on legal rights, a video on domestic violence and sexual abuse in the family, and a series of research reports and books on the findings of WWHR's action-research program.⁷

A. Goals of the Program

The main hypothesis underlying this program is that: if women are given the opportunity to learn their rights and acquire the necessary skills to take action, they might begin to “do something” individually and/or collectively, such as speak out against an infringement of a right. This program aims to equip women for social change by helping them become “citizens” who hold the government accountable and who work as “partners” with other actors in civil society and the public sector towards meaningful participation in a democratic society.

The goals of the program are:

- a) to create awareness of global norms and national laws on human rights and women's human rights;
- b) to encourage social action leading to remedy of violations of women's human rights, as well as to promote greater respect and application of those rights by both the state and society;
- c) to fill the gap left by the limited efforts of the state in creating awareness and education programs on human rights and women's human rights.

B. Objectives of the Program

The main objectives of the program are as follows:

- To enable women to gain awareness of their rights as equal citizens;
- To support women in developing strategies for the implementation of their legal rights in daily life;
- To raise women's consciousness of how customary practices, i.e. ‘unwritten’ laws, often limit or violate their rights;

⁷ Training materials for the Women's Human Rights Training Program: *It's Time to Say No!*, (documentary), 1996; *We have new legal rights!* (booklet), 2001; *We have reproductive rights!*, (booklet), 2001; *We have sexual rights!*, (booklet), 2000; *We have rights!*, (booklet), 1995; *The Myth of a Warm Home: Domestic Violence and Sexuality*, (book), 1996.

- To provide basis from which women can discuss and create action plans to change these practices and written and unwritten laws;
- To create a safe environment in which women can share their own life experiences with one another and determine common and pressing problems in an atmosphere of solidarity;
- To enable women to view themselves as active individuals in the process of social change, at both local and national levels;
- To enable women to develop personal and collective grassroots organizational skills, which will assist them in mobilizing to confront the problems and needs they identify;
- To support grassroots organizing efforts developing between women.

C. Subject Matter

The Women's Human Rights Training Program consists of a minimum of 16 participatory workshops, in which a diverse range of issues is discussed depending on the specific needs of each local group.

The Workshops:

1. Greeting Session; Introduction of the Women's Human Rights Training Program; Needs Assessment
2. Women's Human Rights
3. Constitutional and Civil Rights
4. Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
5. Strategies against Violence
6. Women's Economic Rights - Section 1
7. Women's Economic Rights - Section 2
8. Communication Skills - Section 1
9. Communication Skills - Section 2
10. Gender Sensitive Parenting and Rights of the Child
11. Women and Sexuality - Section 1
12. Women and Sexuality – Section 2
13. Reproductive Rights
14. Women and Politics
15. Feminism and the Women's Movement
16. Women's Grassroots Organizing

D. Partnership with the General Directorate for Social Services

Since 1998, this program is being implemented with the collaboration of a Turkish governmental agency, the General Directorate for Social Services and Child Protection (SHCEK). WWHR–NEW WAYS has expanded the training program to women living in seven different regions of Turkey through the Directorate's community centers. WWHR-New

Ways has conducted trainer training for the social workers of the community centers who in turn have started offering training to women at the community centers under close supervision and monitoring of WWHR-New Ways. The cooperation proved to be very yielding. The partnership created the possibility for the sustainable and widespread implementation of the Women's Human Rights Training Program at the grassroots level. The first "trainer training" was held in Ankara (August 1998), the second in Istanbul (October 1999) and the third in Ankara (November 2000). At the time of the evaluation research, 68 social workers had participated in the trainer training and 57 of them had implemented the program at least once. Since the third trainer training in 2000, the project has been expanded to 24 provinces: Adana, Adiyaman, Agri, Ankara, Antalya, Batman, Bitlis, Bursa, Canakkale, Diyarbakir, Edirne, Eskisehir, Gaziantep, Kocaeli, Igdir, Icel, Istanbul, Izmir, Malatya, Mus, Samsun, Siirt, Sanliurfa, Van and Yalova. The primary target group of the trainer trainings has been the social workers who work in the community centres. Besides the community centers, the program has also been held in other units of the General Directorate for Social Services such as women's shelters, girls' orphanages, kindergartens, and rehabilitation centers.

Approximately 1425 women have so far participated in WWHR-New Ways' Women's Human Rights Training Program at the time of the research. The women who apply to participate in the program are interviewed by the trainer and admitted according to certain criteria. Depending on the specific case, the trainers may construct either a homogenous or heterogeneous group. In order to ensure the success of the program, trainers try to choose women with motivation towards the objectives and a genuine interest in women's human rights. In 25% of the cases, the women who are already participating in other programs offered at the community centers apply to become participants.

E. Supervision and Monitoring

Supervision and monitoring take place through regular supervision site visits by the WWHR-New Ways staff, as well as telephone and fax communication with the trainers and participants. WWHR-New Ways provides existing and new outreach and training materials to participating community centers on a regular basis. They also keep the group facilitators updated on the changes in national laws or international treaties binding Turkey. In line with such reforms and changes, they periodically revise the trainers' manual and other training materials.

WWHR-New Ways staff facilitates the flow of information through periodic letters between the training groups in different parts of the country, as well as informing the participants of the activities of groups in other countries. WWHR-NEW WAYS also provides support for the development of grassroots organizing initiatives that emerge as a result of the training.

III. THE EVALUATION OF THE WOMEN’S HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING PROGRAM

A. Evaluation Framework:

The premise underlying this evaluation is that the Human Rights Training Program for Women first provides a knowledge base, a greater understanding and appreciation of women’s human rights (referred to as “cognitive competence”). This then is assumed to lead to “affective competence” meaning that participants would experience changes in their self-perception and how they relate to their family and their communities (and vice versa) as they become more aware of their rights. The final expected result is “action competence,” implying modified behaviour both in the personal application of rights, within family relationships, and in the application of rights within a group – such as grassroots organizing and other forms of association to seek the application of women’s human rights as an organized entity.⁸

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Participation in the Program



Cognitive Competence (Knowledge and awareness of women’s human rights)

- Becoming aware of one’s rights as secured in legal documents, as well as the limitations and/or violations of those rights;
- Developing a critical consciousness of the social construction of gender roles.



Affective Competence

(Changes in perception and attitudes on women’s human rights)

- Changes in self-perception and attitudes (awareness of experiences of gender based discrimination and of having human rights);
- Change of attitudes within the family (both the family’s towards the trainee, and the trainee’s towards family);
- Change of attitudes within the community (both the community’s towards the trainee, as well as the trainee’s towards community).



Action Competence

(Implementation of women’s human rights)

- At the personal level: applying and exercising the rights learned on an individual basis;
- At the family level: applying the rights within the family and in family relationships;
- At the community level: applying human rights as a group (exercising right to association, right to remedy, right to work, as a group rather than individually);
 - At all levels: all types of grassroots organizing.

⁸ Council of Europe symposium used a triangular model of “thinking”, “feeling” and “doing.” In this program, the same approach is used, assuming that enhancing knowledge/understanding and skills in a participatory, group based training process will lead to attitudinal changes (affective competence), which will then lead to changes in behaviour (action competence).

B. Evaluation Design

We have considered three types of design for the evaluation research:

- a. Using control groups: In each region/city, administering questionnaires to a group of women who partook in the training, and to a control group of similar status who did not participate in the training to measure the specific influence of the training. This is normally the strongest type of design where the changes can specifically be attributed to the training. Unfortunately, we could not employ this type of design, because it would have been very difficult in each case, if not impossible, to find a group of women, who resembled the focus group in every possible way (similar socio-economic status, age, education etc.) except that they had not participated in the training.
- b. Before/After: Administering questionnaire to a group before they participated in the training and after. This was not built into the original design of the project; therefore no “before” evaluation prior to the participants starting the training has been done. Therefore, we didn’t have the baseline data to adopt this research design.
- c. Using just the trainees as the sample, and relying on their own impressions/actions to see what their attitude and behaviour was before and after they participated in the training on various levels.

Bearing in mind its limitations, we have applied Design C. A major limitation is the extent to which we can attribute the changes women experienced to the training as opposed to other possible explanations. We have relied on women’s own perceptions of how much they felt that this training had impacted them and their lives.

C. Data

Information sources include both quantitative and qualitative data listed below:

- survey questionnaires administered to a sample of trainees across Turkey;
- small focus group discussions with the same trainees who filled the survey questionnaires;
- interviews with the WWHR-New Ways staff members;
- interviews with the social workers who have acted as trainers;
- program documents (including the protocol between WWHR-NEW WAYS and the Directorate, and previous evaluation documents of the program);
- interviews with staff members from the Directorate of Social Services.

D. Selection of the Sample

Approximately 1,425 women have participated in the Human Rights Training Program for Women since 1998. They do not represent a random sample of women across Turkey because most of these women live in close proximity to community centers established by SHCEK mostly in low-income areas of the country.

Generally the women who already come to the community centers tell other women, their daughters or neighbours. Women who were attending other trainings at the center learn about

this one, and may decide to participate. Most group facilitators interviewed reported that they generally chose their group from those women who were already coming to the community centers. Attempts to advertise the program more widely were reported by the Diyarbakir Fatihpasa, Canakkale, Ankara Natoyolu and Istanbul group facilitators.

The training currently does not reach certain portions of the population, i.e. the illiterate women in rural areas. In Adiyaman a social worker attempted to start a training group for the village women, but it could not be sustained. She reported that after the first few weeks the number of the participants dropped from 15 to 5 and eventually she had to end the training. She indicated that the women had taken some of the materials home to show their husbands and their husbands had prohibited them from going back to the training. She attributed this situation to the women’s lack of education, lack of economic independence and just plain apathy: that attitude of what would it matter even if I learned my rights.

Selection of the Sample:

The sample used in this evaluation was planned to encompass 20% of all women who participated in the training (20% of 1425 =285). The actual sample size turned out to be 290. Since the 6 geographical regions are very different from each other, and since the number of women receiving the training varies as well, the sample was chosen on the basis proportional representation.⁹ We planned to meet with 20% of the participants from each region. For example, in the Aegean region, 270 women were trained and therefore, our sample size was 54 (20% of 270) women. (See annex 1 on the selection and construction of the sample.)

The respondents were contacted by their former group facilitator/social worker and asked to come to an informal focus group meeting at the community centers to meet with the evaluation team and to fill out the survey questionnaires. The sample was not statistically random since the trainers tended to reach those women who continued to come to the community center for other trainings, or who had remained in contact with the trainer. We had to rely on the group facilitators to find former participants who were willing to come out and talk to us. The former participants that group facilitators were able to contact may have been the women who were already more actively involved than the average woman who participated in the training program. This may have biased some conclusions to be more positive than otherwise.

Characteristics of the sample:

Time of training:

1998	11.7%
1999	12.1%
2000	18.5%
2001	52.0%
2002	5.7%
Total	100%

⁹ The Women’s Human Rights Training Program is actually being implemented in all geographical regions including the Black Sea Region, however evaluation research could not be conducted in the latter as the group facilitator had moved and could not help the evaluation team reach a sample group.

Education level:

Illiterate	4.6%
Barely literate	6.8%
Primary school	33.2%
Middle school	13.9%
High school	28.9%
University	12.5%
Total	100%

Income:

Those who earn an income	45.6%
Those who don't earn an income	54.4%
Total	100%

Income level:

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked to define their own income levels. Thus, the values below do not rely on any objective criteria, but reflect the participants' own subjective perceptions of their economic level.

Low income level	26%
Middle income level	65.6%
High income level	8.4%
Total	100%

Marital Status:

Single	19.2%
Married	74.9%
Divorced	3.5%
Widowed	2.1%
Separated	0.3%
Total	100%

E. Construction of Survey Questionnaire:

The questionnaire was constructed after holding two pilot focus group sessions where former participants talked about the changes in their lives at personal, family and community levels, and also in terms of attitudes and behaviour. (See Annex 2 for the complete questionnaire.)

The survey questionnaire was made up of five sections of multiple-choice questions to assess the following:

1. Changes in attitudes and perceptions about women's human rights after the Women's Human Rights Training Program (Affective Competence):

- a. towards self
- b. towards family, and the family members' attitudinal changes towards trainee
- c. towards community/society, and the trainee's perception of attitude changes in the community towards her.

2. Changes in behaviour/action after the Women's Human Rights Training Program (Action Competence):

- a. personal behavioural changes in applying one's rights
- b. taking action to apply rights in family relationships
- c. taking action to apply rights as a group.

3. What factors promoted greater success in taking action to apply rights as a group (grassroots organizing activities)?

4. How do the participants evaluate the content and delivery of the Women's Human Rights Training Program?

5. Personal Information.

F. Focus Groups Discussions

The focus group discussions allowed the evaluation team to get to know the participants personally and get a sense of if/how attitude and behaviour changes occurred, and the nature of this process. Each group was made up of 15 women on average. The focus groups filled the survey questionnaire following the discussion.

The meetings generally started with an introduction of our team. We explained what we planned to do and why we were there. We then put on the board a set of questions for them to refer to as they spoke, and asked each person in the room to introduce herself and describe the changes she experienced in her life after she participated in this program. We reminded them that we would like to hear specifically the changes they attributed to their participation in the Women's Human Rights Training. Sometimes they had difficulty distinguishing the effects of different trainings they had participated in at the community centers from each other. After an initial period of reticence or shyness, the discussions were generally candid and lively.

The following questions were posed to the focus groups:

- In your opinion, what were the goals of this training and were they attained?
- Before you came, what did you think this program was about, and did that change after your participation?
- Did your view of yourself change and if so, how? Did you start behaving differently in any way?
- Did your attitude towards your family change, and if so, how?

- Did you start behaving differently towards your husband, children and extended family in any way, and if so in what ways? Did your family's attitude and behaviour towards you change? Can you describe this process over time?
- Did you "do" anything differently after you participated in the training? Did you take action to change your life in any way?
- Did you participate in any kind of organizing towards the application of women's human rights with others?
- Do you have any recommendations for how this program should change/be improved?

The social workers/group facilitators were also interviewed. The interview questions for them included:

- How did you select the participants in your training groups? What were the criteria?
- In your opinion, what factors contributed to the success of your training?
- What are the concerns/problems you faced as the trainer/group facilitator during and after the training process?
- In your opinion, what were the effects of this training on the participants? How were they influenced? Did their lives change? How?
- Did you follow-up on the lives of the participants after the training ended?
- Were you able to assist them with grassroots organizing activities?

IV. FINDINGS AND ASSESSMENTS

The assessment in this evaluation is based on the combination of different sources of information utilized in the research: focus group discussions, surveys, documents and individual interviews.

A. Cognitive Competence: Changes in the participants' knowledge and understanding of women's human rights

We did not have a baseline measure of the extent of the participants' knowledge on women's human rights *before* they completed the training. Under these circumstances, we relied on the participants' own perceptions of how much they have learned about their rights as a result of their participation.

The survey asked the extent of knowledge participants acquired about their political, civil and economic rights. 71.6% reported that they learned a great deal, while 17.6% stated they learned some new information. 10.7% of the participants indicated that they already knew about their rights. The survey did not include any direct questions some rights such as sexual or reproductive rights, which were also part of the training. (See Annex 3, Table 1)

The comments during focus group discussions demonstrated that overall the participants increased their knowledge and understanding on their rights and were gratified to learn that there were global and national networks that supported these rights. There were a few cases, where the focus group participants had attended other trainings offered at their community center, or where it had been a few years since they had participated in this program. In these instances, some women had difficulty remembering what they learned, which suggests the need for follow up activities to sustain interest and perhaps some refresher programs. Some sample remarks are provided below:

- We learned about our rights and now know where to go for remedy. (Antalya)
- We learned about the new Civil Code. (Izmir)
- We learned that we can seek our rights and that we can do it with knowledge and awareness. We learned how to approach state institutions. (Istanbul)

The survey questionnaire and focus group discussions revealed the following findings on cognitive competence:

1. The extent of learning varies with the level of education

The respondents who did not receive any schooling are also the ones who said they knew nothing about their rights before the training. Among the respondents who did not have any schooling, none said they knew their rights before; and out of this group, 90.3% responded that they learned a great deal. Out of those who had high school or college level education, on the other hand, 19% indicated they already knew about their rights, 14.7% said they learned some information, while only 66.4% said that they learned a great deal. (Table 3)

2. Political, civil and economic rights are very important for the participants

The participants were asked how much importance they attached to their political rights, civil rights and economic rights. As mentioned above there were no direct questions in the survey on sexual and reproductive rights. The percentage of participants who declared civil rights as very important was the highest (94%). 90.9% said economic rights were very important and 82% indicated political rights were very important. This finding is supported by focus group discussions where many women understood and discussed their rights *first and foremost* in terms of civil rights and of individual rights (rights to divorce, property, civil marriage) and the right to freedom from violence. (Tables 4, 5, 6)

Prevailing gender norms overwhelmingly place women in the private sphere (rather than the public sphere) identifying women primarily as wives and mothers. This may be why most respondents saw their civil rights related to marriage and the family as more significant than their economic and political rights. It may also be the case women's human rights need to be first effectively applied in family relations (the right to divorce, alimony, property, freedom from violence, freedom of movement, sexual and reproductive rights), before they can be applied to economic and political rights (right to work, to assembly, and to association). The importance accorded to these rights is independent of geographical region, which indicates that regardless of where they are from women consider their civil rights and their rights within the family as very important. (Tables 7, 8, 9)

B. Affective Competence: Changes in the perception of self-identity, in attitudes and perceptions of gender relations in the family and within the community

Both the questionnaire results and the focus groups discussions indicate that the participants have gained an overwhelming amount of self-confidence, raised their awareness of gender-based discrimination and developed a positive attitude towards solidarity with other women. They have, however, experienced some difficulty in convincing their family and community towards greater acceptance of their rights.

1. Perception of self: Increased self-confidence and awareness of gender-based discrimination:

According to the survey results, 74% of respondents reported very positive changes, while 22.9% reported somewhat positive changes in their perceptions of self-worth as a woman. Only 3% reported no change. 93.1% reported a high increase in their self-confidence after they received the training, while 6.6% stated that they experienced some change. 0.3% reported no change. 90.3% have greater confidence in their ability to solve their own problems, compared to before the training. (Tables 10, 11, 12)

The focus group discussions reinforced these findings. Many participants enthusiastically related how their self-confidence and perception of self-worth had increased and that they had become "different people." The remarks below constitute as some examples:

- I used to always feel deficient before, but I don't anymore. (Diyarbakir)
- I now feel like a real person, not just a ghost! (Izmir)

- After participating in this program, I realized that I am a valuable person as a woman. (Istanbul)
- My days were empty before I joined this program. I felt like a nobody. (Istanbul)
- I can speak up now and express my opinions anywhere! (Canakkale)
- I didn't know how to say no before, now I can say no. I learned about my rights in greater detail. And I am now sharing what I have learned with others and most importantly, I now have confidence in myself. (Canakkale)

These results indicate how gender norms in Turkish society have generally relegated women to a secondary and inferior position compared to men. Furthermore, since their identity is strongly linked to their familial roles; that are to “being a wife and a mother”, rather than an individual, women have tended to consign their own interests, activities, and self-care to the bottom of their priorities. The survey questionnaire revealed that 81.9% of the participants now allocate more time to private pursuits and activities than before and 66.7% engage in greater self-care. (Tables 13, 14) This seems like an important change because traditional gender norms in Turkey do not necessarily emphasize individualism, but rather membership in a group, or the family. Therefore, a woman generally may find herself giving up her own individual interests and priorities for the good of the family or community. When women learn that they have rights, they realize that they are “human beings” in their own right.

One of the most important changes reported by respondents repeatedly was awareness of gender-based discrimination and that feminism was about overcoming this discrimination. They said that they began to understand that their problems are not just individual problems attributable to their own faults, but stem from gender roles rooted in particular societal and historical context, and therefore *changeable*. They indicated how relieved they were to see many women had similar concerns and that coming to the training felt like “social therapy” and experiencing solidarity with them.

- I now understand how gender based discrimination is pervasive. I can see it in the TV programs I watch and all around me. (Antalya)
- We must have been blind before the Women's Human Rights Training. Now I have gained a critical consciousness. (Ankara)
- I became aware that I am subjected to emotional violence at home. (Canakkale)
- I thought feminism was a bad word, or that it meant something like communism or terrorism! (Antalya)

One of the ways that the more powerful group, in this case men, preserve the status quo in societies, is by claiming that what the inferior group experiences is “their own fault” (Kardam, 1987). It is clear that this has been done effectively since many women had attributed the discrimination they suffered to “their own fault.”

Learning about one's rights did not, however, always lead to greater self-confidence. There were a few participants who mentioned during focus group discussions that they, in fact, wished they had never learned about their human rights. They said that they are now more depressed, because they feel helpless to change things. When gender identities are entrenched, and the status quo puts women in an inferior position, attempting to change them is not an easy task and may lead to initial rejection by family and community. This psychological issue

is one of the obstacles to the application of one's learned rights as 'new gender identities' create resistance and threaten the status quo. This remark made in one of the focus group discussions sums up the basis of this fear well:

- Some women realize that if they learned their rights, they would have to fight for them and they don't like that. Instead of learning and feeling uncomfortable, they prefer not to know. They are afraid. But I know we can overcome these prejudices. (Ankara)

2. Changed gender identities and relations within the family

The survey questionnaire results indicate that husbands' attitudes changed positively in 71.7% of the cases while 22.9% remained the same as before, and 5.4% got worse. Participants reported that other family members' attitudes also changed positively (70%), while 24.9% indicated no change, and only 4.4% said that attitudes had taken a downturn. (Table 15, 16) The focus group discussions revealed a much more complicated picture.

As women became empowered, and their identity as a woman began to change, this inevitably created repercussions in family relationships. In many cases, it became a delicate situation for the woman because it implied a new power relationship between the husband and wife, where the husband found himself in a situation to relinquish some of his power, and provide more "space" to his wife. In some cases, at the beginning when a woman learned about her rights, there was a tendency to feel very negative towards her husband, "like an enemy" and come home and loudly claim that she had rights. There may even have been some fear on the part of husbands that their wives may want to divorce them. Some husbands apparently did ask why their wives were participating in the Women's Human Rights Training Program and whether their intention was to get a divorce.

The fear and sense of threat experienced by some husbands has possibly triggered a negative reaction from them, worsening relations until both sides learned to re-establish their relationship on a different level. There were cases where the husbands did not want to allow the wife to attend WWHR-New Ways' training program. There were several cases, where the women lied and said they were attending another training. They encountered resistance when they wanted to leave the home and come to the community centers. Family attitudes in general appear to be rather ambivalent, and sometimes quite negative. The in-laws, especially the mother in laws, were mentioned by the respondents as interfering and controlling their freedom of movement. Sometimes this feeling of being threatened showed up as resistance, opposition, and sometimes violence by the husbands. Below are some illustrative remarks:

- My brothers say that if they knew, they would not have sent me to this training; they say that I know too much now. (Bitlis)
- I had great difficulty participating in this training program, my parents supported me but my husband and his family opposed it. They suggested I should instead go to a course on sewing and embroidery. But my husband is now happy that I participated in this training.
- My husband sometimes told me not to participate in this training. I suspect he was doing this because of pressure from his family and the neighbours. My mother in law accused my husband of being too lax with me. But instead of living under that pressure, I prefer to come here (to the training) and share my concerns with others. (Ankara)

- Even when my husband gives me permission to come to the community centers, my mother in law and the rest of the community still oppose it.
- I am under psychological pressure. My husband wants me to learn these things but he doesn't want me to implement them.
- After the training I started working. My husband changed and he became very jealous.
- Men say they are the ones who earn money, and therefore they have more say in the household. I haven't been able to change my husband, although my communication with my children has improved. I have become aware of my rights, and how I am being suppressed but I have not been able to change my husband. (Istanbul)
- Women become free when the husband allows them to. My child defends me against my husband, saying: "Dad don't you see that mom comes back home happier from the community center?" (Ankara)

Many participants in the focus groups mentioned how important it was for them to "communicate effectively" and to have learned the "I language." (The training includes a section on the use of "I language", on ways to become better communicators and ways to engage in dialogue without blaming the other person.) Over time, some established a new balance with more equal gender relations. This took time and patience.

Many participants related success stories where the husbands now respect them more, encourage them to attend more trainings at the community center, and overall appreciate that the training program for has, in fact, led to better family relationships rather than worse:

- I was a nervous person before the Women's Human Rights Training. My husband was very happy that I participated. He now recommends it to his friends; saying if you want to have a better relationship with your wife, send her to the community center. The other day, he even allowed me to go to the bar with my women friends. (Istanbul)
- This training helped me a great deal. My husband was very jealous, he didn't allow me to go out, and he beat me. In fact, he tried to kill me. I suffered from a nervous breakdown and sought psychiatric help. They advised me to get a divorce but I refused. I persisted and in the end, I changed my husband. He let me go to the trainings at the community center including this one. He is very repentant of what he did to me. Now I am a free agent.
- When I make suggestions to my husband and he listens to me now.

“Most importantly, now I live for myself.”

Türkan Özmen

Mine was an arranged marriage at the age of seventeen, decided by families and neighbors. I lived with emotional and economic violence from my husband and his family for years. I could not go shopping on my own; I was not even allowed to leave the apartment. My husband would take me out for walks, my arm in his. For years I watched people, sitting at my window, from behind the curtains. For years I did everything my husband or my son ordered me to do. They used to mock me; they did not care for me. I was not treated as a human being. I was not allowed to read the newspaper even; they used me as though I was a robot. I had forgotten how to think. If I were to go see a doctor, I would not be able to explain my problem.

I worked at a factory for 6 years, if that can be called working. Like they say, wrap the woman in a sheet, take her to work, then back home. That is exactly how it was. I learned how to do things in secret. I would write and hide away my writings at night when everyone else was sleeping. I had to ask for my husband's permission even when I was going to the pharmacy to buy sanitary pads. My husband was taking away my salary from me. That is how abused I was.

When I first came to the Community Center, I could not even say why I was there: I could not explain my troubles to anyone. Instead I went back home, crying. When I came back to the center I enrolled in the Women's Human Rights Training program. Then I started to speak, to talk about my problems. At first, it felt very strange to be outside, and even to see other people, after all those years of staying home, and walking around in my husband's arm. I started to live in the real sense only two years ago.

I started to change while I was participating in the Training Program. And as I changed, my husband also changed. When my husband, his family and my own community noticed my transformation, they became more aggressive towards me. Once they realized it was not possible to carry on as before, they started to put more pressure on me.

Physical violence started, which was not there before. My husband would try to hit me on the head, on my face; I would cry. He would belittle me then, calling me a crybaby. I used to love reading, but my husband was jealous of my books. I had been interested in poetry ever since I was a child. There were quite a few poems I had written secretly over the years. One day, my husband got extremely angry and burned all my books and poems along with my child's toys.

As I was participating in the Women's Human Rights Training, I started to read the newspaper in secret. I noticed that all the employment ads were for middle or high school graduates. I had dropped out from school when I was in the seventh grade. My husband had only finished middle school and he did not even have insurance. I started to worry about how to raise my children, if he were to die. Thus, I decided to complete my education. With the support of the training program and that of my friends in the group.

I started the Open Schooling. I was working as a cleaning lady then, at this woman's apartment. She started to tutor me on school work. My husband was not giving me any money, and I was not able to ask for it. That is, I did not have money even for the bus. I walked to work for hours every morning, carrying my daughter on my back. After I finished my work, we would have a class with this woman. Whatever I managed to do, I did it under these circumstances. My husband did not know about any of this. I was secretly studying at home and hiding my books behind the couch. On the day of my final exam, my husband beat me, and with tears still in my eyes I went to take the exam. Finally I passed all the exams and received my middle and high school diplomas. My husband and the whole family were shocked; it was a huge surprise for all of them.

As the women in the Women's Human Rights Training group, we developed solidarity. During the program, throughout the entire process I went through, I always knew that these women would run to help me when I am in trouble, that they would understand me and support me in everything I did, in each new step I took. In this process and together with the women in the training group, I learned to defend my own rights. Now, I know that I have rightful wishes, and that I am not alone in what I have experienced. The problems I have today might be somebody else's tomorrow. My husband treats me like a human being now. He knows that he has to give me money, for myself and for the house. When I tell the people around me "I have earned this money with my own labor" they are very surprised. But this is the truth. I also worked, and I am still working, at home or outside. It is not an easy thing to wear or to eat only what my husband buys. If I had known all this before, I would have gone back to school much earlier. Actually I would have really liked to become a pediatrician and work in rural areas.

We live in the capital city but we are not aware of what goes on in this country. In our day, we could not defend our own rights; we were brought up in ignorance. I do not want my daughter, my son or my daughter-in-law to experience what I have lived through. I have to make this happen. I have seen that through the Women's Human Rights Training Program. I have changed my husband as well; but it is not only my husband, our society has to change. And this will happen in time. I want my daughter to have the life she deserves. I am struggling for this cause. Every step I manage to take, everything I accomplish will be her gain.

And most important of all, I now live for myself. I had not recognized my own individual existence, desires; I had forgotten about the people out there and how to talk to them. Now I travel and talk to my heart's desire, and I write freely, without fear. I no longer want to die in silence.

From the interview with Türkan Özmen, conducted by Ayşe Berktaş in July 2002.

3. Greater respect for children's rights

Participants who learned about gender sensitive parenting and children's rights revealed in focus group discussions that they now respect their children's rights more. 93% reported that their attitudes towards their children changed in a positive direction, while 7% remained the same, and no one reported a negative change. (Table 17) Many women reported during the focus group discussions how they had become aware that their children had rights. They had begun to treat their children with greater respect. They had also realized that perhaps they, as mothers, discriminated against their daughters, according more rights to their sons:

- I decided to let my daughter go to college out of town, whereas before I did not. I now want her daughter to become economically independent. (Istanbul)
- My son and I communicate with each other much better since I have learned to use the "I language." (Istanbul)
- If I can't change my husband, I am trying to change my son to respect gender equality. (Istanbul)
- We mothers start gender discrimination ourselves. (Istanbul)
- After this program ended, I never shouted at my daughter again. After all, she is an individual too. (Edirne)

4. Changing gender relations within the community: Ambivalence

Many participants indicated in focus group discussions that they had developed feelings of solidarity with the women in their training group. The participants of the training groups shared extensive personal information and experiences with each other, on subjects like family relationships and violence in the home. Many of them became good friends and continued seeking each other out.

- I realize that I am not alone and my problems are not because of something I did wrong but that my rights are violated and this is something related to being a woman.
- This is like social therapy; I realized I am not alone.

The neighbours and other members of the participants' communities, however, were not necessarily supportive. In fact their attitudes towards participants were ambivalent and at times, contradictory. Some neighbours reacted negatively, and tried to exclude and blame the participant, while in other cases they noticed the changes in the participants (for example, how they have become more confident and articulate) and complimented them. The negative reactions coming from the neighbours result from the internalised traditional gender roles. Sometimes, the same neighbours who first chided the participant for participating in training later come to her to ask for advice. Many respondents discussed women's own lack of support for each other and the psychological pressure to stay at home and not participate in this training from the community. Many also remarked that they had to disregard this pressure in order to participate in the training:

- "Why are you going? Why do you leave your house and go out?"
- "So are you now going to demand your rights from your husband?" (Ankara)

- Neighbours ask me whether I am now going to become a feminist or a socialist. They don't want to learn anything themselves but when they have a problem, they come to me for advice. (Ankara)
- I came here because I was bored but I learned a great deal. At first, my neighbours were making fun of me but now they come to me complaining about their husbands and asking for solutions. (Izmir)
- When I recommended this training to my friends they said: you think there are women's rights, who lost them so that you will find them?
- One day, a newly married woman friend came to visit me. I mentioned the Human Rights Training Program for Women to her and she was very excited about it. But her husband did not allow her to attend. And he stopped greeting my husband. So I lost a neighbour. (Istanbul)

There also seems to be some ambivalence in the communities towards the community centers themselves, not just to the Women's Human Rights Training Program. Given that the community centers are set up by the Turkish state (the Directorate of Social Services) and most centers are established in areas that received migration from the Southeast (some from villages that had been evacuated during the conflict between Turkish military forces and the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), the feelings of ambivalence are not surprising. Furthermore, state institutions in Turkey have been historically non-participatory and top-down, whereas the idea of a community center at least implies some community participation, a new concept in Turkish state-society relations. Some women said that the people in their neighbourhood questioned the political views and the discourse the centers represented. For example, respondents in one neighbourhood in Antalya mentioned rumors in the community about how the community center is the cause of family break-ups, that they are run by extreme rightists or leftists, that they are going to force the women to take off their headscarves and so on.

Participants mentioned however, that once they had gone to the centers, they realized that these are places, unlike any other bureaucratic institutions, that are *for them* and that they could participate in activities and be heard when they voiced requests. In fact, many women mentioned how they consider the center like a second home, and that they come here to meet with friends. It seems that the centers have become places where the participants could go relatively freely and be relieved of their mainly homebound lives. Given the gender norms in Turkish society that mainly relegate women to the private and family sphere, many participants found relief in leaving their narrower social circle and meeting new women.

C. Action Competence: Application of Human Rights

We know that learning or even changed attitudes and perceptions don't automatically translate into action. This section explores the extent of changes in the application of women's human rights by the participants of the Program, and the factors that shape their application.

1. Right to freedom from gender based violence

The survey results revealed that physical, emotional and economic violence are still widespread. The focus group discussions further revealed that before the training, many women had not distinguished between different types of violence and certainly had not perceived "emotional violence" as violence. It also became clear that many women had

internalised gender norms that condone violence against women and see it as normal, so that there is difficulty getting support from other women in overcoming gender based violence.

Physical violence: 28.7% of respondents (almost one third) reported that they had experienced physical violence before they attended the training program. Among those who have indicated that they had experienced domestic violence before attending the training, 63% said it ended after the training, 21% reported a decrease and 15% reported continued violence. For 1% the violence increased. (Table 29, 30)

Emotional violence: 48.2% (almost half) had experienced emotional violence (verbal harassment, devaluing etc.) prior to the training program. Out of those who said yes, 44% reported a decrease, and 31.2% reported emotional violence ended after the training. 20% reported continued experience of emotional violence and 4.8% reported an increase after participating in the training. (Table 31, 32)

Economic violence: 27.9% of the women reported that they experienced economic violence prior to the training program. Among those who answered yes, 33.8% reported an end to the violence after the training, 35% reported a decrease, 8% reported an increase and 23% said it remained the same. (Table 33, 34)

What we can conclude from the statistics is that about one-third of the women experienced physical and economic violence, while about one-half was subjected to emotional violence. In a few cases, this violence increased after the training. But for the majority, all types of violence decreased or ended after the training.

The focus group discussions revealed a complicated picture. During the discussions, it became clear that many women had accepted gender based violence as normal and had not questioned it. Furthermore, female friends may discourage a victim of violence from taking any action, telling her that it is not a big deal and that they experience too. In-laws may condone it as well. When the participants did question and oppose violence, some were met with even more violence. Sometimes the social context encouraged the men to practice violence as in the case of a couple who had moved from the village to a shantytown area where the husband began to spend time in a local coffeehouse, and became more restrictive and violent towards his wife. This is a question that needs to be explored further: is migration to poor areas of cities and potential economic upheaval related to greater gender based violence in the family?

Another factor in increased violence against women was the husband's resentment of a wife's education, participation in a seminar, going to a community center, and in general being less available to respond to the husband's wishes. Thus, gender based violence may increase when the wife no longer acquiesces automatically to the husband's wishes, and applies her right of freedom of movement by leaving the house:

- My husband's word is still the law in our household. My in-laws live upstairs. When I opposed my husband, I encountered physical violence. When I responded, I was beaten again. (Ankara)
- My husband is irresponsible; he sits in coffeehouses all night. One time, he threw me out on the street. I now know what to do but I cannot do it. When we lived in Kecioren, there was no physical violence. I dressed the way I wanted. Now we are in

the shantytown district and physical violence and he began to restrict my dress and movement. And he started going to the coffeehouse. (Ankara)

Yet, sometimes, it seemed that by just recognizing and acting upon their rights (in this case freedom from violence by announcing to the husband that he has no right to beat her), a woman might catch her husband by surprise. In one case, to his great surprise, one woman hit her husband back. In short, it may sometimes not just be the case that men “don’t let” women apply their rights, but that women just assume that they can’t and never try. Some women coped positively with violence by using community centers as a resource, seeking the social workers’ counsel and by being persistent:

- There was no physical violence at home, but once I started attending this training, it started. I did everything just the way he wanted before. But this time, when he tried to hit me, I hit him back. He tried to threaten me, but at one point, he stopped. There is no more physical violence, we just have heated debates. One day my husband beat me; I came here to the community center. Before, I would not speak to him at all, after he beat me up. But I consulted people here, and I did speak to him to try to work things out as they suggested. He says that I have become a totally different person. A few days ago, my mother-in-law called and talked to my husband. It was clear that she wanted something from me. My husband told her that I had changed a lot, that he would not relay this message and that she had to talk to me herself. My children also tell me that I have become a very sweet person. Yet, here I was I had even thought about committing suicide before this training but now I have changed a great deal. (Ankara)

The statistical results indicate that there is a considerable decrease in gender based violence reported by participants (physical, emotional or economic). This is one of the very remarkable achievements of this program, considering gender based violence continues to be a widespread phenomenon in Turkey. The contributing factors could be summarized as:

- The professionalism and intimate knowledge of the social workers/facilitators of issues related to gender based violence and their ability to counsel participants.
- The length of the training program that provided the participants with sufficient time and support to deal with and find solutions to gender based violence at home.
- The module on communication in the training program that allowed participants to engage in more constructive communication with their partners/families.
- Solidarity and mutual support of the participants who listened to each other’s concerns and provided advice.
- Availability of legal advice and knowledge of where to go/whom to approach in case of violence increased the confidence of participants to deal with such issues.

In many cases, we saw that women helped each other or neighbors by taking them to police stations or to lawyers in the event of violence, even though they encountered resistance and rebuke from the battering husband and/or the police for “interfering” in someone else’s life. In Canakkale, we saw a collective response to gender based violence in the form of police training on Sexual Abuse and a Candlelight Vigil and Workshop to prevent sexual harassment against Children. Furthermore, informational sessions on the new law on gender based violence were held in various community centers.

“No more shouting, no more beating, no more blood. I am a different woman now.”

Halise Özçelik

I was sent as a bride to my relatives. They were living in a village, Karaköçen in Elazığ. It was a desolated place, not one neighbor within sight. When we moved to Izmir, I went to the Community Center because I was experiencing domestic violence. There I started to participate in the Women's Human Rights Training Program.

Throughout the fifteen years of my marriage, I endured the physical oppression of my husband and his family. I had to walk away hungry from every meal, while they watched my every bite. Beating, violence, anything you can imagine, I have lived it all. If a glass broke, I would get a beating. I would hide under the chairs to sleep, and each morning I would wake up to their kicks. I did not resist. There was no one around to support me. My face covered, my lips sealed, my head bearing the *yazma* (hand-painted traditional cloth); I was just the bride. I was a very different person then.

I was sixteen years old and nine months pregnant, but nobody believed I was carrying a child. My mother-in-law said, "it must be something you ate, it might be diarrhea, you are not pregnant". I was losing my mind. I went to the barn, I was going to deliver the baby alone; huge cows were staring at me. Then my sister-in-law came, dragged me up the stairs. My mother-in-law pushed the child out of me, pressing on my belly with her fingers. There was not a soul around; if I died, they would tell my family that I died in labor. "Could not be helped, such was her fate" they would say. Yet, that was not my fate. My first child died from a disease when one and half years old. When he died I got scared of what the family might do with me; I got a rope to hang myself, but I could not do it.

Do the laundry in the morning, work on the farm all day, prepare the flour, bake the bread, run around, get everything ready; come night, lay under your husband who beats you in the morning. You satisfy every need of your husband, want it or not, only if and when he wants. I have been tied down during sexual intercourse, three times.

We moved to the town Menemen in Izmir. My husband had a job then. He would come home tired, blame me for his fatigue, and beat me up. When I was five months pregnant, he climbed on me, stepping on my belly with his feet, shouting: you will deliver now. I was constantly asking myself the reason for all this violence. I have gone to primary school, so I can read. When we moved to Izmir, I started reading magazines and books; I wanted to be able to offer something to my children. I have always wanted to become something someday.

The beatings continued in Izmir. I ran away from home. Either something would

change, or I would kill myself. My husband found me. I told him that I had certain conditions. "You shall not beat me, we will get legally married, and I will get a job." He accepted my conditions. I started working. But the violence did not stop. Often I went to work with blood all over me.

At work I heard about the activities in the Community Center and came here. I participated in the Women's Human Rights Training. During this training, I started to put up a fight against my husband. In the course of the training I heard about human rights, the Purple Roof Foundation For Women's Shelters. I learned that women have rights too. I said, I have rights, and I do not deserve this violence. I have been married for twenty years and for the last five I have been living like a lady. I struggled to bring about this change myself; I changed here during the Women's Human Rights Training.

Much later, I found out that my husband is seeing another woman. And I filed a divorce suit. I and my husband are relatives, our family decided to kill me. While they were debating over who should murder me, my husband realized that I would carry out my decision. During the divorce case he grew penitent, apologized many times. I was also weighing my alternatives. If divorced him, I would have to marry someone else due to my financial situation. That means I would have to try to train yet another man. The fact that I changed one man does not amount to all that much. The basis of manhood has to change.

My husband is not the only cause of the violence I suffered; it is related to his surroundings, it is about the whole society. People are influenced by their surroundings. As we talked with my husband, in time everything in our relationship changed. Now, my husband says, "I am proud of you". I ask him, how come you are proud of me now and not when I was doing everything you told me, and not resisting your abuses? He understood that I am defending my pride as a woman. He even visited our Women's Human Rights Training group of 10 women, and said, "I am proud of my wife, what I have done is wrong".

After the Women's Human Rights Training, my children and I have better communication. We experience beautiful things with my husband. For two years now, he has not touched a hair on my head. To me the old days seem like scenes from a movie. I do not even cry when I recall those times, because I can not believe that I actually lived all those things. If I had the mind that I do now, I would not stand any of that. I would have left, ran away. But I did not know anything then, I was alone.

Now everything is different. I want to live. My husband respects me as a human being, as a woman. I want to partake in every activity that I can, I want to travel. I want to start working again; I am looking for a job. I have been bored because I was unemployed for the last year and a half. Nevertheless, I am peaceful. Because there is no more violence. My children are growing up in a good environment. There is no shouting, no beating, and no blood. I am a different woman now.

From the interview with Halise Özçelik, conducted by Ayşe Berktaş, in July 2002.

2. Sexual and reproductive rights

Even though the survey did not pose any direct questions about the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights, discussions in focus groups confirmed that participants had begun to exercise them more and more. Several participants (from groups in Bitlis, Ankara, Istanbul, Canakkale, and Izmir) mentioned that they were able to say “no” to their husbands when the husbands wanted to have sex. Almost all participants indicated that they were able to say “no” to demands now whereas before they had said “yes” before, even if they did not want to. Even if they did not specifically mention they were able to say “no” to their husbands when they demanded sex, it is safe to say that the ability to say “no” translates to this important sphere as well.

The group facilitators indicated that discussions focused a great deal on issues related to sexuality. Some of the participants in focus group discussions said that they now realize that if they don’t “feel like it”, they don’t have to go with their husbands’ wishes. It was clear that exercise of other rights in tandem, such as increased freedom of expression, empowerment within the family had contributed to the overall exercise of sexual rights as well.

In the focus group discussions, several women did mention how happy they were to have learned about their sexual rights and that they had a right to say no to their husbands:

- When I don’t want to, I don’t have sex with my husband anymore just because he wants to. (Bitlis, Istanbul)
- I had a fight with my husband and left the bed, and laid out another mattress in the living room and refused to go back to our bed, until we had made up. (Ankara)

3. The right to freedom of movement

While the survey questionnaire did not include a specific question on the right to freedom of movement, focus group discussions revealed that women’s freedom of movement still remained quite limited. Some are unable to exercise this basic human right. Many women talked about getting permission from their husbands to leave the house or to participate in this training. This was due to economic dependence because they needed to ask for money from their husbands if they were not working. Husbands could just restrict their movement by denying them money for transportation. Sometimes mothers in law would also join in the limitations imposed on a woman’s venturing outside the home. Social norms restricting women’s movement in public spaces when they ventured out alone also played a role, especially in Eastern and Southeastern regions:

- There is no violence at home, but my family doesn’t allow me to go out very often. I can’t tell that my life has been much affected by this training. (Bitlis)
- My brother told me that the girl that my brother’s best friend fancied had gone downtown shopping herself and a guy said something to demeaning to her on the street. My brother’s friend happened to be there and had to fight with this guy. My brother told me not to ever put him in that position! (Bitlis)

On the other hand, some women related how they were afraid to go out, but now they are much more confident to leave the house and go out on their own:

- When my child got sick, I couldn't take her to the hospital for fear that someone would say you can't go out as a woman by yourself. I lost two children because of that.
- I could never go out alone, ride a bus or train, but now I can go out shopping alone. (Ankara)
- I couldn't even go to Kizilay or Ulus. Now my husband says: go, have fun, enjoy yourself, and learn new things. (Ankara)

4. Right to education

When asked whether they continued interrupted education or enrolled in any educational courses (formal or informal) after the training ended, 54.1% reported that they did so. (Table 19) Thus, about half the respondents were encouraged to continue their education in some form after the training. In the focus groups, women mentioned that taking this training had encouraged them to continue their interrupted education, such as returning to finish middle school, high school, taking university courses in pedagogy, English language courses or professional training course such as training to be a hair stylist.

- Before I wanted to go to school but my mother was against it. But now I am going to middle school. They also called my brother in Istanbul and got his permission as well. This couldn't have been possible before I took this training. (Van)

According to the statistical analysis, geographical region may be a factor in the exercise of individual right to education, whereas income level, or the level of education does not appear to be. The statistical analysis shows that women from the Southeastern region were the least likely to continue interrupted education or enroll in educational courses after the training, women in the Marmara and Mediterranean regions being the most likely. This finding is supported by the fact that girls tend to be pulled out of school early in the former region where traditional and tribal based gender norms (including honor killings) are still prevalent. One of our focus groups in Diyarbakir, for example, consisted of young girls between the ages of 14-17 who weaved rugs and did not attend school.

Survey results indicate that 54% of the participants chose to continue their education by participating in more programs at community centers or starting a formal education program, or continuing their interrupted education. This is a very important result of the program as research around the world has demonstrated that women and girl's education is the key to their empowerment and overcoming of discrimination.

Going Back to School

Cemile Kaynak

I was brought up with violence and beatings, all my life I was subjected to violence which I had not deserved. Mine was an arranged marriage. It was not an easy for me to even go for a walk. We live as an extended family, very crowded. In the past, I was the one who took care of all the domestic chores; everything was on my shoulders. Even the payment of electricity or water bills was my job. No one else would bother and yet if I made the tiniest mistake, in paying the bills etc, I would get yelled at. I was doing all the work while they kept rebuking me and oppressing me.

At the Community Center I heard that there was a program called Women's Human Rights Training. I registered for the program right away.

I started to discuss with my family and friends the things we have talked about and learned in the Women's Human Rights Training; I was also trying to put these things into practice. After the Training I regained my self-confidence. I learned that I also have rights, and that I can use these rights. I realized there is no such thing as having to do everything my husband tells me. Today, my ideas and decisions are also taken seriously. When necessary, I argue with my husband, criticize him, even snap at him. My relation with the household has also started to change. Now they respect me, value my thoughts, and help out with the house chores. I have made it my goal to be useful first of all to myself, then to my community. Not everyone comes to get this training. Thus I am doing my best to inform the others. It is definitely great that the Women's Human Rights Training is being offered here in the Onur neighborhood, yet the process of changing our people is a slow one, it takes time.

I have friends who have experienced domestic violence. I explain to them that they have rights and that they can defend these rights. Some of them have gone to the police station for help. However, the police officer there told these women "spouses have fights and then they make up, we cannot interfere" and sent them back home. The police has certain responsibilities; the woman should be sent to the hospital for instance, she should see a doctor. Everybody should be informed about the duties and responsibilities of the police station. Since we did not know our rights as women, we could not defend them either. This situation changed after the Women's Human Rights Training Program. Now I go to the police station with my friends who were subjected to domestic violence, and I tell the officers there "You people have to do something about this in here; we will demand what is rightfully ours; and you should be guiding us". Now I talk to them in this manner. Today, the officers at the police station are more aware of their own responsibilities.

The Municipality has a project called the "Green Zone". I participate actively in this project. We are trying to make the hills green around here, planting trees. While working for this project, I participated in every program within the scope of the project. The people I've worked with regarded me as an initiating, outgoing and practical person and they suggested that I join the City Council of the Municipality of Karşıyaka. There are members of various associations, mukhtars (*elected head of a neighborhood*), and neighborhood representatives. Now I am acting as a neighborhood representative in the City Council. That is, I am communicating the problems

of our neighborhood to this Council; we are discussing these problems and searching for solutions together. This is a great opportunity for me. I enjoy participating in these activities on a voluntary basis, affecting and changing my surroundings as such. The people I meet at these programs wonder if I am a teacher, they ask me where I work. No, I say, I am a volunteer.

Currently, a plan is being made to build a new hospital in the area, so researches must be conducted concerning its location etc. Also, the garbage collecting system is running poorly in our neighborhood. On such issues, I myself delegate sub-commissions, and collect signatures for the necessary changes. At the very least, I am raising consciousness of people around me about these issues. For instance, the women visiting the Community Center need a place to leave their children. Yet, there is no children's room at the Community Center. Now we are trying to open one. As a result of participating in so many activities concerning the neighborhood, I became a public figure, recognized by and known to many people. I am in constant dialogue with the Muhktar also; he consults me on every subject. People around me, including our Muhktar, suggest that I enter the next Muhktar elections.

I was not always such an initiating, outgoing woman who knew her rights. As I said, my self-confidence enhanced after the Women's Human Rights Training Program. I also participated in the Family - Child Training Program. Later, I decided to go back to school and complete my formal education. I started to study, wanted to finish middle school via the Open Schooling. I passed the first and second semester examinations; and completed the first grade in one year. Now I am in the second year; later I will go to high school. I will also take courses to become a professional hairdresser. I imagine the schooling and the job will go well together. I believe that I will be successful. I think I will manage to get somewhere, with my own efforts and within my capability. The most important thing for me is my future. I do live my own life now, yes, but I do not know what the future will bring. For example, I do not even have insurance. I do not want to be dependent on my children in the future. My wish is to have my own home, my own spending money. I do not want to be dependent on my husband some day. I do not want to be in the position of saying "I am going back to the village". I want to have economic freedom. Actually this is my reason to go back to school. The most difficult part is over. I have recognized my desires and abilities. From now on, I will continue doing my best and be successful. Soon it will be time to receive my high school diploma.

Excerpts from the interview with Cemile Kaynak, conducted by Ayşe Berktaş in July 2002.

5. Right to work

28.8% reported that they had begun to work for an income and 8.3% started a new business. (Tables 22, 23) It is interesting to note a case where a participant engaged in a non-traditional occupation for women after the training. She received a license to become a heavy truck driver; a profession that is male dominated in Turkey. This was met with resistance in her community with reactions from men such as "you drive a truck, and I will have to throw a pie in the oven." But after a while, the men on the job accepted her.

Level of education and income, and marital status does not seem to be a factor in exercising the right to work. In other words, this right seems to be exercised equally by women from all levels of education and income. But geographical region appears to be a factor in applying the

right to work. Participants in the Aegean, Mediterranean and Eastern Anatolian regions had exercised this right more than the others, and the region where it was least exercised was Central Anatolia, followed by the Southeast.

The First Woman Heavy Vehicle Driver of Çanakkale

Şenay Danışan

I was born and raised in Sivas (a city in Eastern Turkey). Our society, our elders, including my own mother, taught us that we, girls and women, are always second-class citizens. When we moved to Çanakkale (a city in North Western Turkey), I participated in the Women's Human Rights Training Program. During the training, I started to recognize myself primarily as a woman and definitely not as a second-class person. Acknowledging myself as a woman, a human being and an individual had huge effects on my relations with my family, my social circle. Most important of all, this acknowledgment affected my self-reflection. I became a confident, more liberated woman and person. I decided I wanted to have a profession. I wanted to find a job to meet my own needs and desires.

By the end of the Training, our training group decided to establish a women's association in Çanakkale. At the foundation stage, we were constantly holding weekly meetings both among ourselves and with various institutions in Çanakkale. We had one of our meetings with the Mayor. We communicated to him our wishes and demands. Our foremost demand was the provision of job opportunities for women. We told the Mayor that "as women we also want to work, but as we are not party members we cannot find jobs in the municipality". The Mayor in reply, said that if a woman among us applies for a job at the municipality, he will immediately hire her. As it happens, he was actually looking for two cleaning personnel to work at the municipality. Furthermore, he complained about the shortage of bus drivers at the Municipality of Çanakkale. They were in urgent need for a heavy vehicle driver. He said that if there happens to be a woman among us who wants to work as a bus driver at the municipality, she can start working right away.

I wanted to get a job and start working. Yet, until then I had never thought I could work as a driver. Plus, I did not even have a driver's license. My friends at the Women's Human Rights Training group supported me. So, the municipality was looking for a driver. I was anxious to see if they would actually hire me, a woman, as a driver. I mentioned being a professional driver to my husband. He was very surprised and wondered where the idea came from. He said "Do not dare, this cannot be".

But it did. First of all, I enrolled in the driver's ed course. At the time we were also busy trying to establish our association. Finally, I passed the driver's test and headed straight for the Mayor with my license in my pocket. He did not have a chance; he had a promise to keep that he had made in front of so many women. I started my first paid job as a heavy vehicle driver in the Municipality of Çanakkale. The day I started my job was also the opening day of our association.

Yes, I had decided to get a job, but I could have gone back on my decision any second. The women participating in the training group, who later became the founding members of Çanakkale Kadının El Emeğini Değerlendirme Derneği (Çanakkale Women's Association for Handcrafts), supported me at all times. They were always with me.

I have been working in the Municipality of Çanakkale for 2.5 years. I am the only woman worker at the Municipality with official status. I drove the office car for a long time. For the last three months I have been working at a desk job. I keep climbing up the ladder in my job. Actually, I really want to drive the garbage truck, but unfortunately that has not been possible yet. We are 234 fellow workers, employed by the Municipality. Elections were held for the Labor Union administration. There were eleven candidates and I was the only woman among them. And I received the second most votes.

When I had first started working, my co-workers were making sarcastic and allusive remarks at me. They said things like "Now that you stir the wheel, I guess we will head home and wash the dishes". But they do not treat me like that anymore. Now they see me not as a female object but as a working- woman, a fellow worker like themselves. I am a woman, a first class person, who works as a driver and makes her own living.

Excerpts from Şenay Danişan's speech at the Meeting for Grassroots Organizing, June 2002. Şenay Danişan is a founding member of the Çanakkale Kadının El Emeğini Değerlendirme Derneği.

6. Right to political participation

When asked if they follow world events and news more *after* participation in the training, 73% responded that they do a great deal more, and 25% more. (Table 21) Following news around the world and Turkey may be regarded as a precondition to political participation. It is also important to note that traditionally politics has been viewed as a male domain so that greater interest may be viewed as a positive development towards greater participation of women in the long term.

While no direct question was asked to assess the extent of political participation, interest in greater political participation was demonstrated in focus group discussions:

- I am going to school to study Local Public Administration. I am planning to become a candidate in the next local elections. (Van)
- During the 1999 elections, my husband and I supported different candidates for "muhtar". I realized that men are at work during the day, and the real owners of the neighborhood are the women. I reserved a café, sent notices to women. I organized a meeting and gave a talk. My husband learned about this and there was a big fight at home that night – he asked me why I worked for that candidate; I asked him why he supported the other candidate. In the end, the candidate I supported won the elections. (Istanbul Gazi Mahallesi)

7. Right to remedy/seek accountability from the state

Did participants apply their rights to remedy and demand accountability by approaching state institutions after the Women's Human Rights Training Program? It seems that there are still difficulties in approaching state institutions given that 75.2% indicated that never approached political institutions with a demand (such as municipality, prosecutor's office, governor's office etc.) before or after participating the Training Program. 85.2% had never personally dealt with a lawyer/public prosecutor or police station. (Tables 24, 25) This is partly due to the fear women have towards legal institutions or the perceived lack of chance to insert their rights at such institutions because of the top-down, hierarchical nature of the Turkish bureaucracy, which may seem alienating and threatening. This is not to say that women did not use their right to remedy or help others in individual cases:

- My father would not let my sister prepare for university exams, and would not let her leave the house. I called the police station, and the police came to the house, and my father had to give up and allow my sister to take the university exams. (Izmir)
- My husband left our daughter and me. I learned that he was cheating on me. He sent me away from Antalya to Ankara and then filed for divorce. I hired a lawyer but he didn't appear at court, and the judge ruled the divorce. I had this decision. (Ankara)
- I didn't know before I came here that you could get free services from a lawyer. I told this to a neighbor who couldn't get a divorce because she didn't have money, and she was able to get a divorce. (Istanbul)

Geographical region is a factor in the exercise of the individual right to remedy. This right was used more often in the Aegean, Marmara and Eastern Anatolia regions compared to the other three. Education also seems to be a factor in the exercise of the individual right to remedy, though not marital status and income level. As education level increased, the exercise of this right also increased proportionally, suggesting that higher level of education equips women with greater confidence and information to seek remedy.

8. Right to association

Did the participants join an organization after participating in the Women's Human Rights Training Program for? 31.4% reported that they had joined an organization after the training, while 67.9% had not. (Table 20) Given that one of the major aims of the training program is to encourage grassroots organizing and that a first step may be to join an organization, how can we interpret this finding? Given the fears and difficulties associated with joining or setting up new organizations in Turkey, this percentage may still be assessed as a success. Even becoming a member of an organization may be viewed with suspicion and fear, if that means one's name and address may now be available to the police or that one may be associated with an organization that is blacklisted by the state. The political developments in Turkey, including the armed conflict between the separatist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and the Turkish Security Forces, as well as the earlier clashes between leftist student movements, ultra nationalists, and state security forces have led to a culture of fear and suspicion about organizations. This background has also caused the assumption that all organizations are politically motivated or have a political ideology, or are controlled by a

particular political party and ideology. These fears were echoed in focus group discussions and may explain the reticence in joining an association.

9. Greater equality within the family

The Women's Human Rights Training Program seems to have contributed to a more democratic family structure, and towards greater equality between partners with equal decision-making powers. 74% reported that they have greater say in the family decision-making process now compared to before (for 25.6%, it stayed the same) 51.8% reported that their husbands contribute to household tasks more now; while 56.9% reported that their children contribute to household tasks more than before. (Table 27, 28)

- We let the husbands control their salaries, letting them have control of the bank accounts where their salaries were deposited and we did not even know how much they made. But after the training, we are in charge of our own salaries. (Adiyaman)
- I never thought my husband would wash the balcony and clean the windows but it happened. (Istanbul)
- Before, I did everything my husband asked me to do. I even cut his toenails. I taught the same thing to my children. But now, I want my children to protect their rights too. One time, when I returned home from the Community Center during the Ramadan, I found dinner ready on the table. (Istanbul)

10. Right to freedom of expression

90.0% of participants report that they are much more comfortable in expressing themselves now compared to before they participated in the Human Rights Training Program for Women. Besides, 74.1% reported that family members listen to their opinions more than before, for 25.2%, it stayed the same. (Table 18, 26) Therefore, there is clear indication that women had greater freedom of expression after the training.

- I could never speak in front of my father before. Now I can express myself and discuss everything with him. I am very happy because of that. (Ankara)
- I can now speak freely and express myself everywhere, and many of my friends comment on how articulate I have become. (Izmir)

11. Application of children's rights within the family

There is evidence that children's rights are respected and applied more in the households:

- I decided to send my daughter to college out of town. I want her to learn to stand on her own two feet. (Istanbul)
- My daughter is teaching women's rights to her classmates at high school and organizing them. (Istanbul)

- After I participated in this training, I changed the division of labor in my home. My son rejected, saying what I asked him to do was a “girl’s job” but he is still doing it. He also says: “I have my rights, I can go to the police if you abuse me.” (Edirne)
- I used to raise a hand at my children before, now I never do it. (Istanbul)

What factors influence the application of human rights?

Constraining Factors:

1. The Pressure from the Private Sphere Actors

The participants constantly mentioned that although they had learned what their human and legal rights are, it may be very difficult to actually exercise their rights due to the pressure coming from their spouses, families and social environment. This pressure on the women is rooted in the existing gender roles, which is mainly a consequence of the customary and religious traditions in Turkey.

- We have learned our rights but it is important to apply them. 70% of us cannot practise their rights. However, it still feels secure to know them. 70% of the women here cannot even ask for help from their families... (Ankara)

2. The State’s failure to enable women to exercise their rights

Women who take steps to stop the violation of their rights or to apply their rights face obstacles from state institutions and officials. The most well known example is the treatment of the officers in police stations when women complain of domestic violence they are subject to.

- I went to a police station with a friend who had been constantly beaten up by her husband – once he almost stabbed her. The Police commissioner tried to settle the situation with my friend and her husband, who had just told her “I will put your blood in a glass and drink”. I told the official that my friend wanted issue a complaint. He yelled at me asking if I am her lawyer. (Ankara)
- My neighbour had problems with her husband. The police used to come often but they were disregarding the problem saying it is a family matter. (Edirne)

3. Continued internalization of prevailing gender norms that discriminate against women

For some women it has been very difficult to overcome prevailing gender norms that place women as inferior to men, which they have also internalised. Since many women are brought up to consider themselves “inferior” to men and to see their circumstances and existing gender relationships as “normal”; they internalise their oppression and fear retaliation and threats from men if they tried to fight for their rights:

- I learned about my rights but I have lost a great deal. I wish I had not known all these things. Now knowing and still sharing the same circumstances with my husband and friends is very difficult. For example, I didn't tell my husband that I was coming to this group meeting because he would have said: You already finished this training, what are you going to do there?" I have fought to gain my rights but when it did not work out, I am now in depression and am on medication. What we know, our men should also know [without us having to teach them]. (Istanbul, Gazi Mahallesi)

As one social worker explained, women do not support each other when someone among them is a victim of violence and complains. They tell her: what is the big deal, they sometimes are subject to it as well, that she should not complain. They may also tell her, if she is newly wed, that once there are children, the marriage will be fine. Children are seen as the guarantee of a marriage.

Women also internalise that they are less important than men, and that it is men that should support the family:

- If there are no jobs for men because of the economy, how can anyone think about jobs for women? (Bitlis)

4. Fear of change in the face of potential retaliation and exclusion from family and community

There is fear of change because women feel that the majority of society is still opposed to the application of women's human rights and that they are working against great odds. They now only have to change themselves in terms of their own gender identity, but that they have to change their husbands and children in order to create more equality within the family. Sometimes they lie in order to attend the Women's Human Rights Training Program because they think that their husbands won't let them attend if they tell the truth. This is a big challenge:

- Some of them realize that if they learned their rights, they would have to fight for them and they don't like that. Instead of learning and feeling uncomfortable, they prefer not to know. They are afraid. But I know we can overcome these prejudices.
- Learning about rights means some changes in behaviour need to be made. This is very difficult for women. Because they have to work to change their husbands and children as well. Then they become angry. They wonder how they didn't know about how their rights were being violated before. Then they become afraid. The reason for that fear is they both want to make changes but they are also afraid to. They are caught in a conflict. They are afraid of their husbands, families, and their husband's families. Furthermore, their neighbors and community also criticize them. They say: what is this thing about women's rights – do you now want to divorce your husband? (Ankara, Safaktepe, Group facilitator)
- I don't tell my husband that I am attending the Human Rights Training because he would object to it. Instead I tell I am going to ACEP (mother-child training program). (Ankara)

- We learned what our rights are, but to apply them is most important. Most of us here could not even go to our families if we had a problem, but to learn about them gives us confidence. We know that we are not alone; it is very important for us to know that there are people who can help us. (Ankara)

Enabling factors:

1. Applying the communication techniques learned in the Women's Human Rights Training Program over time (such as using the I language, using time as an ally, engaging in dialogue, not being defensive, etc.)

- I put the booklets from the Human Rights Training on my dresser and I knew that my husband started reading them without letting me know. (Istanbul)
- We can't expect our husbands to change quickly. I have taken this training four years ago, and my husband is just beginning to change. Time is a very important factor. One of my friends went home the day she learned about her rights and announced that she had rights. Her husband showed her the door. Change is not a quick process and we don't have a magic wand. Four years ago, my husband came here to the CC and complained that I changed because of the CC. But now he came to Mamak with us, watched our folklore performance and congratulated us. (Ankara)
- We learned how to ask for what we want, and we learned how to communicate better through the "I" language. Why did husbands change? Because we learned how to ask for our rights. There is still a way to go, however. Before my husband expected me to cook even when I was ill. But now he makes the salad and clears the table. I believe that I will be able to change it slowly and with patience. He still doesn't allow me to work but that will change too. My husband is influenced by his family. I now sell cosmetic products but I don't ignore my household responsibilities. Along with Human Rights Training, I also started courses to finish middle school. If I hadn't learned to use the "I" language, my husband and children would never have changed. (Istanbul)
- My husband was conservative regarding our daughter and reacted negatively when I wanted to talk about it. So I suggested that I write him a letter. I wrote it and put it in his pocket. His attitude changed towards our daughter after that. My daughter now goes to college and lives alone.

2. Seeking support from the Community Center workers and the participants in the training group

Many women related how the support from the Community Center, the friends that they had made there, and the advice they got from both those women who they met at the CC, and from the group facilitators gave them the courage to persist.

- When I first started here, I came secretly. My husband used to beat me. But now, I answer him back. I came from Urfa to Ankara. I was very afraid of my husband. When he scolded me and beat me, I remained silent. One day, we had a fight and he said he was leaving. I showed him the door but he didn't leave. One day, he beat me again, and I came here to the CC, crying. I told him he can't beat me, that I can also beat him

in return. He was very surprised. He never beat me again. When my niece came over, she was amazed. She asked what I had done to her uncle to make him behave like an angel! (Ankara)

D. Action Competence: Grassroots Organising

Types of grassroots organizing:

- a. Becoming resource people in the community**
- b. Forming informal groups that meet periodically**
- c. Organizing events (Conferences, Workshops etc.)**
- d. Participation in ongoing events (Public Campaigns, Markets)**
- e. Establishing ongoing activity groups (e.g. folklore groups)**
- f. Establishing new organizations (Associations, Cooperatives, etc.)**

a. Becoming resource people: sharing knowledge and helping others apply their human rights

66.1% reported a high level of sharing what they learned with their family, while 57% reported the same with their friends and close community. 52.9% said that they were sometimes approached with questions on women's human rights issues while 35% said that many people sought their counsel and advice in applying their rights and that they become a resource person for their community. (Tables 35, 36, 37) The respondents' eagerness to share their newly acquired knowledge was sometimes received well, other times they were met with resistance.

- I became a speaker at a meeting at the request of the men in my neighborhood. I give advice to community members on sexual issues. Even the men call me "Mrs. President" (Ankara)
- I teach my child what I learned, and he goes and teaches his classmates. He shares the booklets in his class. (Edirne)
- I invite my daughters' friends to our home, and discuss women's rights issues with them. (Izmir)
- As nurses, we provide advice for women who suffer from violence and direct them to appropriate places. (Adiyaman)

Geographical region and marital status are factors in the extent of sharing; while education levels and income levels are not. The sharing and networking occurred most in the Aegean and the Marmara regions and least in Eastern Anatolia. Married women were much more likely to share information than single women. This may be because they already have built in families and networks to share them with and that single women may be socially more reticent in the Turkish cultural context.

Participants in focus group discussions gave examples of how they helped their neighbours exercise their rights to freedom from violence (in once case of a man suffering violence from

his wife), to divorce, to a civil marriage. Some examples from focus group discussions are below:

- I let a friend know that she could get a lawyer free of charge and she was able to get a divorce. (Izmir)
- There was a family who had recently moved into our neighborhood, and they were stealing. But no one would go to the police station for fear. I let the muhtar know about this. The police came and sent them out of town. I could have never done this before. (Edirne)
- I hosted a woman who was a victim of violence who needed help. I applied on her behalf and got her to move into a women's shelter. (Canakkale)
- I knew a woman whose husband had left her. I advised her to make sure she insists on ownership of their home and otherwise not to consent to a divorce. She did and she now owns her home. (Van)
- I was working for the Highway Systems and I was the only woman among 190 men. I almost felt like a man myself. I distributed the training booklets at work. A male colleague who suffered violence from his wife wanted me to talk to his wife. In fact, one of my colleagues wanted to come to this meeting today. My male colleagues suffer as well from this feudal order they are in. They feel obliged to implement the traditional rules.
- My brother in law had not married in a civil marriage. We also had a relative who was not married in a civil ceremony. I told the relative that children born from this union are not considered to have lawful fathers and that I could get a document to that affect. I gave them a date by which they should be married in a civil ceremony and threatened that I would turn them in to the authorities if they didn't. Before that date, they had had a civil ceremony. (Van)

b. Forming informal groups: meeting periodically at Community Centers or at homes

35.9% of respondents said that they are involved with such activities (meeting with former participants) after the Training Program on a regular basis. 46.6% reported doing so on an intermittent basis, and 17.4 said not at all. 69.6% said that they came together and taught each other what they knew. 52.9% said that they sometimes share their skills and talents with other women (and teach each other what they know), while 38.9% said that they do this all the time. (Table 38, 39)

We have found that the Community Centers have become a place where women go to meet other women, learn new knowledge and skills, and to share experiences. For many, it is a home away from home. They say that they are usually alone in their homes, if they are not working outside the home, or have close friends or relatives over for tea and "gossip". They claim that coming to the Community Center is a much more productive way to spend their time. Once they come to participate in training, they usually come back for more. Informal meetings took place either at the centers, or at homes.

Several questions were combined to create a variable that measures the extent of informal organization such as meeting with other participants after the training has ended and sharing experiences, and teaching and learning from each other. Geographical region and marital status are factors in the extent of participation in informal organization. Married women seem

more likely to engage in informal organization activities. But such participation is independent of education level, socio-economic status, and economic activity.

c. Organization of events (Conferences, Workshops, and Training Sessions etc.)

International Women's Day Celebrations: (Speeches, dance, music, theater, fashion shows, etc.):

Aegean Region:

Izmir, Onur Community Center

Marmara Region:

Istanbul, Umraniye and Gazi Mahallesi Community Centers

Edirne, Kaleici and Yildirim Community Centers

Mediterranean Region:

Antalya

Information Sessions, Conferences, Workshops and Training Sessions

Aegean Region:

Izmir, Onur Mahallesi: Information sessions on the new Civil Code and the new law on protection orders against domestic violence

Canakkale: Public information meeting on the new Civil Code; candlelight vigil and workshop to prevent sexual harassment against children; training of the police on sexual abuse

Marmara Region:

Edirne: The New Civil Code Celebration Meeting.

Eastern Anatolia Region:

Van: Legal counselling to victims of violence

d. Participation in ongoing regular events (such as public campaigns, and ongoing markets)

Aegean Region:

Canakkale: fax and telegram campaign for the new Civil Code; participation in the Canakkale Festival by organizing a booth

Marmara Region:

Edirne: Mor Kurdele (Purple Ribbon) Campaign to support the new Civil Code

Istanbul, Okmeydani: stands in an ongoing market.

Central Anatolia Region:

Ankara, Anadolu Bahçeleri: participation in markets and marketing crafts (Anadolu Bahçeleri project was established by SHCEK so that women could sell their handicrafts at street markets.)

e. Establishing on-going activity groups

Central Anatolia Region:

Ankara: women's folklore group at the Sincan Mamak municipality; theater group (playwriting and performance)

Mediterranean Region:

Antalya: theater group; ballet group; "Hamarat Eller" (crafts) group

Eastern Anatolia Region:

Van: "Ev Ekseni" (home axis) group

f. Establishing an organization: including action plans to establish and/or strengthen established organizations

Southeast Anatolia Region:

Diyarbakir: kindergarten, candle production studio

Aegean Region:

Canakkale: women's association (works on rights to work, and freedom from violence; it has 67 members); café connected with Habitat Agenda 21; establishment of a women's center

Central Anatolia Region:

Ankara: Association to Promote and Support Sincan Community Center (activities include visits to orphanages, help poor people, organize tours, organize sales, help poor students)

Mediterranean Region:

Antalya: Hamarat Eller Association (handicrafts production, marketing and resale); plans are underway for the establishment of an Association to Support the Community Center

Marmara Region:

Edirne: Association to Promote and Support the Community Center; Cooperative for Handicrafts Production and Marketing (fruits made out of soap, jewellery)

Istanbul: plans are underway to establish a cooperative (Deniz Kizi Cevre, Kultur ve Isletme Kooperatifi whose goal is to improve the environment and neighborhood in collaboration with Kadin Dayanisma Vakfi who prepared the project proposal and located funding sources); project to establish a kindergarten (land has been allocated by the Municipality and the European Union has promised the funding; a needs-assessment was conducted that identified kindergarten as the top community need)

Eastern Anatolia Region:

Van: a cooperative was established whose objective is to restore an old Van house and run it as a restaurant. (A house was found and restored. The next step is to set it up as a restaurant. The proceeds will be used to provide health services to women and set up a playground); project to set up a women's education center (proposal submitted to the World Bank); project to start literacy courses in rural areas and work with volunteer teachers in the Karpuzalan village (as part of the Support for National Education Program).

In all the above mentioned types of association, except for the last one, the right to association has been exercised more by women of primary or secondary school education than those with a high school or university degree. Married women tend to exercise this right more than single women. The exercise of right to association also varies from region to region, Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia being regions where it is least exercised.

Associations with official status were founded in four of the seven regions (Marmara, Central Anatolia, Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia), in a total of seven cities.

Women Are Pushing the Barred Doors in Diyarbakır

Müşeyyer Açıkgöz

I am the first female child who went to school in my family. I finished primary school but I was not allowed to go to middle school. My family got me married to my uncle's son. All my life I could not even walk out the door when I wanted. I discovered the Women's Human Rights Training Program after I had my sixth child. Then both my family life and social life changed. I started to talk about this training and about our rights with every woman I knew. After a while, we started to gather together with my women relatives and neighbors to discuss women's human rights. We would tell our husbands and elders that we are meeting for coffee or tea; they would not know what we were up to. I saw that you have your own rights, as a woman, as a mother, and that you have the right to know about these rights. Yet, I realized this fact during this training. It seems like I did not even have any rights before then.

We are eight people in our household. There were eight mouths to be fed, and only my husband had a job. While participating in the training, I decided I wanted to have a job too. And I was not the only one, many women in our training group were thinking like me. We came together around our common needs and formed a group. We met with friends working at KEDEV (Women's Labor Support Foundation), and figured that we can start a production workshop with them.

Formerly, I would not think it possible even to tell my husband that I had such a wish. Yet, once the person finds her own desire acceptable, she is able to express herself. I told my husband, I want to work, I will go out and work alongside with other women and men and I will surely converse with them too.

We started working as a group after the Women's Human Rights Training. Our main subject is the protection of women's economic rights. We made a comprehensive survey in our neighborhood. The results showed that there is no place for children to play or to receive education. Yet there is such a big need for it. We considered opening a kindergarten for the children.

We had to start somewhere. First of all our group should have a formal identity, an official status. We decided to become a cooperative. We conducted a market research to determine what we might produce, and we decided to make candles. With this aim our group prepared a project and we presented the project to the governorship. The governorship accepted our project. Now we are producing candles.

When we first started this job, we did not even have a studio, we were making the candles at home. Then we rented a small store. The Municipality paid for its rent for five months. Until the opening ceremony of our studio, no one would believe that we were actually going to work. Once the Governor showed up at our opening ceremony, congratulations and compliments started to flow in.

By the way, there have been many people who tried to hinder our work. There are many women's organizations but they do not have solidarity among themselves. Once you start working on an issue, everybody else starts doing the same thing. Why do not they take care of some other problem, if I am already taking care of this one?

We want to become a cooperative to have an identity. This is our short- term goal. Currently we are in the process of foundation, in consultation with our lawyer. In order to solve the marketing problem, we made contacts with the wholesalers. The quality of training and the variety of our candles have improved. We have stands at hotels and meetings and take the orders of the local shops and supermarkets. Most importantly, we do everything ourselves. Be it the production or the sales, we take care of it all. There is no middleman. Thus we named our studio the "Group of Trust". We shut our doors to trouble.

We will conduct another market research. We have to find out the demands of the market besides candles, and see what else we can produce. We might also engage in the mosaic and screening wire production. We are currently determining the resource people and institutions that can support us in all this work. In the past, I was hardly able to leave the house, but now I am talking about making connections with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the Directorate of Cultural Affairs, the City Directorate, and private firms.

The number of women who join our group is ever increasing. Our cooperative will offer these women an opportunity to satisfy their own needs. We will enable women to have a work life separate from home. Our goal is to promote the social and economic status and awareness of women in Diyarbakır. We aim to bring women into the production process and take them out of the home. I pushed the door open, I have a job, I have a group of people I work with, we have goals and plans, and here I am in Istanbul representing my group.

Excerpts from the speech of Müşeyyer Açıkgöz, from Diyarbakır, at the Meeting for Grassroots Organizing, organized by Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways in Istanbul, June 2002.

Best practices

Important conditions that encourage grassroots organizing:

1. A social and political context either more tolerant of women's activities and women's human rights, and/or a community generally more open and democratic than the average in Turkey affected the attempts to organize positively. This was the case in Canakkale, Istanbul Gazi Mahallesi, Diyarbakir Fatihpasa Mahallesi, and Edirne.
2. The social workers who facilitated the groups in locations where grassroots organizing occurred demonstrated a strong level of support and commitment. Yet, it is also important to point that there is a danger of over dependence on them and overusing their goodwill. One way to avoid that is for the social workers to stand back and make way for group leaders to take responsibility.
3. All groups successful in organizing were able to come up with a well-defined, concrete objective. In fact, some even did a needs-assessment, which legitimized a need within the community and helped them to negotiate with government organizations for land and resources. The importance of identification of a concrete objective by a group based on a needs assessment cannot be overemphasized.
4. It seems that continuing and ongoing sets of training groups in a particular location, and particular attention to the composition of participants to make sure there are potential leader types in each one is very helpful for finding new group leaders as in Canakkale. That may be a good suggestion to all social workers as they form their groups. In other words, a history of continuing training groups may be a precondition for successful organizing.
5. For group leaders and others, it is important to come up with a clearly defined strategy on how to approach relevant governmental bodies to achieve their objectives and learn to establish good relationships with them. (Such as with municipalities, provincial directorates, Community Centers.) This suggests the need for further training in political advocacy and NGO capacity building.
6. Working with WWHR-NEW WAYS and other women's NGOs and getting their support also seem invaluable. Some of the grassroots organizing occurred with the help of NGOs that formulated proposals and/or helped to find funding.
7. It seems that if women have already begun to exercise their other rights, such as the right to work, the right for political participation, the right to education or the right to assembly, then the likelihood is higher for moving to grassroots organizing. It seems that there was a gradual process of moving from informal organizing, to organizing one-time events, to establishing on-going groups and activities, to more formal organizing in the form of associations or cooperatives. This is what happened in Canakkale, Ankara, Antalya, Istanbul, Van and Edirne. The Diyarbakir case presents an anomaly in this sense because the candle workshop and kindergarten were established without the benefit of a prior process of organizing or participating in various events.

8. WWHR-NEW WAYS's close partnership and continued support of the women participants and the social workers encouraged grassroots organizing.

What human rights have the program participants exercised as a group?

Right to assembly:

As mentioned above, a number of conferences, workshops, information meetings, performances and public campaigns have been organized. All of these demonstrate an increase in the exercise of the right to assembly. The questionnaire results show that 41.2% of respondents had taken part in organized and/or participated in various events. 35.3% had participated in or started a petition campaign. (Table 40, 41)

What factors are important in the application of the group right to assembly? The level of education, marital status, geographical region, and economic activity are all factors in the exercise of group right to assembly, while income level is not. But married women were more likely than single women to exercise their group right to assembly. This may be due to greater social pressure over single women in Turkish society. The right to assembly was exercised most by those who had primary and middle school education and less by both of the other groups: the barely literate and those with high school or university education. This goes against the conventional wisdom that higher education goes with greater exercise of rights – including the right to assembly. Sometimes, those that are more educated may be also more apathetic. The right to assembly also varies with region. Not unexpectedly, the regions where the right to assembly has been least exercised are also the regions with most political conflict and repression: Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia.

Right to seek remedy and to demand accountability as a group:

When respondents were asked if they approached state institutions as a group after they had participated in this training, 71.9% said they had not. 23% had done so a few times and only 5.2% said they had done so many times. (Table 42) This demonstrates that approaching state institutions and holding them accountable to implement their rights is still a difficult task for most women.

As mentioned earlier, the top down nature of state institutions and the gap between state and society inhibit people from approaching state institutions in general. There is also the general fear of organizing and the possible harassment of state officials. One of the new laws that has not yet been implemented is supposed to give greater freedoms to non-governmental organizations. But the general trend has been to restrict the operation of such organizations unless they are controlled by the state.

There are, however, examples when this right was exercised sometimes with positive results in the following areas:

Marmara Region:

Establishment of a kindergarten:

- My child was going to go to kindergarten, but state kindergartens were closed. Private ones were open. Eleven of us gave a petition to the Ministry of Education. After this

petition, a kindergarten was started at one of the state schools, to be followed by others. (Edirne)

Seeking permission for an area to sell goods in an ongoing street market:

- I decided to become a businesswoman. I had learned that if I could collect signatures from 20 people, I could get free space from the municipality. I did that and we have now set up a market. (Istanbul)

Demanding more effective garbage collection:

- At Gazi Mahellesi, garbage was not collected on a regular basis at regular hours. The women started to work together on this issue, went to the Municipality and now garbage is collected between 7:30 and 10:00 am. Grocery stores just threw their garbage on the street and the women felt very bad about that. So again, meetings were held, decisions were taken, and now grocery stores have green garbage cans in front of their doors, where they place their garbage. (Istanbul)

Mediterranean Region:

Seeking the establishment of police stations run by women focusing on women's issues:

- A group of women went to the mayor and spoke with policemen at police stations. They asked that women's police stations be established. (This exists in Brazil) The mayor responded that there was no need for such an initiative. (Antalya)

According to statistical analysis, geographical region and level of income are factors in the exercise of this right, whereas level of education is not. Right to seek remedy as a group was exercised more in the Aegean, Mediterranean and Eastern Regions and least in the Southeast. The middle and upper income group of respondents tended to exercise the right to seek remedy as a group more than the low income group.

Right to Association:

As mentioned above, a number of associations and cooperatives have been established and plans for more are under way, demonstrating how women are using their right to association. In the statistical analysis, when asked whether they had established (or help establish) an association, a cooperative or a foundation, 17.5% answered affirmatively. 25.1% said that they had participated in markets to sell goods, 13.4% said that they had established a business. (Tables 43, 44, 45) Level of education, marital status and income were not significant factors. Geographical region was a significant factor. The regions where the exercise of this right was high: Aegean, Mediterranean, and Eastern Anatolia. Lowest level was in the Southeast.

What conditions have encouraged grassroots organizing efforts?

- a. Emergence of leaders among the participants**
- b. Achieving consensus on concrete, achievable objectives**
- c. The social worker/group facilitator’s support and leadership**
- d. Enlisting the support of the Community Center and other relevant government organizations**
- e. Family and spousal support**
- f. Collaboration with and support of women’s NGOs**
- g. Employment of a combination of appropriate strategies (learning the facts, doing the “homework”, and employing political strategies and advocacy)**

a. Emergence of leaders among the participants

65.9% percent of respondents considered leadership (emerging of leaders within their group) in organization efforts very important, while 24.1% said it is somewhat important. (Table 46) As one participant pointed out:

- Husbands and the community are two barriers in front of us. If we had a leader, at least we could participate saying she is calling us. (Ankara)

The evidence supports the importance of this factor: There were, in fact, women with strong leadership qualities in the cases where grassroots organizing occurred. (Edirne, Van, Canakkale, Sincan – Ankara, Fatihpasa – Diyarbakir, Antalya) Conversely, when there is reticence to take leadership roles, we do not see effective grassroots organizing. This is clearly a long term process as many women are not used to taking leaderships roles and prevailing gender norms do not encourage it. Thus, a social worker’s comment:

- They all want women’s organizations to be established, but when it comes to taking leadership roles, they step back. (Edirne)

What factors are important in the emergence of local leaders?

1. Successfully renegotiating gender relations within the family or already having relatively equal relations with husband.

There are costs to becoming a leader: The leaders become committed to grassroots organizing efforts which require time away from home and family responsibilities. Thus, women who have become leaders are ones that also have tended to renegotiate relations within the family towards greater equality, but as one woman pointed out, not without sacrifice:

- I have become a leader and accepted the position of the President of the Association to Support the Sincan Community Center. This is both wonderful and very difficult. Because of me, my husband couldn’t face his relatives for a long time. I feel sad for this, I criticize him, but I still love him. But I have my freedom and intend to keep it no matter what the cost is. I want to be an example to my children. (Ankara)

2. Offering Women's Human Rights Training Programs on a continuing basis over time may make it possible for leaders to emerge. This is the case with Canakkale:

- We offered 12 trainings. That means 200 women. We wanted to have many groups because one group of women may not be able to organize. There may be people with many different approaches, personalities and cultures in one group. But when there are a lot of groups, the likelihood of finding women with similar concerns, objectives and interests increases. We prepare the ground for grassroots organization this way. We ask them: there are people who think like you; would you like to get together with them? For us, this worked very well. The groups that are organized call and establish contact with former groups and thus they are communicating with each other without my interference. I am convinced that the women who take this training have the desire to do something. For us, the biggest obstacle is the husbands. (Canakkale group facilitator)

3. Continued support and training of emerging leaders:

This is being done by WWHR-NEW WAYS who invited a group of the Human Rights Training Program participants who had emerged as potential leaders to a training session on grassroots organizing in Istanbul in June 2002.

b. Achieving consensus on concrete objectives

Coming to an agreement on a concrete objective seems like an important condition for grassroots organizing. There has to be a specific need identified by the group and not just a feeling that something might be a good thing to do. The objective should be personally important to the participants, something they care about and are committed to undertake. Concrete objectives such as "production and selling of candles", or establishing a "kindergarten" may be easier to rally around because it is easier to see the potential benefits.

The diversity of the participants' backgrounds in the training groups offered may sometimes lead to a difficulty in finding shared goals that everyone may agree on. Focus group discussions also revealed that personality and class differences sometimes prevent collaboration. The survey questionnaire showed that 88.9% considered good relations among the participants as a very important factor in grassroots organizing, while 9.2% considered it somewhat important. A needs assessment activity may reveal what is most important to a community and participants may then rally around that objective, as it occurred in Gazi Mahallesi, Istanbul.

c. The group facilitator's support and commitment

Strong support and continuing commitment of the social worker to grassroots organizing efforts after the Program has ended seems to be one of the most crucial factors. 90.7% of respondents consider this very important, while 7.8% somewhat important. (Table 48) Many of the participants mentioned in the focus groups that they found the social workers commitment and support invaluable. Sometimes, there seemed to be an over dependence on the leadership of the social worker who was tapped for ideas around which to organize or who became resource persons in many ways. In all the locations where grassroots organization occurred, the social workers took leadership roles and provided strong support.

- We didn't tell the women, here are the rules and regulations, now go and set up this association. We helped them write up the rules, to set up the association, and naturally, we also became a member. (Social Worker, Ankara Sincan)
- When we talk about grassroots organization, it is absolutely necessary that a social worker provides support and advice. (Canakkale)
- When we set up the Sincan Women's Association, Nilufer Hanim, the director of the Community Center, and other center personnel, did the whole work. Kaymakam was also very supportive and helpful. (Ankara)

This support is very important but the facilitators also have to know when to stay back and let the participants "own" a project and be responsible for their actions. This was successfully done in Canakkale as related by one of the social workers who facilitated the Training Program:

- On November 19th, (the day to end sexual violence) we had a candlelight vigil in Canakkale. We needed to get permission from the police. The police said there is no such "day", therefore, you are not allowed to hold such an event. I went with the women to the police, and they gave us the permission to hold the vigil. Later we got a call from the police station; I went there with 10 other women, after all the activity is their activity. They said that we could not hold the vigil after 5 pm, it is not legal and if we do it, they could round us all up. The women got anxious and I thought that they were afraid of what the police said. But, in fact, I saw it was just the opposite. They were worried about cancelling this meeting after having announced it publicly and asked many women to participate. They said we have to hold this vigil now, we have invited everyone and we will do it even if the police try to round us up. I never imagined this reaction. After the vigil, we organized three working groups – one facilitated by me, another by another social worker, and the third by one of the group leaders. This activity was very productive; and the reports out of this activity contain many recommendations and ideas. There is no need to be hopeless. I think all this is the result of three years of efforts. There is no need to downplay our power and efforts. (Canakkale)

d. Support from the Community Centers and other relevant government departments

Many events were organized with the collaboration and support of the social workers and the Community Centers. For example, committees were set up to organize and coordinate events with the collaboration of WWHR-New Way team and community centers, such as in Edirne for the International Women's Day Events. One of the major forms of organization efforts took the form of associations to help and support the community centers, such as in Ankara and Antalya.

State institutions can discourage grassroots organizing. One of the obstacles to grassroots organizing was the police attitude towards the establishment of new organizations. This is not only the case with women's organizing efforts but a general problem in Turkey. NGOs have to get permission from the police for their activities. The police, in fact, have the right to walk in and investigate an NGO's documents and the right to close it down. In short, there are some strong limitations to NGO activities, which have created obstacles to setting up "associations", (dernek) but the same kind of obstacles do not apply to cooperatives. The

Canakkale group encountered opposition from the police when they were establishing their Association. As one member recounted, the police told them that there was already a Mother's Association, that they could join that association as members instead of establishing a new association. They created obstacles in approving their "charter". But the group was successful because they enlisted the help of a woman lawyer who had the professional legitimacy and clout to deal with the police to get their approval.

It must be mentioned here that the procedures of setting up an NGO are long and cumbersome, and the lack of knowledge on exactly how to go about applying to become a legal organization is an impediment along with the obfuscation that is sometimes practiced by government bureaucracies in charge of NGO activities. Furthermore, the Turkish political context, as discussed in the introduction, has not been conducive to strengthening civil society and encouraging non-governmental organizations. The fear that existing NGOs may be controlled by political parties or acquire a political nature is not entirely unfounded. The professional nurse's association in Adiyaman, for example, had ties to a particular political party. Due to the perceived "political" nature of associations, many women expressed some initial fear and reticence towards grassroots organizing associating it with outlawed political organizations and police harassment:

- "Dernek" (association) to me meant something "political", but when I went to find out, I saw that I needn't have worried. (Canakkale)
- My husband tells me to stay away from organizing because he says that he doesn't want to pick me up from the police station, detention centers or jail!

Enlisting the support of various relevant government institutions, approaching them armed with information and facts, having done one's homework, and engaging in political advocacy seems very important, as the Istanbul, Gazi Mahallesi experience demonstrates:

- In our quest to establish a kindergarten, we met with the Municipality. We found some lots that may be appropriate. Thus we went to them with a solution – we told them to just give us the land we located, and we will do the rest and it happened. We prepared a report, a needs assessment (identifying a concrete objective based on a community needs) and have applied to the World Bank for funding.

e. Support from family members

93.5% considered family support as very important, 6.2% somewhat important. Only 0.4% considered this not important. (Table 47) Many women mentioned the importance of family support and group facilitators also indicated that one of the major barriers were the husbands.

f. Collaboration with and support from women's NGOs and women leaders in the community

For example, in Canakkale, the president of *Cagdas Yasami Destekleme* foundation became a member of the women's NGO. In Van, there was collaboration with the Development Foundation in Diyarbakir with Kadin Emegini Degerlendirme Foundation and in Istanbul, with Kadin Dayanisma Foundation.

Collaboration among women's organizations is not to be taken for granted. There have also been instances of conflict and competition. For example, the Canakkale discussions revealed that the police called in the women who established the Women's Center because of a complaint from another women's NGO questioning the legality of this new NGO.

Another quotation from Diyarbakir also points to the difficulties in collaboration, the competition for funds among NGOs, and the influence of donor funding:

- I don't know if this problem exists in other provinces but here there are a lot of women's organizations but little collaboration among them. When you try to undertake an activity, others try to do exactly the same thing; they don't try to do something different. Someone asked our group in the candle making atelier how much money she made. When she answered 'not much', the next question turned out to be: where are the funds that come from Europe? What have you done with them? I felt very uncomfortable.

g. Employment of a Combination of the above Strategies (gaining expertise in gathering and presenting new information and in political advocacy)

In Canakkale, the process of organizing was a painful one that taught the participants the value of persistence and enlisting the support of the local municipality and the police and the mayor.

- After the Human Rights Training for Women, we (trainees) divided into three groups: project, association and platform groups. Our group decided to establish an association. I learned how to fight and deal with state institutions. First we started out as a group 150 women who participated in Training Program. When we talked about organizing, some women decided to leave. Only 15 women were left, the process of forming an association was very hard. In the end, just 5 of us were left. The police refused our request to establish an association. We brought the charter we prepared, and they rejected it. They said that there was An Association of Mothers already in existence, and that we should join them. When they rejected our charter, we didn't give up; we went back with a woman lawyer friend, who said that she wrote the charter herself, and wanted to know what was wrong with it. This time the police said there was nothing wrong with it, we invited you here to tell you that the charter is just fine. (Canakkale)

Similar combination of strategies was used in successful grassroots organizing in Diyarbakir and Istanbul.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

It is useful to examine what factors were important in successful organization efforts that did take place. Below are three best practices and an analysis of the factors that led to success.

a. Canakkale

Strong commitment of the social workers who delivered the training, and the emergence of group leaders:

In Canakkale, the two social workers who were both committed to the training program worked together and supported each other. They established the highest number of ongoing training groups over three years, which made it possible to have a large pool of trained women for grassroots organizing. One of the ways they were able to have so many training groups was they asked previous participants to recruit new ones in their neighbourhoods. The social workers worked closely with the group leaders that emerged.

Selection of participants with potential leadership characteristics:

The social workers selected training participants such that in each group they made sure that there were a few potential leaders, who would be willing to take action and bring others along.

Establishment of good working relations with the community centers and other relevant government bureaucracies:

The women established good working relationships with the mayor, the Provincial Directorate (Il Mudurlugu), the Municipality, and the Community Center staff.

Relatively high socio-economic status of the participants and geographic location:

Canakkale is one of the cities that is claimed to be more democratically oriented. The Community Center catered to women with relatively higher socio-economic status than other Community Centers.

The exercise of other rights in tandem:

A number of events were organized in Canakkale, such as information sessions on the new Civil Code, police training sessions and candlelight vigils. In other words, the women were also exercising their right to assembly as a group, their right to set up a business (Café).

Experience with different forms of organization (from informal groups, to organizing events, to establish new NGOs):

In 1998 all groups that participated in different sessions united to form a project committee. This committee then established a women's provincial committee (about 25-30 women) who decided to work to create public awareness in Canakkale and provide a continuous supply of information on domestic violence.

They established an association in 1999. This association has succeeded in placing women who are group leaders at the Community Center on various commissions at the Governor's Office (children's commission etc). This presence and participation at commissions have given women more confidence and political experience. This political experience and ability to deal with different levels of government has been crucial, along with persistence in the face of resistance or rejection. The association started out with 25 women and has grown to 85 members.

A Women's Center was established by the association in 2001. Meanwhile, they have held public campaigns, Information meetings, and police training sessions and have gradually become more and more accepted by the Canakkale people and the local government.

Women's Independent Grassroots Organization In Çanakkale

Gülay Sarışen

Once we completed the Women's Human Rights Training Program, we immediately moved to organize among ourselves, as a group of participants. We decided to put into practice the things we have learned during the training and to implement our rights and to be a part of the women's movement in Turkey. As women, we experience discrimination in our own lives and see it happen to other women around us. We have to fight against this discrimination against women. We realized that it is necessary to be organized as a group in order to succeed. Thus we decided to acquire a legal identity. We aim to ensure that the women in Çanakkale actively participate in the social, economic and political spheres. All the governmental and non-governmental institutions in our city must function with an understanding equipped with gender perspective. We received the Women's Human Rights Training at the Community Center, but after a while one has to break free from the Community Center and become independent. Otherwise, it is rather difficult to link the training with the larger women's movement. At the organizing stage, the idea of founding an association came up. We held long meetings among ourselves and with the other institutions in our city. Finally, in 1998 we founded the *Çanakkale Kadının El Emeğini Değerlendirme Derneği* (Association for Realizing Women's Handwork Labour In Çanakkale). We are the first group of women that organized after participating in the Women's Human Rights Training, in Turkey.

You just cannot go back on something once you have started it. In the beginning we had simply wanted to arrange for a market place where women could sell their handiwork products. At first we, had no problems with the local governance, but they merely saw us as "a bunch of women". That is, we were being belittled in the economic sphere as well, simply because we were women. Yet, everything changed once we formed our organization. Now they perceive us in a different light, with a different status. When we go with a demand to the Municipality or the Governorship, they all know that we will follow up on the issue, and that we will finish the job we have started.

We founded an association concerning women's economic rights. Yet we work on various

subjects. We aim to reach as many women as possible, and enable their active participation in public life. One of our main subjects is violence against women. In the background of all our activities, we aim to raise consciousness on this subject. We started out with economics rights in order to spread at the ground level. Our actual aim is to put an end to the violence against women.

Ever since the foundation of our association, the meetings we have held with the Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways, their persistence to follow up and carry through issues, and their support for putting things in perspective now and then, and our participation in the Third Annual Meeting for Women's Shelters, and the other women's organizations and programs we encountered there, have enabled us to think from a larger perspective. In this process, we aimed to go a step further each year. Our group formed committees within itself, and currently these committees are running all the activities of our association. Each one of us has duties and responsibilities.

Last year we started to work on creating a Women's Shelter in Çanakkale. In as short a time as 6 months, we managed to get the space and everything necessary for the shelter. Yet, we got stopped by the bureaucratic obstacles of the SHCEK statutes (Directorate of Social Services). While we were trying to find a solution, we channelled our work towards creating a Women's Center. Finally in the year 2002 we opened the Women's Center.

Meanwhile we are still selling our handiwork products. Our market is located in a tourist area; so the women felt the need to learn a second language. In order to meet this need, we are offering English courses at the Center. Women have been studying English for a year and they started to be able to communicate well with the customers.

Unfortunately, during our work we have met people who have tried to discourage us. Certain institutions and even certain non-governmental institutions, have tried to claim our work as theirs or sometimes hinder our work. For instance, another NGO in the region filed a complaint against us saying "how can an association open such a center", which bore no legal validity or meaning. Following the opening of the Women's Center, we were even taken to the Police Headquarters for interrogation.

NTV (a TV channel) produced a program about our Association. In September it will be broadcasted in TRT (public TV channel) as a documentary. The message we want to give the people and institutions is that violence against women is a human rights violation and that official institutions are responsible for the prevention of this violence.

As a group, we have been the first one to accomplish many things. Our short term objective is to help form a Woman's Council and open a women's shelter in Çanakkale. Also, we are working to ensure that official and non-governmental institutions who work with women have gender perspective and that they are sensitive towards women's problems.

The Governorship, City Directorate of Police Forces, City Directorate of Social Services, local media, Chamber of Doctors, the Municipality, the Bar, Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways and the General Directorate of Women's Status and Problems (KSSGM) are among the institutions that we can obtain support and resources for our work. Once we have gathered the necessary information and data, we will organize meetings with large participation and discussions. We will also hold monthly meetings with the police in order to

determine the state of violence against women in Çanakkale.

In the short term, in order to increase awareness and sensitivity on the subject of violence against women, we will offer trainings for the organization of police forces in Çanakkale, the state hospitals and the district attorney's office. Actually, we have already started our preparations for the training at the organization of police forces.

Excerpts from Gülay Sarışen's speech at the Meeting for Grassroots Organizing, 2002. Gülay Sarışen is the founding member and director of the Çanakkale Kadının El Emegini Değerlendirme Derneği (Association for Realizing the Handwork Labor of Women in Çanakkale).

b. Istanbul Gazi Mahallesi

The nature of the Alevi Community (The group facilitator and participants were from this community):

The Alevi community is known to be relatively more open to gender equality and in general, democratic practices, than others. They are a socially cohesive community, generally having more tolerant attitudes towards women. Thus, the women may already have been more inclined to take leadership roles and may have found more support in their community.

Establishment of good working relationships with government organizations and support from the Community Center:

The women established good working relations with the municipality, with the *muhtar* and others. As one participant explained:

- A protocol will be signed with SHCEK for establishing the kindergarten. Since we are not yet a cooperative, we cannot own the land allotted to us. The municipality says that you have to prove that you can sustain this kindergarten; we don't to invest in it to find out a few months later, that you are withdrawing. This is logical too; we have to prove ourselves. Once we become a cooperative, the municipality will transfer all rights to us.

Achieving consensus on concrete objective:

A needs assessment was conducted to decide what the community needed most, giving the objective of establishing a kindergarten legitimacy. A committee was formed to meet periodically, and besides going from door to door and conducting a needs assessment, the group really did their homework and appeared like they knew what they wanted by having located a lot to build the kindergarten, before going to negotiate with the municipality. As one participant explained:

- We found that the major impediment to women organizing in our neighborhood was the family situation – the husband and the child. Women don't have a place to leave

their children – a kindergarten or preschool. This was established as the most important need as a result of the participants research in the neighborhood.

The exercise of other rights in tandem:

Participants had begun to exercise other rights as well. As the group facilitator pointed out:

- A woman from the second training group knows how to sew and is teaching the women in the next group how to make dolls. The women are supporting each other in different ways. They have become active politically, they are entering the work force in increasing numbers, and they are taking professional training courses.

Besides these factors a committed group facilitator/social worker of the same cultural background with the participants and networking/collaborating with other women' NGOs also contributed to the success of the grassroots organizing.

Women of Gazi Neighborhood in Istanbul are Organizing Around Their Own Needs

Güler Han, Nurcan Karaman

We participated in the Women's Human Rights Training in the period of 2001-2002. Women participating in the previous period had organized themselves, and conducted a research to determine what prevented women's mobility in our neighborhood. According to this research, the biggest obstacle rising before women was their own children whom they have to take care of all day. Women were stuck when it came to children. The results of the research showed us the way: to overcome this obstacle we planned to open a children's kindergarten. We were still participating in the Women's Human Rights Training when we started to organize towards this goal.

We prepared a survey. Through this survey we reached 131 women in 4 neighborhoods. As we examined the survey results, we realized that 85% of the mothers we talked to were unable to work. Their reason was that they did not have a place to leave their children. If there was a day- center here for children, women could go to work, take courses. We want the women of this neighborhood to be free, to have self- confidence. In order to realize our goals we must acquire an official status. We have seen that if we have the time we can achieve great things. Even having three hours for ourselves have enabled us to accomplish so much. Yet, we spend all our time taking care of our children. Women's Human Rights Training played a very important role in realizing this need.

Once we decided to open a kindergarten, we took training in pre-school education. When our group started working on this subject the Community Center rented a small apartment for us. And we began this project, which every woman in this neighborhood can benefit from. Our struggle is about enabling women to enter the working life. We also believe it is necessary that women organize among themselves. Our primary goal is to open the kindergarten, since that is our basic need right now.

Our group holds weekly meetings. We have made a division of labor among ourselves. We have also made a need assessment. We found out the number of children, public spaces, and the unused lands in the Gazi neighborhood that can be allotted to us. After evaluating the surveys, we talked with the muhktars, the municipality, the school directors and the provincial district governor. We visited the kindergarten in İzmit - Yeşilova, which was opened by women and received information about their work. Then we planned our next steps, and the methods of contacting people and institutions for our aim.

We went to the deed office, to find out about the available lands. We asked for detailed and specific information. By then we were informed about everything including the city blocks, map sections, lot numbers. Even the officials were surprised. They sent an engineer from the office of deed and cadastral; we did more research to see which lands are appropriate for us and which ones can actually be allotted to us. We visited the provincial district governor to introduce our group and activities. As we talked with him, we told him that as women we have certain material demands for our neighborhood. Then we visited the Mayor, and we asked him why we are not receiving any services in this neighborhood. We said, this area has the population of a city, thus there should be at least 4 day- centers here.

After we presented these information and demands, the Mayor promised to allocate land to us. We asked for a big building on the land, because we want to be able to create not only a kindergarten but also a large space where women can work and socialize. We might offer occupational training courses for women once we move to the permanent residence. We also want to engage in production. To start with, we will conduct a market research. Then we will open a workshop studio according to the results of the research. We will sell our products and widen our sphere of production. If we manage to create all these possibilities we will have paved the way for women to organize.

Currently our plan is to sign a protocol with the Social Services for building the kindergarten. Once we have legal status, we will take over the land right away. The Municipality will construct the building but they will not interfere with its inner structure or with its teachers. We, the women will run this place. Our administrative committee will consist of the mothers in the neighborhood. With time we are overcoming the obstacles surrounding us. We are aware of the fact that the kindergarten will have its costs but we have never considered establishing a firm. Our aim is not to make profit. We have already decorated the building but we will also have the electricity, water, telephone bills to pay for. In order to cover these expenses, we will ask for a certain fee from each family according to their income. Families without means will also use the kindergarten. Those who cannot pay may help out with the kitchen or the cleaning of the kindergarten for a few hours.

The primary step to accomplish all this is to acquire an official status. First step is to become a cooperative. If we are a cooperative, then we can create our sub institutions. Yes, seven women will open this cooperative, but we will not remain as seven women running this place, we will have other members.

Our cooperative will definitely need resources and institutions supporting us, to promote women's social, economic and political freedom. In order to find resources, we can reach out to sponsors and the big firms interested in helping our neighborhood. We will build connections with non-governmental organizations. We will explain them how the development

efforts of the neighborhood will benefit from our cooperative and our production. We are determined to explain to the state units about the necessity of women's participation in work life. We will use the media. Despite all the prejudices, women of Gazi neighborhood are working together, producing together; they are organized. That is the message we want to give to the media. Our cooperative will enable women to get out of the house, and to act according to their own needs independent from their children, surroundings or husbands. The cooperative will enable the women to have an occupation or to produce something outside the house. We have made our voice be heard all the way in Greece, they came over to visit us. We will not take a step back after this point.

Excerpts from speeches of Güler Han and Nurcan Karaman at the Meeting for Grassroots Organizing, organized by Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways, in Istanbul, June 2002.

c. Diyarbakir Fatih Pasa Mahallesi

Achieving consensus on concrete objective:

The women in the neighborhood conducted a needs assessment in the neighborhood. Everyone wanted a place for a preschool. Fatihpasa is a neighborhood where the crime rate is high. They had to start from somewhere. As the group facilitator pointed out:

- This neighborhood had a lot of children, and the children were on the streets a lot, and they did not have access to preschool education. So the need for a kindergarten had become obvious. This is a very low-income neighborhood, with low employment and high crime rate.

Nature of the community:

There seems to have been political awareness and a shared Kurdish cultural background in this community, which encouraged organization. As one of the leaders in the group explained:

- In the neighborhood I was working at, there was an interest in organizing. Maybe we can say that in general for Diyarbakir. This group had a great deal of awareness and political consciousness. They had to courage to do something on their own.

Collaboration and networking with other women's NGOs

- We hadn't met for about a year after the training, but in the last period, we met again with KEDEV's Project. Collaborating with them, a candle production workshop was established. (one of the group leaders)

Besides these factors, the emergence of group leaders and support from group facilitators/social workers also contributed to the success in grassroots organizing.

V. The Implementation Process: Partnership of WWHR-New Ways and the Directorate for Social Services

The collaboration of NGOs and government agencies is a new phenomenon in Turkey. Overall, it is fair to say that the political structure has been a top down one, allowing only limited participation and partnership to civil society. The Community Centers, started in the early 1990s represent an innovative and unusual idea, (perhaps the Village Institutes of the 1940s are the only comparison). The populations around the Community Centers are often communities, which have to grapple with many pressing problems, including unemployment and poverty. Even though the centers have first been received with skepticism by the local population, they have, in large part, become an accepted part of the community, as well as a unique example of open and participatory government-civil society interaction.

The first community centers were established by SHCEK in 1994. SHCEK officials and representatives from WWHR-New Ways signed a protocol to start implementing the Women's Human Rights Training Program in 1998. The protocol states that the training of the trainers (the social workers) will be undertaken by WWHR-New Ways and that the social workers will be supplied by the relevant teaching materials. WWHR-New Ways will monitor the implementation of the program through interviews, meetings with the trainers, periodic reports and communication from the trainers. WWHR-NEW WAYS evaluates the overall program by examining reports and notes from the trainers, the evaluation forms filled out by the participants and periodic evaluation meetings. The protocol states that social workers who take the training will begin a Women's Human Rights Training session in 3 months or less and offer at least two trainings per year. Social workers copy the teaching materials sent by WWHR-New Ways and distribute them to the participants. They are obligated to pay attention to the WWHR- New Ways recommendations and evaluations regarding the training and make necessary changes. Furthermore, WWHR- New Ways materials may not be used by anyone who has not received the trainers' training or may not be passed on to anyone without permission. The protocol states that WWHR-New Ways and SHCEK will together determine the selection of potential trainers. SHCEK is obliged to pay travel and local expenses of the social workers who participate in such meetings. The training sessions, evaluation meetings and any other meetings during the implementation of the program are organized together as well. The training program may be ended by a common decision between the two organizations.

The Community Centers now offer not just the Women's' Human Rights Training, but a number of other training programs as well (literacy, mother-child education, citizenship education etc.) in collaboration with different NGOs. Thus, the scope of government-NGO partnership has been extended. The partnership between NGOs and the state is feasible in different areas: i.e. public services, developing human resources, seeking and creating funds, research, education programs, lobbying and political participation. The partnership of SHCEK and WWHR-New Ways has been both an educational program and one for developing human resources.

These partnerships between the state and an NGO are gaining importance throughout the world and examples can be found in numerous countries. Experts state that the necessary

principles for an effective partnership are common goals, mutual trust and complementary characteristics of the partners. The benefits of such a partnership are as follows:¹⁰

- State-NGO partnership can produce a complemented effect: different resources, knowledge, methods and allies will complement each other.
- NGOs may have access to regions and issues outside the reach of the state.
- Sustainability may be achieved.
- A well-planned collaboration between the partners may lead to more comprehensive, economic and successful results.
- The partners may learn from each other.
- The risks may be reduced: different partners will minimize threats coming to the programs from the outside and increase the possibility of dealing with such situations.
- Even though different experiences and perspectives may lead to some conflicts, they also provide space for innovation and creativity.

A. Potential Problems in a State - NGO Partnership

Experts list potential problems that may arise during such a partnership as: (Levinger and McLeod, 2002)

- Possible lack of institutionalization and dependence of the partnership on personal relations
- Lack of implementation mechanisms of the relevant laws and legislations
- Internal problems of the partners (ie. Lack of support, poor working conditions)
- Political drawbacks and impediments
- Difficulties in achieving sustainability in acquiring funds and obstacles for using outside resources.

Being an innovative model for Turkey, which of these problems arose in the partnership between WWHR- New Ways and SHCEK? Analyzing the problems and developing solutions is an integral part of enhancing the benefits and success of the partnership. The institutionalization of the partnership is essential. The communication between WWHR- New Ways and SHCEK officials should rest on institutional principles. Otherwise the sustainability and success of the program may be jeopardized. Institutionalizing the partnership will ensure the continuing results of the program. Considering the Turkish context and the dominance of personal relationship based partnerships, SHCEK and WWHR – New Ways have to pay special attention and make an extra effort to sustain their institutionalized partnership.

Lack of implementation mechanisms of the relevant laws and legislations

Within a central bureaucratic system as the one in Turkey, the lack of supervision, monitoring and follow-up mechanisms and the limited communication between the directorate and the field may compromise the success of the program. SHCEK officials commented in the interviews how crucial it was to develop an effective monitoring system. They also emphasized the importance of site visits from Ankara to supervise the program on the field. The social workers stated that some of the problems arose from the limited communication

¹⁰ Beryl Levinger and Jean McLeod; *Togetherness: How Governments, Corporations, and NGOS Partner to Support Sustainable Development in Latin America*; Inter-American Foundation; 2002.

with Ankara, the lack of institutionalization on various levels of the government and lack of support.

WWHR-New Ways was observed to have a central and effective role in the monitoring process of the program. The protocol gives the foundation extensive responsibility and authority on the issues of the content of the training, training the trainers, supervision and monitoring. Having a meeting to reconsider and reestablish the roles of the partners in supervision and monitoring may be beneficial.

Internal problems of the partners

The absence of incentive and awards system for the social workers was emphasized in a number of interviews. An official commented:

- The biggest public concern in Turkey right now is the nature of Turkish bureaucracy. Within the Turkish bureaucracy, there are no incentives to work more, to be successful, to take initiatives. Such incentives could be in the form of psychological support, promise of promotion, extra pay, opportunities to share knowledge with other professionals at conferences/workshops in Turkey and abroad. This applies to the social service workers as well and of course, to the way that the training is implemented.

Overall, it seems that social workers are overworked and at times, go well beyond their professional duties and act as “mothers, sisters, counsellors, therapists, teachers” all wrapped into one. The interviews revealed that this puts a lot of strain on the social workers and they find themselves in several dilemmas. They struggle between their professional duties of attending meetings, writing reports on the one hand, and on the other hand, becoming facilitators for many different training programs as these programs have proliferated over the last few years. They also struggle between helping the women by spending personal time and effort and going beyond the call of duty when they encounter women who are in dire need of help; yet they also have to remain professionals and have to protect their own personal and psychological time and space. All these issues affect the Women’s Human Rights Training Program as well.

The social worker is expected to hold two trainings a year, on a continuing basis. The social worker is also expected to follow up with the participants who have finished the training. So the responsibility of the social workers becomes more than just offering a training program. It places some continued responsibilities on the social worker. The more successful programs, where women have been able to exercise their individual and group rights, are the ones where the social worker is not just a government employee, but a committed activist, a supporter, friend and ally to the women. As was discussed earlier, one of the major encouraging factors for grassroots organizing was the support and commitment of the social workers, when they chose to undertake the above responsibilities. This may, however, not be the case with each and every social worker. Some take on all responsibilities and others prefer to work within the parameters of their job descriptions.

An incentive and award system for those social workers who are successful will increase the motivation of the social workers and thus contribute to the success of the program.

Political drawbacks and impediments

Politicization of such programs or gearing them towards allies is a common occurrence especially in developing countries. The newly elected governments often choose to close down the running programs and implement new ones. This risk has to be discussed and assessed in depth in a closed meeting between the partners to prevent any potential threat.

The sustainability of the program and resources

The concept of community centers is not fully accepted by the political structure and these centers do not receive enough financial resources from the government. They are often understaffed with very limited resources. Some community centers have not even been assigned a social worker or have difficulty paying their bills. As one official pointed out SHCEK is currently monitoring 51 community centers, 8 women's shelters and 11 family counselling centers. Considering the limitations of this context, what could be said about the sustainability of the program?

Women's Human Rights Training Program is implemented with the outside funds acquired by WWHR – New Ways. Funds are usually provided for specific projects for a given period of time. Thus, it is important to consider the question of how to continue the training program when the resources are exhausted? Can the program be implemented by other institutions? Is it possible to find other partners? These questions are yet unanswered and should be discussed thoroughly. This process could be open to the media and interested individuals and institutions that could contribute to preventive measures and solutions.

B. Common Goals and Complementary Attributes

The structures of WWHR- New Ways and SHCEK are different from each other. SHCEK functions as part of the state bureaucracy while the foundation is an independent non-hierarchical institution. These differences may be expected to cause problems, but actually the diversity of knowledge, methods and experiences will contribute to minimizing the risks and threats.

Community Centers are seen as a bridge between civil society and the state; a place for people to come and receive help, skills training etc. Community Centers already represent a built in potential group of women who are eligible for the Human Rights Training Program for Women. There are already qualified social workers who work at these centers who can act as group facilitators. Community Centers are seen as safe places where women are allowed to go to. This makes it easier for women to participate in the training.

Furthermore, SHCEK has benefited from the knowledge and collaboration of an NGO expert on women's human rights and the presence of women's human rights within the state bureaucracy has created changes in discourse. Most social workers expressed appreciation of the human rights training for women and how it had helped them gain professional skills as better facilitators, as well as substantive skills in the area of women's human rights. They reported that they valued the program and considered the training in both the substance and procedure of the training program an asset to their professional development. They indicated that they have used and applied both to other training programs. Some claimed that they had to grapple with their own gender identity, and existing gender relations at home and became

conscious of gender discrimination themselves. Using social workers as facilitators is clearly a good idea as evidenced by the effectiveness of the program. Having social workers deliver the program as group facilitators means that a trained group of government workers are delivering the Human Rights Training Program for Women across the country, giving it legitimacy and sustainability.

The accounts of the participants and social workers reveal that the community centers have become places where people felt comfortably “at home.” This is very significant progress. The community centers have followed an independent, participatory and close-to-community approach unlike most other bureaucratic institutions. Their primary objectives are improving the living conditions, finding participatory solutions, developing a sense of community and sharing. In this pursuit, the women have been a key target group. In this respect the objectives of the Women’s Human Rights Training Program and the community centers overlap. The participants have widely publicised the centers and caused more women to come and benefit from them. The status of the community centers had risen. As group facilitators pointed out, participants from the training program would serve as leaders and examples to other women and start to act as a group and organise around their needs and problems and thus decrease the burden on the social workers and serve the objective of the community centers. Therefore, not only do women learn to use a public institution, but also the community center finds its true owners. All these outcomes confirm that SHCEK and WWHR – New Ways are partners of complementary attributes for this partnership.

VI. Conclusions

The Women's Human Rights Training created awareness and understanding and increased the level of knowledge on women's human rights. The level of education of the participants varied inversely with the extent of knowledge they acquired. The least educated women were also the ones who learned the most about their rights. Most participants placed the most importance in learning about their civil rights.

One important contribution of this program was to show women the existence of gender based discrimination in Turkish society, and begin to dispel the fears and ignorance around "feminism" and about "grassroots organizing."

The participants gained greater self-confidence and raised awareness on discrimination against women and they developed a positive attitude towards solidarity with other women. They have, however, experienced some difficulty in convincing their family and community towards greater acceptance of their rights. There was inevitable internal and external conflict as they redefined and renegotiated their gender identities. The changes in them necessitated complementary changes in family members. The family relationships changed during and after the training as gender relations and norms had to be redefined and renegotiated. Many times, husbands and in-laws resisted the wives' demand for exercising their rights. It was a long and difficult process that for the majority ended in better and more equal family relationship as the survey indicated.

Husbands felt threatened at first thinking that women's rights meant that the wives would now seek divorce. But in fact, in many cases the family relationships improved also thanks to the section on "communication" in the training. One of the most significant attitudinal changes occurred towards children in respecting and applying their rights and developing greater awareness of daughter's rights, especially awareness not to engage in discriminatory behaviour towards girl children. Participants received greater respect from their communities in many cases, although they also experienced ambivalent and conflicting attitudes by neighbors and other community members towards them.

Freedom of expression was one right that most women learned to express on an individual level much more than before. About half of the sample exercised their right to education after their participation in the training. Joining an organization was still not easy for many: but 31% reported that they had joined an organization after the training. About one-third (28.8%) reported that they had begun to exercise their right to work after the training, and 8% started a new business. There was still reticence in the exercise of seeking remedy from state institutions, as 75% indicated that they had never approached government institutions on any basis.

For many participants, the knowledge about various forms of violence such as physical, emotional and economic violence was a new concept, as well as the realization that they may be subjected to all three. It became clear that gender based violence was still widespread and although the majority were able to stop the violence they were experiencing after the training, some experienced an increase during and after the training. Even though one participant reported having divorced an abusive husband, there were many reports of helping a neighbour in seeking divorce, helping to find a shelter to a victim of violence, or to seek a civil marriage

ceremony. Continued internalization of prevailing gender norms that discriminate against women, and fear of change in the face of potential retaliation and exclusion from family and community kept women from exercising their rights more extensively.

A. Factors that Contributed to the Overall Success of the Program:

- **Length:** the 16 week program made it possible for the participants to take the time to get to know each other, to digest the materials, to learn from each other and to begin to formulate common strategies; in a shorter program, such effects may not have been possible.
- **Strong follow-up and supervision by WWHR/New Ways:** The social workers/ group facilitators and the participants always had the support of WWHR staff who were in constant contact with them.
- **The participatory principle of the training:** The training program was constructed as a participatory process that promoted empowerment and the exercise of rights.
- **Translation and integration of global gender equality norms in understandable and clear language:** These training modules made the information accessible to participants.
- **Collaboration with SHCEK:** The partnership provided access to community centers, to the wide participation of women, and the opportunity for professional social workers to act as trainers and group facilitators.

B. Outcomes

- Learning about women's human rights and attitudinal changes leading to greater self-empowerment and confidence;
- Greater exercise of rights, especially freedom of expression; right to education and right to work;
- Greater respect for children's right in the family from a gender sensitive perspective;
- Overcoming physical, emotional and economic violence;
- Important steps towards grassroots organizing (ie. exercise of the right to assembly, to seek , demand accountability and the right to association).

C. Recommendations for the Future

Short Term:

- Discussions with SHCEK based on mutual trust and dialogue on clear delineation of responsibilities and airing of concerns regarding the implementation of the program; a reestablishment of responsibilities (which includes provincial units), follow-up procedures and persons responsible for follow-up on each side;

- For SHCEK to institute a reward/incentive system to encourage successful social workers/group facilitators;
- A separate future project (apart from the training program) to support capacity building and leadership training for grassroots organizing efforts that have already begun (A workshop with the leaders has already been done in June 2002).

Long term:

- Enhancing participatory communication and appropriate principles and mechanisms of action between SHCEK/Ankara general directorate, local directorates and community centers towards greater effectiveness of joint NGO - state programs;
- Bringing the program and its effects for discussion to the public agenda and in the media and search for other potential partners and ways of continuing and/or expanding the program (such as with GAP administration, Ministry of Education or other NGOs like Turkish Development Foundation).

VII. Afterword

This evaluation research has indicated that the Women's Human Rights Training Program is the first of its kind in Turkey, and in that sense represents a unique, innovative, almost revolutionary initiative to promote women's human rights in partnership with a government agency disseminated to a wide area via Community Centers. Considering the objectives of the program, one can draw the conclusion that:

- The participants have increased their knowledge of their rights as a human being, citizen and as a woman;
- They have begun to learn their rights as embodied in legal documents, how to exercise them and criticize them;
- They have become conscious of gender based discrimination;
- They have started to analyse their own life situations. This has been a long and difficult process as it involves redefining their own identities, and renegotiating gender relations;
- They have acquired attitudes of solidarity with other women;
- They have begun to take action in exercising their rights as an individual, within the family and as a group.
- Even in the Turkish context, which does not encourage grassroots organization, they have actively initiated and participated in grassroots organizing efforts around their needs.

These successes, obviously, have to be considered within the limitations posed by the existing political, bureaucratic and cultural context in Turkey. There is no doubt that greater openness and tolerance is being promoted by an increased demand for the reformulation of ethnic, religious and gender identities in local contexts. The fundamental changes will come from continued dialogue and collaboration between state institutions and women's organizations. This program is a pivotal in preparing women from many different backgrounds, education and income levels to learn both the global gender equality norms, women's human rights at the global level, and Turkey's responsibilities to abide by them, as well as the workings of legal and bureaucratic systems in order to hold them accountable. It has the potential to promote an open dialogue with the state as a partner. In fact, many government personnel in the field have become sensitised to women's human rights. Many men in provincial and local directorates where Social Services are housed inevitably have found themselves in the unusual situation of supporting or at least tacitly agreeing to implement this program. Thus, the potential for greater institutionalisation of gender equality and women's human rights, with the government's partnership is there.

Ultimately, what will be necessary is an open discussion and synthesis of seemingly contradictory gender norms that are espoused by the different institutions (legal, bureaucratic, family/kinship, religious, market etc.) in order to overcome the gaps and inconsistencies between global promises, legal systems, bureaucratic procedures, and traditional norms that deal with women's human rights. Such an open discussion can only occur with the presence of women educated, and aware of their rights, and ready to apply them.

“I exist and I create!”

Elif Aldoğan

All this time we have been looking at our surroundings, at the advertisements, the news, the violence on the television, the consumption; looking at everything, without really seeing anything. I was able to see what was in front of my eyes only after I participated in the Women's Human Rights Training.

In the past I was not allowed to go out by myself. I was under much pressure. At first my husband did not let me come here to the Community Center either. This is how our husbands have been brought up. They think, she is a woman, she should not see or learn anything, and her eyes should be veiled. I was not aware that I have a personality, that I am Elif. I only had duties; I was only fulfilling my tasks. The concept of shame and prohibitions were ruling my life. During the Women's Human Rights Training process, I understood that I am a person, a woman and that I have rights.

While I participated in the Training, I enrolled in the reading-writing course and got my diploma. Then I started to attend theatre classes. I realized that I have a great thirst for education. I have been taking theatre classes for six years now. After the Women's Human Rights Training I wrote a one sketch play, rather like a funny anecdote. It was about a young bride who did not know herself and how she could not break free from the oppression of her mother-in-law and husband. We had long rehearsals. And at each rehearsal I added some new things to the sketch. Finally, I created a two hour play, which makes people laugh and think. We used regional accents and traditional costumes as we staged the play. We staged it at the Community Center and in Taksim, with my team of seven people. It was received with much enthusiasm. We have worked a lot for this play as a team. We even have it on tape now. When I had first started theatre, all I wanted was to act. Now I play the hardest role, the witch like mother-in-law, and I am also the one who created this play.

I was not always such an initiating person. During the training process, I came to know the things that make me happy, I realized that I have my own needs and desires, and I started to express all these. It is not only the ability to create this play; I have gained other things during this process as well. As I grew to know myself I was able to bring out the things hidden inside me. I found myself.

In the course of the Women's Human Rights Training, I learned communication. I had taken other trainings, courses before. Yet, it is with the Women's Human Rights Training Program, that all these trainings formed a whole, the concepts started to fit in place. During the process, my husband and children also changed. They started to appreciate and support me. If I had not participated in this training program, if I still had my old mind frame, when my daughter went out with someone, perhaps I would call her a bitch, because I had been brought up to think like that. Yet now, my daughter talks to me about her boyfriend. Both my daughter and I are very lucky that I have been through this training.

In the past, I would worry over whom to visit for tea every day. Now I do not have that need. Furthermore, it seems like a waste of time. I go to art exhibitions or make plans for visits to

museums, as much as our financial possibilities permit of course. I love to go to plays and observe the mimics of the actors. I realize that when I am exposed to works of art, new creations are forming in my brain.

Also, now I have a personal interest in the social issues around me. For instance, I think that the conditions of education in our district are very insufficient. I have talked to the school directors. Naturally, when there are 2800 students at a school with a capacity for 800 people, they can manage the place only by a method of practicing strict authority. I blame the families, because they show no interest in the schools. They should join the administrative committees. They should force the system to change. Surely, if the state had established a decent education system, this job would not be left to the mercy of personal initiatives. If there are 2800 students in a school, then a huge army of stupid people will come out of there. This is a major wound; a big danger for our future. The school directors' job is hard too. Nevertheless, I believe I would be able to create a different future, if I were in their position and if I trusted myself.

I believe that we are not sensitive enough about the environment either. The beauty of our lives is in our hands. We analyzed the environmental laws with the women in the Training group. There is supposed to be a seven meter square green land per person in this area. Yet of course nobody would bring you the green land and say here you go. For the environment, for our children, we the women should demand this green land from the municipality, we should work on this issue. If we really become conscious citizens, we can claim this place with its green land. Last year for instance, the forest here was covered with ichneumon flies, the trees died due to lack of care. I ran around, applied to all the authorities. We managed to gather four neighborhoods together, but I was too late. I am still fighting for this cause. Finally the authorities promised to apply pesticides to the trees in March this year.

I am trying to bring the people together as much as I can. I believe that we will be stronger together and be able to inform each other on different subjects. The ideas and the struggle should go hand in hand. We formed groups on realizing women's handiwork labor and on the protection of environment; we are talking to everyone about these. Also, I am participating in the foundation activities of a woman's cooperative here.

In the past, I would not claim my own rights or feelings. I was constantly under stress; I did not want to live. As a young girl, they had taught me that I would get married and have children. I spent my life waiting for this to happen. I was very unhappy. But after the Women's Human Rights Training I found Elif, I found myself. I am a citizen, an individual; I exist. Once I realized and started to value myself, I also started to create. In the old days, I was too scared of making a mistake. Now I know that it is okay to make mistakes, I am a human being. And I am not afraid anymore. I want to live. I want to develop myself, and to beautify my surroundings. I exist and I am creating.

Excerpts from the interview with Elif Aldoğan, conducted by Ayşe Berktaş in July 2002.

VIII. Annexes

Annex 1:

The Sample

A. Region: Marmara (Istanbul, Edirne, Kocaeli, Yalova, Bursa)

Number of women met: 49

Cities visited: Istanbul and Edirne

Focus groups: Istanbul; Umraniye (1), Gazi Mahallesi (1), Okmeydani (1)
Edirne (1)

Trainers met: 4

B. Region: Aegean (Canakkale, Izmir)

Number of women met: 59

Cities visited: Izmir and Canakkale

Focus groups: Canakkale (2)
Karsiyaka, Izmir (2)

Trainers met: 4

C. Region: Central Anatolia (Ankara, Eskisehir)

Number of women met: 77

Cities visited: Ankara

Focus groups: Ankara; Sincan (1), Safaktepe (2), Natayolu (2)

Trainers met: 4

D. Region: Mediterranean (Antalya, Adana, Icel)

Number of women met: 41

Cities visited: Antalya

Focus groups: Antalya; Sutculer (3)

Trainers met: 1

E. Region: Eastern Anatolia (Bitlis, Van, Malatya, Mus, Agri, Igridir)

Number of women met: 25

Cities visited: Bitlis and Van

Focus groups: Bitlis (1), Van (1)

Trainers met: 2

F. Region: Southeast Anatolia (Gaziantep, Diyarbakir, Adiyaman, Sanliurfa, Siirt)

Number of women met: 39

Cities visited: Diyarbakir and Adiyaman

Focus groups: Diyarbakir (2), Adiyaman (1)

Annex 2:

The Survey Questionnaire

***EVALUATION OF THE WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING PROGRAM
SURVEY QUESTIONS***

I. CHANGES IN ATTITUDES AFTER THE TRAINING:

a) Your Attitude Towards Yourself

(V1) My outlook on myself as a woman after the training has positively

1. Not changed at all
2. Changed a little
3. Changed a lot

(V2) My self- confidence

1. Has decreased
2. Remained the same
3. Increased

(V3) My ability to resolve my problems as opposed to before

1. Has decreased
2. Remained the same
3. Increased

(V4) Concerning my political, civil and economical rights, I

1. Was already informed
2. Learned a little
3. I learned a lot

(V5) From the above mentioned rights, for me, political rights

1. Are not important at all
2. Are slightly important
3. Are very important

(V6) From the above mentioned rights, for me, civil rights

1. Are not important at all
2. Are slightly important
3. Are very important

(V7) From the above mentioned rights, for me, economical rights

1. Are not important at all
2. Are slightly important
3. Are very important

b) Your Attitude Towards Your Family

(V8) My attitude towards my husband

1. Deteriorated
2. Did not change at all
3. Improved

(V9) My attitude towards my children:

1. Deteriorated
2. Did not change at all
3. Improved

(V10) My attitude towards the other members of my family

1. Deteriorated
2. Did not change at all
3. Improved

c) Your Family's Attitude Towards You

(V11) My husband's attitude towards me:

1. Deteriorated
2. Did not change at all
3. Improved

(V12) My children's attitude towards me

1. Deteriorated
2. Did not change at all
3. Improved

(V13) My family's other members' attitude towards me

1. Deteriorated
2. Did not change at all
3. Improved

d) Your Attitudes Towards Society

Please determine the importance of the following, in accordance with your views after the training:

(V14) Being a useful person for the society is

1. Not very important
2. Important
3. Very Important

(V15) Being a wife

1. Not very important
2. Important
3. Very Important

- (V16) Being a mother
1. Not very important
 2. Important
 3. Very Important

- (V17) Being a citizen
1. Not very important
 2. Important
 3. Very Important

- (V18) Being a woman
1. Not very important
 2. Important
 3. Very Important

II. *CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR AFTER THE TRAINING:*

a) Your Behaviour Towards Yourself

- (V19) The time I spare for my hobbies
1. Decreased
 2. Did not change at all
 3. Increased

- (V20) Personal care (in terms of appearance, clothing etc)
1. I have started not to care
 2. I did not change at all
 3. I have started to care

- (V21) What is happening in Turkey, the world and the news interest me
1. Less
 2. Same as before
 3. More

- (V22) I express my thoughts
1. Not at all
 2. Same as before
 3. More comfortably

- (V23) The change in making my own decisions
1. I make fewer decisions on my own, compared to the past
 2. I make as many decisions as I used to make
 3. I have started to make my own decisions more often

b) Your Behavior Towards Family Members

(V24) The Women's Human Rights Training affected my relationships (such as communicating more comfortably, protecting my rights etc.) with my family members

1. Not at all
2. A little
3. Very much

c) Your Family Member's Behavior Towards You

(V25) The importance given to my thoughts in the family

1. Decreased
2. Did not change at all
3. Increased

(V26) My influence over family decisions

1. Decreased
2. Did not change at all
3. Increased

(V27) The participation of your husband in house chores

1. Decreased
2. Remained the same
3. Increased

(V28) The participation of your children in house chores

1. Decreased
2. Remained the same
3. Increased

(V29) Did you experience physical violence in the family?

1. Yes
2. No

(V30) If yes, after the training the violence

1. Increased
2. Remained the same
3. Decreased
4. Stopped

(V31) Did you experience emotional violence in the family?

1. Yes
2. No

(V32) If yes, after the training the violence

1. Increased
2. Remained the same
3. Decreased
4. Stopped

(V33) Did you experience economical violence in the family?

1. Yes
2. No

(V34) If yes, after the training, the violence

1. Increased
2. Remained the same
3. Decreased
4. Stopped

d) Your Behavior towards Society and Initiatives in Organising

The training affected my behavior in the social sphere in the following manners:

(V35) I have become a member of an association(s)

1. Yes
2. No

(V36) I have (re)started my education (enrolled in a course, went to back school)

1. Yes
2. No

(V37) I have started to work

1. Yes
2. No

(V38) I have started my own business

1. Yes
2. No

(V39) I have appealed to state institutions with demands (municipality, governor's office etc)

1. Never
2. A couple of times
3. Many times

(V40) I appealed to a lawyer/prosecutor/the police

1. Never
2. A couple of times
3. Many times

After the training who did you share your new knowledge with and to what extent?

(V41) With my family

1. Not at all
2. A little
3. Quite a lot

(V42) With my community

1. Not at all
2. A little
3. Quite a lot

(V43) Did you become a resource person?

1. No, I did not.
2. Sometimes I was asked for advice
3. I was consulted quite a lot

Together with my friends we had the following organizing initiatives:

(V44) We meet frequently with friends from the training and we give each other support

1. No such thing happens
2. Sometimes
3. Happens frequently

(V45) We shared our experiences with other women

1. No such thing happens
2. Sometimes
3. Happens frequently

(V46) We have visited the state offices as a group and made demands

1. Never have
2. Sometimes
3. Happens frequently

(V47) We have started a petition

1. Yes
2. No

(V48) We have organized conferences, meetings

1. Yes
2. No

(V49) We have gathered together and taught one another our skills

1. Yes
2. No

(V50) We organized theatre activities

1. Yes
2. No

(V51) We have set up a public market or joined one

1. Yes
2. No

(V52) We have started a business

1. Yes
2. No

(V53) We have started an association, foundation, cooperative

1. Yes
2. No

What are the factors that bring about success in these attempts?

(V54) The leadership of one or more people in the group

1. Not at all
2. A little
3. Quite a lot

(V55) Good relationships between friends

1. Not at all
2. A little
3. Quite a lot

(V56) The support of the group facilitator

1. Not at all
2. A little
3. Quite a lot

(V57) Sportive attitude of state institutions is

1. Not important
2. A little important
3. Very important

(V58) The overall political and economical atmosphere in the country is

1. Not important
2. A little important
3. Very important

(V59) The support of family members is

1. Not important
2. A little important
3. Very important

(V60) The financial condition of your family is

1. Not important
2. A little important
3. Very important

III. CONCERNING THE TRAINING PROGRAM:

(V61) Do you think that this program has achieved its goal?

1. Yes
2. No

(V62) What do you think was the most important aspect contributing to the success of the program?

1. Group facilitators
2. The subject matter
3. The program's format
4. If other, please write:

Evaluate the importance of the following in terms of the program's success

(V63) Group facilitator:

1. Not important
2. A little important
3. Very important

(V64) Subject matter

1. Not important
2. A little important
3. Very important

(V65) The program's format

1. Not important
2. A little important
3. Very important

IV. PERSONAL INFORMATION:

(V66) What year did you start the Women's Human Rights Training Program?

1. 1998
2. 1999
3. 2000
4. 2001
5. 2002

(V67) How did you hear about this training? Please write.

(V68) What other short term trainings did you attend prior to this training? Please write.

(V69) What other trainings did you attend after this training? Please write.

(V70) What is your level of education?

1. I am illiterate
2. I did not go to school but I can read and write
3. I went to primary school

4. I went to secondary school
5. I went to high school
6. I went to university

(V71) Do you have a paying job?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, what is it? Please write.

(V72) Do you own the house you live in?

1. Yes
2. No

(V73) Which one/s of the following do you own?

1. Car
2. Refrigerator
3. Washing Machine
4. Television
5. Computer

(V74) Which income level would you place yourself and your family in?

1. Low income
2. Middle income
3. Upper middle income

(V75) Your marital status:

1. Single
2. Married
3. Divorced
4. Widowed

(V76) The neighborhood and the city you live in

The date the survey was filled out:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Annex 3:

Tables

Table 1: Learning about political, civil and economic rights

In terms of my political, social and economic rights,	PERCENTAGE (%)
I was already well informed	10.7
I learned some new things	17.6
I learned a great deal	71.6
Total	100

Table 2: Learning about rights and geographical region

In terms of my rights,	Central Anatolia	Aegean	Marmara	Mediterranean	Eastern Anatolia	Southeast Anatolia
I was already well informed Percentage (%)	14.3	12.1	10.2	9.8	0	10.3
I learned some new things Percentage (%)	19.5	10.3	14.3	14.6	52.0	10.3
I learned a great deal Percentage (%)	66.2	77.6	75.5	75.6	48.0	79.5
Total Percentage (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(Pearson Chi square = 27.173, p: 0.002; significant)

Table 3: Learning about rights and education level

Education level 1: I am illiterate
 I did not go to school, but I can read and write a little.

Education level 2: I finished primary school or middle school.

Education level 3: I went to high school or university.

In terms of my rights,	Education level 1	Education level 2	Education level 3
I was already well informed	0	6.1	19.0
Percentage (%)			
I learned some new things	9.7	22.0	14.7
Percentage (%)			
I learned a great deal	90.3	72.0	66.4
Percentage (%)			
Total			
Percentage (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0

(Pearson Chi square = 18,387, p: 0.001; significant)

Table 4: The importance of political rights

Political rights are	PERCENTAGE (%)
Not important at all	1.4
Somewhat important	16.5
Very important	82.0
Total	100.0

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Table 5: The importance of civil rights

Civil rights are	PERCENTAGE (%)
Not important at all	1.4
Somewhat important	4.2
Very important	94
Total	100

Table 6: The importance of economic rights

Economic rights Are	PERCENTAGE (%)
Not important at all	1.7
Somewhat important	7.3
Very important	90.9
Total	100

Table 7: The importance of political rights and geographic region

Political rights are	Central Anatolia	Aegean	Marmara	Mediterranean	Eastern Anatolia	Southeast Anatolia
Not important at all (%)	2.6	0	2.0	0	0	2.7
Somewhat important (%)	14.5	25.9	14.3	12.8	12.0	16.2
Very important (%)	82.9	74.1	83.7	87.2	88.0	81.1

Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100
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(Pearson Chi square = 7.839, p=0.645; insignificant)

Table 8: The importance of civil rights and geographical region

Civil rights are	Central Anatolia	Aegean	Marmara	Mediterranean	Eastern Anatolia	Southeast Anatolia
Not important at all (%)	3.9	0	2.1	0	0	0
Somewhat important (%)	3.9	3.4	2.1	7.5	8.0	2.6
Very important (%)	92.1	96.6	95.8	92.5	92.0	97.4
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100

(Pearson Chi square =8.783, p=0.553; insignificant)

Table 9: Economic rights and geographical region

Economic rights are	Central Anatolia	Aegean	Marmara	Mediterranean	Eastern Anatolia	Southeast Anatolia
Not important at all (%)	4.1	0	0	2.4	0	2.6
Somewhat important (%)	5.4	6.8	8.2	12.2	12.0	2.6
Very important (%)	90.5	93.2	91.8	85.4	88.0	94.7
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100

(Pearson Chi square = 8.771, p=0.554; significant)

Table 10: Changes in women's own perception of themselves after the training

My perception of myself	PERCENTAGE (%)
Did not change at all	3.1
Changed somewhat	22.9
Changed a great deal	74.0
Total	100.0

Table 11: Changes in women's self confidence after the training

My self confidence	PERCENTAGE (%)
Decreased	0.3
Remained the same	6.6
Increased	93.1
Total	100.0

Table 12: Changes in women's ability to resolve problems after the training

My ability to resolve problems	PERCENTAGE (%)
Decreased	2.4
Remained the same	7.3
Increased	90.3
Total	100.0

Table 13: Changes in time spent pursuing personal interests

Time I spent	PERCENTAGE (%)
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pursuing personal interests	
Decreased	2.8
Remained the same	15.3
Increased	81.9
Total	100

Table 14: Changes in women's personal care after the training

I	PERCENTAGE (%)
Stopped paying attention to myself	3.5
Did not change	29.9
I started to pay more attention to myself	66.7
Total	100

Table 15: Changes in the attitudes of the husbands' towards the women after the training

My husband's attitude	PERCENTAGE (%)
Worsened	5.4
Remained the same	22.9
Improved	71.7
Total	100

Table 16: Changes in the attitudes of other members of the family towards the women after the training

My family's attitudes	PERCENTAGE (%)
Worsened	4.4
Remained the same	24.9
Improved	70.7
Total	100

Table 17: Changes in women's attitudes towards their children after the training

My attitude towards my	PERCENTAGE (%)
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children	
Worsened	0
Remained the same	7.0
Improved	93.0
Total	100

Table 18: Changes in women’s expression of their opinions after the training

I	PERCENTAGE (%)
Began to express my opinions less	4.5
Remained the same	4.5
Am now more comfortable in expressing my opinions	90.9
Total	100.0

Table 19: Attending other trainings after the Women’s Human Rights Training Program

I attended another training program	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	54.1
No	45.9
Total	100

Table 20: Joining an association after the training

I became a member of an association	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	31.4
No	68.6
Total	100

Table 21: Changes in following the news in Turkey and around the world after the training

I keep up with the news	PERCENTAGE (%)
Less	2.5
Same as before	25.0
More	72.6
Total	100.0

Table 22: Starting working with payment after the training

I started working	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	28.8
No	71.2
Total	100

Table 23: Starting up a new business after the training

I started a new business	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	8.3
No	91.7
Total	100.0

Table 24: Appealing to governmental institutions after the training

I appealed to the state's institutions for remedy	PERCENTAGE (%)
No	75.2
A few times	18.1
Frequently	6.7
Total	100.0

Table25: Appealing to lawyers/ district attorneys/ the police after the training

I appealed to lawyers/ police/...	PERCENTAGE (%)
No	85.2
A few times	13.3
A number of times	1.5
Total	100.0

Table 26: Changes in the way the families views the women’s opinions after the training

My family	PERCENTAGE (%)
Values my opinions less	0.7
Values my opinions as much as they used to	25.2
Values my opinions more	74.1
Total	100.0

Table 27: Women’s influence over family decisions after the training

My influence over family decisions	PERCENTAGE (%)
Decreased	0.4
Remained the same	25.6
Increased	74
Total	100.0

Table 28: Contribution of husbands to housework after the training

My husband contribute to the housework	PERCENTAGE (%)
Less	1.8
The same as before	56.8
More	41.1
Total	100.0

Table 29: Physical violence before the training

I was subject to physical violence	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	27
No	73
Total	100.0

Table 30: Changes for women who answered “yes” in Table 29 after the training

Physical violence	YÜZDE (%)
Continued the same as before	15.1
Decreased	21.6

Ended	63
Total	100.0

Table 31: Emotional violence before the training

I was subject to emotional violence	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	46.1
No	53.9
Total	100.0

Table 32: Changes for women who answered “yes” in Table 31 after the training

Emotional violence	PERCENTAGE (%)
Increased	4.8
Continues the same as before	20.0
Decreased	44.0
Ended	31.2
Total	100.0

Table 33: Economic violence before the training

I was subject to economic violence	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	26.8
No	73.2
Total	100.0

Table 34: Changes for women who answered “yes” in Table 33 after the training

Economic violence	PERCENTAGE (%)
Increased	8.1
Continued the same as before	23.0

Decreased	35.1
Ended	33.8
Total	100.0

Table 35: Sharing knowledge from the training with the family

I shared knowledge from the training with my family	PERCENTAGE (%)
No, not at all	3.1
Yes, a little	30.8
Yes, a great deal	66.1
Total	100.0

Table 36: Sharing knowledge from the training with the community

I shared knowledge from the training with my community	PERCENTAGE (%)
No, not at all	4.3
Yes, a little	37.9
Yes, a great deal	57.8
Total	100.0

Table 37: Becoming a mentor on women's human rights after the training

I became a mentor	PERCENTAGE (%)
No	11.7
Yes, people sometimes consulted me	52.8
Yes, people consulted me often	35.5
Total	100.0

Table 38: Meeting with other participants after the training

I meet with women from the training	PERCENTAGE (%)
No	17.4

Yes, sometimes	46.6
Yes, often	35.9
Total	100.0

Table 39: Sharing experiences with other participants after the training

I share experiences with other women from the training	PERCENTAGE (%)
No	8.2
Yes, sometimes	52.9
Yes, often	38.9
Total	100.0

Table 40: Organizing conferences and meetings after the training

We organized conferences, meetings, etc.	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	41.2
No	58.8
Total	100.0

Table 41: Participating in petitions after the meeting

I participated in petitions	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	35.3
No	64.7
Total	100.0

Table 42: Making appeals as a group to governmental/state institutions after the training

We appeal collectively to state institutions	PERCENTAGE (%)
No	71.9

Yes, sometimes	23.0
Yes, often	5.2
Total	100.0

Table 43: Exercising the right to association (forming cooperatives, associations, etc.)

We exercised our right to association	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	17.5
No	82.5
Total	100.0

Table 44: Opening or participating in public markets after the training

I started and/or participated in a market	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	25.4
No	74.6
Total	100.0

Table 45: Starting a new business with other participants after the training

We started a business with women from the training	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	13.4
No	86.6
Total	100.0

Table 46: The influence of group leaders in organizing after the training

Group leaders affect exercising the right to organize	PERCENTAGE (%)
No, not at all	10.0
Yes, a little	24.1

Yes, a great deal	65.9
Total	100.0

Table 47: The importance of support from family members for organizing after the training

The family's support	PERCENTAGE (%)
Is not important	.4
Is somewhat important	6.2
Is very important	93.5
Total	100.0

Table 48: The influence of the social worker/group facilitator's support in organizing after the training

Support of the group facilitator	PERCENTAGE (%)
Does not have any influences	1.5
Has some influence	7.8
Has a lot of influence	90.7
Total	100.0

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