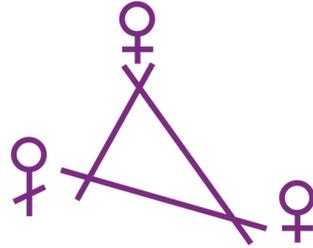


## WOMEN FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS – NEW WAYS

### IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN (HREP), WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING (WHRT) AND GENDER EQUALITY (GE) SEMINARS IN 2012-2018



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## 1. STUDY BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

### 1.1. Overview of the Current Agenda in Turkey

Women for Women’s Human Rights-New Ways (WWHR) considers it particularly important to assess the impact of its Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP)—which it has been continuously running since 1995—on direct and indirect beneficiaries, in the light of research studies conducted by independent/external experts. The present independent research report covers the 2012-2018 period, and contains findings from the third of these external studies; it aims to display the impact of not only HREP but other training programs entitled the Women’s Human Rights Training (WHRT) and the Gender Equality (GE) Seminars from a perspective of women’s human rights and gender equality. HREP implementations began with a pilot study in 1995, reached thousands of women in the context of an official protocol signed with the General Directorate for Social Services and Child Protection (GDSSCP) in 1998, and has primarily been implemented in collaboration with municipalities and local women’s organizations since 2011 when the GDSSCP was abolished. HREP has been implemented in 56 provinces across Turkey’s seven regions to date, and as of 2019, over 15,000 women have benefitted from HREP directly, while indirect beneficiaries (the families and other women, men, and children in their social circles) may be said to have reached tens of thousands.

To clearly delineate the changes and transformation brought forth by any kind of human rights work carried out in civil society in Turkey, the social and political climate in the country must also be taken into consideration. Accordingly, it can be said that the period following 2012 was an increasingly challenging climate in terms of the women’s movement in Turkey and work on gender equality.

2012 was an important milestone in terms of the field implementation of the Women’s Human Rights Education Program (HREP). WWHR implemented HREP mostly in collaboration with the GDSSCP under the Prime Ministry under an official protocol between 1998 and 2012, after which it was mainly implemented in partnership with municipalities and autonomous women’s organizations when the collaboration with the GDSSCP effectively ended. Collaboration with the GDSSCP was a very important example of working with the public sector, and its termination resulted in HREP trainers who were GDSSCP staff and implemented HREP as part of their official job description to not be able to form groups in the field, causing a significant drop in WWHR’s pool of trainers. The present obstacles to collaborating with the public sector can be interpreted as a consequence of political and societal problems in women’s human rights in general in Turkey.

In May 2011, immediately after Turkey signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (also known as the Istanbul Convention) without reservations, the State Ministry responsible for Women and Family was closed and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (MFSP) was established in its stead. Subsequently, in 2018, the MFSP was replaced by the Ministry for Family, Labor and Social Services. Removal of the word “woman” from the titles of the mentioned ministries was an important indication of the government rhetoric after 2012, marked by an increase in the publicly visible discriminatory discourse against women by public servants, government representatives and ministers.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CEDAW – STYK 7<sup>th</sup> term Shadow Report (<http://kadinininsanhaklari.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/cedaw-g%C3%B6lge-2016-TR.pdf>) & Hrant Dink Foundation Hate Speech in Media Report (<https://hrantdink.org/tr/asulis/yayinlar/72-medyada-nefret-soylemi-raporlari/1885-medyada-nefret-soylemi-mayis-agustos-2018>)



Meanwhile, a discourse based not on “equality” but on “justice” began to spread, especially by government supported non-governmental organizations (GONGOs), the number and power of which soared after 2013. GONGOs also began to implement widespread programs and projects in close collaboration with the government, leading them to gain visibility in the international arena, which has become another area of struggle for feminist women’s organizations. Due to the emergence of this new form of relationship building in dialogue with the government and international organizations, it has become increasingly difficult for most women’s organizations to secure funding, develop projects with international organizations and platforms, and become involved in such networks. The process of electing a candidate from Turkey for the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) in 2014 under the Istanbul Convention, is a case in point; the election process was neither transparent nor sufficiently participatory, and the autonomous women’s movement strongly opposed the attempts to restrict civil society representation. Protests calling for a transparent and open election process for GREVIO members in the upcoming period are ongoing.<sup>2</sup>

The Report by the Parliamentary Investigation Commission Established to Study Factors that have a Negative Impact on Family Unity and Divorce and Determine Measures Necessary to Strengthen the Family Institution published in 2016<sup>3</sup> focused on strengthening the family rather than the ideology of gender equality, and was another official statement strongly criticized by autonomous women’s organizations.<sup>4</sup> The motion proposed by the government in late 2016 to amend Article 103 of the Turkish Criminal Code on the sexual abuse of children was met with great opposition from the women’s movement and widespread protests, on the basis that it which would lead to deferring the sentences for the crime of the sexual abuse of children, and dismiss the cases of the perpetrators of the crime after five years after. Although the motion was withdrawn, there are concerns it may be raised again for discussion in parliament before the 2019 local elections.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, the State of Emergency declared after the attempted coup on 15 July 2016 was followed by a period where working in the field of human rights became even more difficult and progress was reversed: a number of women’s organizations were shut down, some women’s rights activists were taken into custody, and various municipalities were appointed administrators who almost immediately closed down women’s counseling and solidarity centers and women’s shelters.

In the last quarter of 2018, arguments on legal alimony rights were on the agenda and most recently, as was the case with a statement made by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Legal Division of the Appeal Court in February 2019, comments on the duration of alimony and poverty alimony to the disadvantage of women continued to encourage sexist legal practices which disregarded the acquired rights of women arising from domestic and international law.

Another step back in gains in equality came when the Higher Education Institute (HEI) discontinued its Gender Equality Project in February 2019 and removed the project document from its website, indicating the loss of yet another important tool in achieving gender equality in education.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/kadin-ve-lgbti-orgutlerinden-cagri-turkiyenin-istanbul-sozlesmesi-denetleme-komitesi-grevio-adayi-prof-dr-feride-acar-olmalidir/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem26/yil01/ss399.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> The report includes mandatory counseling and mediation in cases of divorce and violence, the possibility of questioning “consent” in sexual intercourse with children and allowing perpetrators to avoid sentencing by marrying the child, shortening the duration of precautionary judgments in cases of violence, and holding cases of family law in closed sessions to ensure “family unity”.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/tecavuzu-erken-ve-zorla-evlilikleri-ve-cocuk-istismarini-mesrulastiracak-hicbir-yasal-degisikligi-kabul-etmiyoruz/>



Moreover, in the elections on 31 March 2019, only 652 of the 8,257 mayoral candidates were women (7.8%), suggesting that women were again being ignored and political parties were unwilling to prioritize women neither in decision-making organs and mechanisms nor in terms of political representation. Hence, of the 652 mayoral candidates—already a very small number—only 43 were elected.<sup>6</sup>

Based on the developments noted above, it can be said that it was quite difficult for rights-based feminist organizations to reach women and actively continue their activities after 2012. Taking current circumstances into account, the importance of developing alternative methods, considering new collaborations and increasing national and international solidarity becomes even more evident.

## 1.2. WWHR and its Training Programs

WWHR, founded in 1993 to support the organization and empowerment of women in Turkey and worldwide, is an autonomous and feminist civil society organization that advocates for women's rights and the elimination of discrimination nationally and internationally, and is actively involved in women's platforms and coalitions in Turkey and across the world to ensure national legislation and international documents and mechanisms are drafted or improved in favor of women.

WWHR works to achieve sustainable change and transformation, and believes that real and permanent transformation can be realized by carrying out the struggle for women's rights and equality at all levels and in an interrelated manner. WWHR embraces a holistic view of women's human rights, and focuses on matters such as violence against women, education, economic and legal rights, sexuality, reproductive rights, the rights of girls, gender equality and local organizing. WWHR uses various methods such as advocacy and networking, trainings, publishing and disseminating materials and publications, and monitoring-evaluation activities to reach its objectives, as detailed below:<sup>7</sup>

- Actively advocate at the national and international levels to secure and improve women's rights and gender equality,
- Strengthen pro-equality and anti-discriminatory approaches by creating international, regional, national and local cooperation networks that bring together individuals and organizations advocating for women's rights and gender equality,
- Develop and implement training programs based on women's human rights to increase women's awareness and skills that will enable them to exercise their rights, and encourage them to be active participants in societal change,
- Build capacity in people and activists working on women's human rights to raise their awareness on women's and LGBTI+ rights, and
- Produce and/or disseminate feminist knowledge, publications, and tools that can also support standing against gender discrimination and local organizing.

To this end, WWHR has been working in many provinces across Turkey since 1995, carrying out various training programs and advocacy work, and producing publications to support women in exercising their rights, live as equal and independent citizens, and contribute to societal transformation.

The following are the basic findings of the previous external impact study carried out with women who completed HREP between 2005 and 2011:

- ✓ 60% of women who were subjected to physical abuse, 33% of women who were subjected to emotional abuse, 27% of women who were subjected to economic abuse were successful in ending the relevant violence,
- ✓ 94% of the participants reported an increase in self-confidence,

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<sup>6</sup> <http://ka-der.org.tr/yerel-secimlerde-kadin-adaylar-yine-gormezyden-gelindi/>

<sup>7</sup> Source: WWHR website (<http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/hakkimizda/biz-kimiz/>)



- ✓ 89% stated that they were more influential in decision-making in the family,
- ✓ 67% stated they were more politically active, 59% stated they actively participated in an existing women's organization,
- ✓ 35% stated they returned to school to complete their education, and
- ✓ 33% stated they joined/returned to the labor force for gainful employment; 7% of these women started their own business.

### **1.2.1. The Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP)**

As one of the most comprehensive and widespread human rights education programs for women implemented by participatory and feminist methods in Turkey and across the world, HREP aims to contribute to women's empowerment through rights awareness, exercising their rights in all areas of life, and organizing locally in line with their needs.

A 16-module program that lasts four months, HREP was carried out in collaboration with the GDSSCP between 1998-2012 on the basis of an official protocol. While the protocol remained in effect until 2017, HREP was mainly implemented in collaboration with municipalities and autonomous women's organizations after the GDSSCP was abolished in 2011. HREP has been implemented in 56 provinces in Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus beginning from 1998, and was attended by over 15,000 women as of 2019. Considering that the indirect beneficiaries of HREP include the families of the direct beneficiaries of the program as well as the women, men, and children in their close social circle, the number of indirect beneficiaries can be expressed in the tens of thousands. As confirmed by the findings of the present study, HREP is highly effective in facilitating interaction and communication among all these groups of people.

HREP is also known to contribute to local organizing and the women's movement. Once women attend HREP, they mostly either locally form or join organizations that are involved in the women's movement or working on human rights. Many women who have completed HREP become much better informed, equipped, and self-confident with regards to political participation and local organizing, and in fact become willing to engage in political decision-making mechanisms and structures. They may choose to establish a new local women's organization, join an existing one, and/or become part of structures such as municipal assemblies or city councils.

HREP has a four-stage implementation process:

1. The HREP Trainer Training
2. Local Field Implementation and the Supervision Process
3. Final Assessment Process
4. Joining the Women's Human Rights Action Network

### **1.2.2. The Women's Human Rights Training (WHRT)**

WHRT is one of the training programs WWHR developed in the context of a project implemented between 2015-2017 in collaboration with the Turkey Office of the International Labor Organization (ILO). During the pilot implementation phase, 827 women who were taking vocational training and hobby courses organized by some municipalities in Istanbul, Ankara, and Bursa attended the program.

Implemented by HREP trainers, WHRT was based on HREP in terms of content and method; it consists of 10 modules and lasts 10 weeks in total.



### 1.2.3. The Gender Equality (GE) Seminars

The GE Seminars developed by WWHR are geared to women and men employed at municipalities that have signed a HREP Protocol, private companies, and various non-governmental organizations; they last four hours in total and aim to convey basic concepts and legal provisions pertaining to gender equality.

A total of 37 GE Seminars were organized in 2017-2018, which were attended by 2,104 individuals (1,061 women and 1,043 men). WWHR continues to hold GE Seminars in collaboration with municipalities, women's organizations, and private sector companies.

### 1.3. Study Objective

This was the third external study to assess the impact of the training programs developed by WWHR, and aimed show the impact of the training programs on direct and indirect beneficiary groups in 2012-2018 from a women's human rights and gender equality perspective; its specific objectives can be summarized as follows:

- a) Establish satisfaction and expectation levels among all stakeholders; individuals, group facilitators, and program partners involved in the implementation of HREP, WHRT, and the GE Seminars in 2012-2018,
- b) Measure the direct and indirect impact of these programs on individuals who completed the training programs, the group facilitators, and program partners,
- c) Establish the impact of HREP and WHRT on indirect beneficiaries, people and groups who did not attend the programs but benefited from their multiplier effect, and analyze their potential impact on the families, spouses, and male family members of the female beneficiaries,
- d) Assess the different and relative impact of HREP and WHRT, and
- e) Generate recommendations about new potential strategies, policies, methods, and tools that can be developed to improve and expand all the aforementioned training programs.

### 1.4. Research Methodology and Sample

The study used a mixed methodology that involved three basic data collection methods. A detailed desktop study and field observation process was followed by qualitative and quantitative fieldwork. This made it possible to both statistically determine the impact of the training programs on various target groups, and quantitatively analyze the causal relationships that generated this impact and satisfaction. The details of the methodology and samples used at each stage is as follows:

**a) Desktop Study and Field Observations:** A comprehensive desktop study was carried out to become better informed about the target audience, objectives, and activities of the training programs; gather information in preparation of the research questionnaires; and establish the conceptual framework of the research. At this stage, documents and data WWHR shared with IPSOS were examined, and relevant observations and data collation work was carried out over digital platforms. Resources examined as part of the desktop study included promotional materials on WWHR and its training programs, materials used in the training programs, WWHR's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, two separate external assessment reports from 2003 and 2011, questionnaires filled out by women who completed HREP groups, WWHR's website and social media accounts, and the Shadow Report by the Istanbul Convention Turkey Monitoring Platform and relevant materials.

Moreover, IPSOS researchers observed two GE Seminars—one in Istanbul and one in Diyarbakir—and the opening session of a HREP group in Izmir. Both the desktop study and the field observations constituted the preparatory phase of the qualitative and quantitative data collection process, while face-to-face interviews were held with the WWHR team to finalize the questionnaires.

**b) Qualitative Field Study:** Qualitative fieldwork on the target audience of the research was launched following the desktop study. At this stage, the basic data collection techniques consisted of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. A total of 13 focus groups were held in five provinces with HREP group facilitators as well as participants of HREP, WHRT, and the GE Seminars who attended these programs in 2012-2018 (Table 1). While sampling for focus group participants, effort was made to include the provinces in Turkey's various geographical regions where the number of training groups were high. For HREP participants, effort was made to include women who received education in various years during 2012-2018 in the sample group.

**Table 1. Sample Distribution for Focus Group Discussions**

Focus Groups	Profile	Gender	City
Group 1	HREP participants	Female	Izmir
Group 2	HREP participants	Female	Ankara
Group 3	HREP participants	Female	Istanbul
Group 4	HREP participants	Female	Diyarbakir
Group 5	HRE participants	Female	Ankara
Group 6	HRE participants	Female	Bursa
Group 7	HREP participants	Female	Istanbul
Group 8	HREP participants	Female	Ankara
Group 9	HREP participants	Female	Diyarbakir
Group 10	HREP participants	Female	Izmir
Group 11	GE Seminar participants	Female - Male	Ankara
Group 12	GE Seminar participants	Female - Male	Izmir
Group 13	GE Seminar participants	Female - Male	Istanbul

In addition to the focus groups, a total of 35 face to face in-depth interviews were conducted; 16 with spouses or adult male family members of HREP participants (Table 2), and 19 with program partner representatives (Table 3).<sup>8</sup> A variety of provinces where the programs were implemented were included in the sample design so as access diverse views and experiences; also, representatives from different types of organizations were included in the sample of program partners. Interviews with program partners were conducted with persons in senior management positions who were actively involved in developing the HREP partnership. Qualitative fieldwork was carried out between 26 September and 7 December 2018.<sup>9</sup>

On average, there were six people in each focus group, and each discussion lasted approximately two hours. Each in-depth interview was completed in approximately 45 minutes. Additionally, interviews were conducted with WWHR team members and HREP consultants, and the training programs included in the research were discussed from various perspectives; overall, interviews were conducted with seven WWHR representatives. These interviews were conducted between 6-26 February 2019, either face to face in the WWHR office or over the telephone.

<sup>8</sup> Although few in number, some of the in-depth interviews were held over the telephone with participants who were either out of town at the time of the fieldwork or found it more convenient to speak over phone due to their schedules.

<sup>9</sup> Interviews with ILO Representatives were conducted at the time of writing of the report.

**Table 2. Sample Distribution for In-depth Interviews with Male Family Members**

Number	Profile	City
1	Adult child of HREP participant*	Izmir
2	HREP participant husband/partner	Izmir
3	HREP participant husband/partner	Izmir
4	HREP participant husband/partner	Izmir
5	Brother of HREP participant*	Ankara
6	HREP participant husband/partner*	Ankara
7	HREP participant husband/partner	Ankara
8	HREP participant husband/partner	Ankara
9	HREP participant husband/partner	Ankara
10	HREP participant husband/partner *	Ankara
11	HREP participant husband/partner	Istanbul
12	HREP participant husband/partner*	Istanbul
13	HREP participant husband/partner	Istanbul
14	HREP participant husband/partner	Istanbul
15	HREP participant husband/partner	Diyarbakir
16	HREP participant husband/partner*	Diyarbakir

\* Denotes in-depth interviews conducted over the phone.

**Table 3. Sample Distribution for In-depth Interviews with Program Partners**

Number	Profile	Gender	City
1	Municipal Representative	Female	Izmir
2	NGO/International organization representative	Female	Izmir
3	Municipal Representative	Female	Izmir
4	Municipal Representative	Male	Izmir
5	Municipal Representative	Male	Izmir
6	NGO/International organization representative	Female	Izmir
7	Municipal Representative	Female	Ankara
8	NGO/International organization representative*	Female	Ankara
9	Municipal Representative	Female	Istanbul
10	Municipal Representative	Female	Istanbul
11	Municipal Representative	Female	Istanbul
12	Municipal Representative	Female	Istanbul
13	NGO/International organization representative*	Female	Şanlıurfa
14	NGO/International organization representative	Female	Adıyaman
15	NGO/International organization representative*	Female	Van
16	Municipal Representative*	Female	Mardin
17	NGO/International organization representative	Female	Diyarbakir
18	NGO/International organization representative	Female	Ankara
19	NGO/International organization representative	Female	Ankara

\* Denotes in-depth interviews conducted over the phone.

c) **Quantitative Field Work:** Questionnaires used at the quantitative stage were drafted in light of the information obtained and observations made during the quantitative fieldwork, and administered to the four basic target groups. Accordingly, Computer Assisted Telephone Surveys were conducted with women who completed HREP groups in 2012-2018, and women who completed WHRT groups in the provinces where the project was implemented in 2016-2017; Computer Assisted Online Surveys were conducted with HREP Trainers, and women and men who participated in GE Seminars. Details of the fieldwork for each target group and sampling was as follows:

- **Computer Assisted Telephone Survey with HREP Participants:** A total of 3,931 women completed HREP in the 2012-2018 period. Data collection from HREP participants took place between 26 December 2018 and 12 February 2019; 500 respondents were targeted, and 472 completed the questionnaire. A closed-ended questionnaire that took about 20 minutes to complete was administered over the telephone to HREP participants via the IPSOS Computer Assisted Telephone Survey system. During the preparation of the sample distribution of the study, to ensure participants from different backgrounds were included, a stratified random sample representative of the participants was taken on the basis of the year HREP was completed and the province where HREP was provided, from among all women who completed HREP in the 2012-2018 period. Details of the sample distribution are provided in Table 4.

**Table 4. Sample Distribution for Quantitative Study of HREP Participants by Year**

HREP Group Year	Number of Respondents
2012	49
2013	62
2014	79
2015	41
2016	97
2017	109
2018	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>472</b>

**Table 5. Sample Distribution for Quantitative Study of HREP Participants by Province**

Province of HREP Implementation	Number of Respondents
Adiyaman	9
Ankara	33
Antalya	8
Bursa	24
Çanakkale	35
Denizli	11
Diyarbakir	9
Erzincan	1
Eskişehir	9
Giresun	2
Hakkâri	4
Hatay	11
Içel	7

Istanbul	31
Izmir	203
Kıbrıs	8
Kocaeli	3
Mardin	1
Muğla	33
Muş	7
Şanlıurfa	4
Trabzon	5
Uşak	7
Van	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>472</b>

- **Computer Assisted Telephone Survey with WHRT Participants:** A total of 830 women benefitted from WHRT that was held in Istanbul, Ankara, and Bursa in 2016-2017. A total of 200 completed questionnaires were targeted; data collection took place between 25 December 2018 and 16 January 2019, and 202 respondents completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire took about 20 minutes to complete and consisted mainly of closed-ended questions that were administered over the telephone via the IPSOS Computer Assisted Telephone Survey system. The distribution of the stratified random sample was planned in parallel to the number of participants and year WHRT was completed in the three provinces where WHRT groups were held. The detailed sample distribution is given below.

**Table 6. Sample Distribution for Quantitative Study of WHRT Participants by Year**

WHRT Group Year	Number of Respondents
2016	141
2017	61
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>202</b>

**Table 7. Sample Distribution for Quantitative Study of WHRT Participants by Province**

Province of WHRT Implementation	Number of Respondents
Ankara	157
Istanbul	39
Bursa	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>202</b>

- **Online Survey with HREP Group Facilitators:** Links to custom-made online surveys that took about 20 minutes to complete and consisted of closed-ended questions were sent by IPSOS to email addresses of a total of 126 group facilitators who had completed the Trainer Training and were in WWHR's pool of trainers, regardless of whether they had opened a group or not. A total of 83 group facilitators who accessed the link to the survey between 26 December 2018 and 12 February 2019 and accepted to participate in the study completed the online form. Detailed sample distribution related to the group facilitators is provided below.

**Table 8. Sample Distribution of HREP Group Facilitators by Province**

Province of HREP Trainer	Number of Respondents
Ankara	9
Antalya	1
Aydın	2
Balıkesir	1
Bursa	4
Çanakkale	3
Denizli	2
Diyarbakır	4
Eskişehir	2
Gaziantep	1
Giresun	1
Hatay	3
Istanbul	19
Izmir	17
Kocaeli	1
Mardin	2
Mersin	5
Muğla	1
Muş	1
Van	1
KKTC	1
Overseas	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83</b>

- Online Survey with GE Seminar Participants:** To assess the GE Seminars, quantitative surveys were administered between 26 December 2018 and 12 February 2019; data was collected from a total of 126 respondents. The survey took about 15 minutes to complete and consisted mostly of closed-ended questions; it was sent by email to a total of 446 female and male participants who had provided their email addresses after attending a GE Seminar held by WWHR, organized by different organizations in various provinces. Since participation in the online survey was low, participants whose telephone numbers were available were contacted via the IPSOS Computer Assisted Telephone system and the survey was administered to respondents who agreed to participate in the survey over the phone. The survey was also administered to participants in a GE Seminar held in Istanbul in a pen-and-paper format within the scope of the IPSOS GE Seminar Assessment Study.

## 2. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

It was found that WWHR's training programs—which are all built on the basis of gender equality but differ in terms of content, participant profile, and organizational conditions and aims—had one aspect in common: They all generated high satisfaction among both participants and implementers, and had a significant impact on the personal lives of these people, as was the aim.



**Table 9. Table of Key Findings**

	<b>HREP Participants</b>	<b>WHRT Participants</b>	<b>GE Seminar Participants</b>	<b>HREP Trainers</b>
<b>Total Satisfaction</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Total Impact</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>83%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>472</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>83</i>

A detailed examination of the gains of each program and the factors that lead to these gains revealed the following findings:

**a) Key findings in relation to HREP participants:**

- Women’s primary objective in participating in HREP was to *contribute to their personal growth and transformation* and to *learn about their rights*. HREP succeeded in meeting these motivations at a rate of 85% and 86%, respectively.
- Although not listed on the questionnaire, 86% of the respondents—the majority of which had children—considered *gender-sensitive parenting* a gain.
- Similarly, while *improved communication with children* was not on the women’s agenda prior to HREP, 84% of the respondents reported this as a benefit.
- Many of the male family members of HREP participants also reported that communication in their family improved, adding that the women expressed themselves better and stood their ground more both at home and in social life, embracing a more decisive and results-oriented attitude.
- At a time when violence against women hangs like a dark cloud over Turkey’s agenda, HREP contributed to 84% of the participants in *fighting against violence against women*. In fact, after HREP, there was a statistically significant decrease in all types of violence (emotional, psychological, physical, economic, sexual) compared to before HREP. HREP was pivotal in contributing to this important success.
- HREP contributed to respondents *gaining a gender equality perspective* and *becoming a women’s rights advocate/activist*, both at a rate of 83%.
- Two areas in which HREP had limited impact was organizing; while the percentage of participants who *joined a political party* following HREP was 46%, those who stated HREP contributed to them being nominated as candidates *in local or national elections* was 45%. Given the recent political atmosphere, where the freedom of assembly is considerably restricted and organized individuals and institutions continue to exist in a climate of fear, achieving said percentages must still be considered a success, for nearly one out of every two HREP participants showed courage despite the male domination in politics and took action in organizing and political participation.
- At least eight out of every ten women who completed HREP experienced personal transformation in many respects. Of the respondents, 91% said they were more *self-confident*, 88% felt *stronger and better equipped*, 88% were able to *express themselves better*, and 87% became *more aware of gender inequalities in their lives*.
- Three basic factors were determined that make HREP an extremely effective program in terms of personal transformation: the *trainers*, with their inclusive attitude and effective group facilitation skills; the *HREP content*, which uses participatory methods to cover numerous unknown topics; and the well-designed *HREP modules* that provide a holistic learning experience. These three factors were the most valuable structural components of HREP that generated satisfaction in *all* participants.
- Almost *all* (99%) participants recommended HREP to other women, based on both their personal transformation and their overall satisfaction it. This finding is another piece of

evidence for HREP's success. It is also important in terms of reaching a greater number of women in the future and making the program more sustainable.

**b) Key findings in relation to HREP group facilitators:**

- The respondents were motivated to become HREP group facilitators for many reasons, the most prominent of which was to *contribute to women's awareness of their rights* at 88%. Meanwhile, 80% of the trainers stated that they benefited from HREP in *supporting women around them in claiming their rights*.
- While 76% of the group facilitators benefited from HREP in *learning about their legal rights*, 75% said they had *become resource persons in their social circles* as a result of HREP. According to qualitative findings, HREP group facilitators continued to be easily accessible by the participants and were consulted for information even after the program ended.
- In general, HREP is a program that contributed to the *personal growth and transformation* of 70% of HREP group facilitators in one or more ways. A more detailed analysis revealed that 77% of the HREP group facilitators felt *stronger and better equipped*, 71% felt *more self-confident*, and 66% were *more compassionate and understanding*.
- While there was a statistically significant decrease in the rate at which HREP group facilitators were subject to emotional violence at home and outside the home, they were subject to physical, economic, and sexual violence outside the home less frequently. This finding shows that women's awareness of their rights, and their knowledge and skills in fighting violence increased as a result of HREP.
- Of the HREP group facilitators, 97% said they would recommend becoming a group facilitators to other women. The fact that nearly all the group facilitators recommended becoming one—an undertaking that requires effort and belief, and is done on a volunteer basis—is another indicator of how valued HREP is.

**c) Key findings in relation to WHRT participants**

- WHRT participants had initially attended the program to *obtain information on current legislation, contribute to their personal development and transformation, and learn about their rights*; they benefited most from *learning about their rights* at 86%.
- Of the WHRT participants, 81% reported having benefited from it in terms of *personal development and transformation*. The fact that eight out of ten women experienced this is in line with the objectives of WHRT.
- Improved communication with children was not a motivating factor for women to attend WHRT. Yet after completing WHRT, 83% of the participants—the majority of whom had children—stated that WHRT contributed to their communication with their children. This finding suggest that WHRT is a program that exceeds expectations.
- Of the participants, 80% said they *applied gender equality in their family* as a result of WHRT.
- As was the case in HREP, the contributions of WHRT in relation to organizing and political involvement remained limited at 37%.
- Ultimately, WHRT is a program that is highly empowering for women; while 89% of the women who completed WHRT felt *stronger and better equipped*, 88% were able to *express themselves better*, and 87% felt *more self-confident*.
- As a result of WHRT, almost nine women out of ten (87%) became more aware of gender-based inequalities. Moreover, eight women out of ten (79%) began to struggle against such inequalities.
- As was the case in HREP, there was again a statistically significant decrease in all types of violence women had been subject to following WHRT. This finding shows that WHRT is an effective tool in fighting violence.



- As a program that more than met expectations and generated an impact in many aspects, WHRT was recommended to other women by 100% of its participants. Although attending the WHRT was compulsory for some, the fact that it was recommended by all its participants without exception is another indication that it is a very successful program.

**d) Key findings in relation to the GE Seminars:**

- The GE Seminars contributed to the knowledge level of its participants primarily in the area of *emotional violence against women* at 66%, and *physical violence* at 65%.
- While it succeeded in informing 66% of its participants in *the definition of gender*, participants became informed about *gender equality* and *equality between women and men in the Turkish Criminal Code* at a rate of 60% each.
- The GE Seminars provided limited information in the areas of *Feminism and the Women’s Movement* at 49%, and *equality between women and men in the Turkish Constitution* at 46%. The fact that only one out of every two participants considered the information provided in these areas beneficial points to potential room for improvement.
- Meanwhile, the most important contribution of the GE Seminars at 90% is that participants who were employees at the collaborating organizations said they began to use *the information on gender equality in their place of work*.
- Of the participants, 95% would recommend WWHR’s GE Seminars to others.

### **3. DETAILED RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **3.1. Assessment of the Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP)**

This section includes analyses of the quantitative data from the questionnaires and the qualitative data from the focus groups obtained from women who completed HREP in 2012-2018 and the HREP trainers who ran these groups.

##### **3.1.1. Brief Information on HREP**

Establishing organizational and sustainable partnerships is a priority for WWHR so that women can benefit from HREP. The collaboration with the General Directorate for Social Services and Child Protection (GDSSCP) under the Prime Ministry between 1998-2011 on the basis of an official protocol was one such partnership. From 2002 onwards, municipalities, women’s organizations formed by HREP participants, and other women’s organizations have also joined the HREP collaboration and partnership network.

HREP is a 16-module program, implemented in four-hourly sessions per week over 16 weeks, the headings of which are as follows:

- Module 1 – Greeting Session, Introduction to HREP, and Needs Assessment
- Module 2 – Women’s Human Rights
- Module 3 – Constitutional and Civil Rights
- Module 4 – Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
- Module 5 – Strategies Against Violence
- Module 6 – Women’s Economic Rights – Section I
- Module 7 – Women’s Economic Rights – Section II
- Module 8 – Communication Skills – Section I
- Module 9 – Communication Skills – Section II
- Module 10 – Gender-sensitive Parenting and Rights of the Child
- Module 11 – Women and Sexuality– Section I
- Module 12 – Women and Sexuality – Section II



Module 13 – Women and Reproductive Rights  
 Module 14 – Women and Politics  
 Module 15 – Feminism and Women’s Movement  
 Module 16 – Women’s Organizing

### 3.1.2. Profile of HREP Participants

Table 10 shows the demographic profile of the 472 HREP participants who participated in the qualitative survey. A majority of participants appear to have a high school level education and higher (80%), be married (65%), have children (71%), and are employed or retired (64%).

	<b>a) Year of Participation in HREP</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	2012	8
	2013	9
	2014	14
	2015	14
	2016	24
	2017	22
	2018	10
	<b>b) Age group</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	15-35	28
	36-45	33
	46 and above	39
	<b>c) Education Level (last completed)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	Primary school or less	20
	High school / Vocational high school	30
	Vocational college	12
	University	33
	Master’s degree / PhD	5
	<b>d) Employment Status</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	Student	3
	Employed	37
	Unemployed but looking for a job	10
	Unpaid domestic laborer	22
	Retired	27
	Other	1
	<b>e) Marital Status</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	Married	65
	Divorced	12
	Widowed	4
	Unmarried	19
	<b>f) With or without children</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	Has children	71
	Does not have children	29

### 3.1.3. Profile of HREP Group Facilitators

In terms of demographic information, the most prominent profile among the 83 HREP group facilitators who responded to the qualitative survey was individuals aged 36 and above (61%), who had completed



university education or higher (89%), were actively employed (71%), and had no children (54%). Of the 83 HREP trainers, 69 had previous experience of running a group (see Table 11).

<b>a) Age Group</b>		<b>Percentage (%)</b>
18-35		40
36-45		26
46 and above		34
<b>b) Education Level (last completed)</b>		<b>Percentage (%)</b>
High School/ Vocational High School		6
Vocational College		5
University		54
Master's degree / PhD		35
<b>c) Employment Status</b>		<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Student		1
Employed		71
Unemployed but looking for a job		6
Unpaid domestic laborer		0
Retired		19
Other		2
<b>d) Marital status</b>		<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Married		43
Divorced		16
Widowed		1
Unmarried		40
<b>e) With or without children</b>		<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Has children		46
Does not have children		54

#### **3.1.4 Sources of Accessing HREP**

The majority of the participants first became aware of HREP through word of mouth (32%) (see Table 12). This was especially true in the case of Muğla (71%). The rate of those who became aware of HREP through local authorities such as municipalities and city councils was 28%; this was a statistically significant resource for participants aged 45 and above (36%).

	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Through family and friends	32
Through local authorities such as municipalities, city councils etc	28
Through other non-governmental organizations	7
Through current employer	7
Through women who previously participated in HREP	5
Through direct contact from HREP group facilitator	4
Through school /teacher	3

(\* Factors with a value of 3% and above are listed. Question: How did you first hear of the HREP group you participated in?)



While there were many sources through which HREP trainers could access participants, municipalities and city councils (51%), non-governmental organizations (51%), women who were HREP participants in the past (49%) and current employers (46%) were the primary sources of access (see Table 13).

<b>Table 13. Group Facilitators' Sources of Access to Participants*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Through local authorities such as municipalities, city councils etc	51
Through other non-governmental organizations	51
Through women who previously participated in HREP	49
Through current employer	46
Through family and friends	36
Through social media announcement	29
Through WWHR- New Ways	14
No answer	3

(\* ) Factors with a value of 3% and above are listed. Question: How do you reach women to participate in HREP groups you run?

### 3.1.5. Motivating and Challenging Factors in Becoming a HREP Participant/Group Facilitator

#### a) HREP Participants

There is no specific factor that was more influential than others in encouraging women to participate in HREP, and motivating factors for participation were statistically varied (See Table 14). In addition to 10 closed-ended questions on motivating factors, the participants specified 25 other reasons for in open-ended questions. Out of 35 motivating factors, “contributing to personal development and transformation” topped the list at 38%. Other significant factors can be grouped as becoming generally informed-aware-contributing to others’ transformation as an activist. According to the demographic breakdown analysis, women who stated “I would like to know my rights” were predominantly high school graduates or lower (30%) and the majority of those who stated “to actively join women’s movement” were university graduates (28%).

<b>Table 14. Participants' Motivations to Attend HREP*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
To contribute to my personal development and transformation	38
To learn my rights / women’s rights	26
To be actively involved in the women’s movement	23
To obtain information on laws	22
To become informed / gain awareness	22
To learn strategies to fight against violence against women	19
To improve myself professionally	14
To be beneficial to others / to help family and friends	13
To improve my knowledge on gender equality	11
To meet new people	8
Because it was recommended	7
To deepen my feminist perspective	7
Because I was curious	5
For work	3
Other	3

(\* ) Factors with a value of 3% and above are listed. Question 1: What was your key motivation for participating in HREP during that period? Question 2: What were your other motivations for participating in HREP?



In focus groups, women stated that the primary reason they participated in HREP was personal development and becoming informed. Additionally, it was frequently stated that their experience with HREP exceeded their expectations.

*“To be honest, when I heard that it would be a human rights education program, I went prepared thinking that it would definitely be an informative education program and that I would learn many helpful things. But it went far beyond that. It was very good. It was not just me but all my friends felt the same.” (Ankara, HREP Participant)*

Challenges of participating in HREP are set out in Table 15. It is striking that the vast majority of participants (79%) stated they did not encounter any challenges in participating in HREP. Those who expressed difficulties, such as transportation to the training venue and mandatory attendance for 16 weeks remained at 4%. In the focus groups, participants often provided positive feedback with regards to the 16-week duration of the program, noting it was satisfying because it allowed time to listen to other women’s stories as well as to obtain and digest information. It is important to note that women who answered this question had successfully completed the 16-week training program and their impressions of it was predominantly positive; consequently, this may have resulted in them not defining some of the obstacles they encountered before or during the education as a “challenge.”

*“You become like sisters when you’ve been together for 16 weeks. What is shared there, stays there. It was a very good and knowledgeable group.” (Izmir, HREP Participant)*

<b>Table 15. Challenges Faced by Participants in Attending HREP*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
There were no challenges	79
The training venue was far / transportation was difficult	4
I was employed full-time/part-time	4
The training lasts 16 weeks and attendance is mandatory	4
It was difficult to spare the time	3

*(\*) Factors with a value of 3% and above are listed. Question 1: What was the basic difficulty in participating in HREP at that time? Question 2: What were any other difficulties in participating in HREP at that time?*

HREP trainers were asked a closed-ended question on what might make it difficult for women to participate in HREP. In their view, there were two major obstacles to women’s participation in HREP (particularly at the initial stage): the fact that the program is 16 weeks long and attendance is mandatory (77%), and the presence of someone in need of care at home (72%) (see Table 16). Another challenge frequently expressed particularly by some trainers interviewed in focus groups was the length of the weekly sessions, where a preference of 2-to-3-hour sessions was noted as opposed to 4-hour sessions. Primarily two reasons were given: 4 hours were said to be too long due to women’s domestic responsibilities, and that it became difficult for women to concentrate after 2 hours.

*“I always say this in the assessment meetings. In my opinion, regardless of group profile—I have done this with highly educated people and with people who have had less education—they can’t spare 4 hours. Not because they lose concentration, but there’s a child care problem, some have children who attend school. Everyone has responsibilities. 2-to-2.5 hours, 3 hours at maximum (would be more convenient).” (Ankara, Group Facilitator)*



<b>Table 16. Conditions that Made it Challenging for Participants to Attend HREP According to HREP Group Facilitators*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
16 week duration of the program and mandatory attendance	77
Presence of a child / elderly person / person with a disability at home	72
Being employed full-time or part-time	42
Not being aware of HREP	36
Lack of permission from their husbands / male relatives at home / families	33
Pressure from family and friends or neighbors	25
Inability to source funds for transportation to the training venue	23
Training venue being remote / transportation being difficult	4
Presence of more than one obstacle	3

(\*) Factors with a value of 3% and above are listed. Question: In your opinion, what are the conditions that make it difficult for women to participate in HREP?

However, although some participants and HREP trainers said there were challenges regarding duration and attendance at the beginning of HREP groups, they frequently highlighted that after the initial stage HREP drew the participants in and provided them with the motivation to continue. For instance, some HREP trainers noted that according to the positive feedback from their participants, HREP offered women a breathing space, both with its atmosphere and the methods used, and that the participants wished it lasted longer than 16 weeks. It was observed that women who completed the 16 week program were still highly motivated, and experiencing somewhat of a lurch, spoke of their training days with nostalgia. A question posed by a participant at the end of one of the focus groups, “What does WWHR expect of us?” can essentially be read as being open to new programs and activism from WWHR.

*“Women come here tired. (The opportunity) to rest and see people like themselves feels good. Tea time is very nice. Other than that, they find the duration (16 weeks) long. We then notice that it’s not long. I think it should be 20 (weeks). (It would be good) to split the Politics and Feminism (modules).” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

*“I am the one who brought twenty women together last year. When they said 16 weeks everyone stepped on the brakes a little, but they all continued to come. I wish it went on for another 16 weeks.” (Ankara, HREP Participant)*

*“I will ask you something; we attended this training, are they happy with us, I would like to know this too. We all came here today. I am saying this because it’s on the record. What are their expectations from us, I would like to ask that too.” (Ankara, HREP Participant)*

Ultimately, HREP’s duration and mandatory attendance can create an obstacle for HREP Trainers at the group forming stage. However, it appears that arranging group times to suit the participants, first impressions of the HREP trainers on the first day, sharing dialogue and tea during the sessions, and information provided during the program that participants did not know and were surprised to learn all play an important role in achieving continued attendance. The fact that there are potential participants should advanced or follow-up modules HREP modules be offered—as well as those waiting for a Trainer Training—can also be interpreted as an indicator of HREP’s impact.

*“I eagerly await the chance to become a trainer. HREP is very important; even though I think that I am in it professionally, it was still mind opening and very good group work.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*



## b) HREP Group Facilitators

There were mainly four reasons that motivated HREP group facilitators to become trainers: contribute to building rights-awareness in participants (88%), support participants to become socially active (76%), encourage them to take part in non-governmental organizations and politics (65%), and provide them with tools to resolve the problems in their locality (63%) (see Table 17).

The most fundamental desire observed in almost all HREP Trainers was the wish to convey to other women the meaningful transformation, growth, and enlightenment they themselves experienced, and share the conviction, “you can do it too.” In focus groups, important motivating factors were noted as HREP’s contributions to their self-confidence and personal development, HREP’s objectives to empower women and encourage solidarity, being a very well-structured program, and WWHR’s encouragement to become a group facilitator.

*“It’s a training that has impacted my life. It made such an impression on me, it caused me to change. All this should not end with me; if I can change, so can other women. I became a trainer to be able to reach other women.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

*“I attended HREP in 2015. In 2017, went to the Trainer Training. I started my first group last summer. It was a good group. The results were good. We reached many women. I will open a second group. I am excited about that, it is good, I am glad to have been involved, I have become even more self-confident. I feel better and more valuable. Most of all, I learned to say no with HREP, I was unable to say no to anyone.” (Adiyaman, Group Facilitator)*

*“The best part of HREP is that the women who attend the training gain the desire for joint action. I have carried out six HREP groups so far. All six groups have created WhatsApp groups. They meet once a month and invite me too. They even wish to unite those who have taken HREP in Izmir and set up something like a HREP Platform. This is pleasing. The other day, the husband of a participant who is still continuing HREP hit her and sprained her wrist. She (the participant) went to (the gendarmerie), she recalled what she learnt in HREP. She took shelter at the gendarmerie. It seems her husband is a police officer. She asked them to take his weapon off him. She called me in the meantime. She told me she was at the police station in Urla and that she felt strong due to HREP.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

<b>Table 17. Motivations for Becoming a Group Facilitator*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
To contribute to participants’ gaining rights-awareness	88
To support participants in becoming active in society / in their community	76
To encourage participants to become involved in NGOs or politics	65
To provide various tools for participants toward resolving their local problems	63
To become actively involved in the women’s movement	53
To deepen my feminist perspective	45
To contribute to my personal development and transformation	43
To improve my knowledge of gender equality	41
To improve my knowledge related to legal legislation	31
To develop skills as a trainer	27
To improve myself professionally	25
To meet new people	14

(\* ) Factors with a value of 3% and above are listed. Question 1: What is the basic motivation for your being a HREP trainer at the present moment? Question 2: What are other motivations for your being a HREP trainer at the present moment?

Meanwhile, there were four predominant factors that posed challenges to being a trainer: Workload at the workplace (48%), time constraints (46%), difficulties in finding participants (%45), and difficulties in exercising the learned rights (%36) (See Table 18).

<b>Table 18. Challenges to Becoming a HREP Group Facilitator*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Workload at the workplace	48
Time constraints	46
Difficulties in finding participants	45
Difficulties in putting learnt rights into effect	36
Increased feelings of responsibility	31
Lack of financial earnings	23
Negative attitudes and obstacles created by senior staff such as managers, directors, etc.	23
Difficulties in finding venues to hold the training	22
Lack of understanding of the importance of the training at my workplace	20
Emotional changes due to becoming aware of the inequalities in my own life	14
Becoming even more aware of inequalities around me due to feminist awareness	13

(\* Factors with a value of 3% and above are listed. Question 1: What is the main difficulty of being a HREP trainer for you? Question 2: What are the other difficulties of being a HREP trainer for you?

The major difficulties expressed in focus groups were obstacles in reaching women and creating groups, and logistical factors. The fact that the number of program partners is low was also said to be an important challenge. These factors were all considered outcomes of the current undemocratic political climate in Turkey, accompanied by a deep sense of helplessness. In fact, although topics discussed were on legal rights and equality, the feeling that knowledge of these topics would be of no use due to the breaches of law in Turkey created pessimism among both participants and group facilitators alike.

*“The main difficulty is finding a venue to come together with women for first introductions. If I made house calls, the women would say who is this, they don’t know me. I could reach them via an organization, but at the moment there are none. We have serious difficulties both in terms of venue and means.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

*“Finding a venue takes effort since at the moment we can’t say ‘come to my office.’ Also, getting to and from the venue; there is an expense. Plus you spend effort to ensure women’s continued attendance. You provide snacks.” (Ankara, Group Facilitator)*

*“We don’t live in a democratic environment. We feel helpless. They ask, what are you talking about? They say, yes there are [laws/rights] but what good are they? And as a woman who believes in the law, I can’t explain it. But we will move onto a democratic order. Just know that they exist. I have a lot of difficulty in this sense. Facing it is very disheartening sometimes.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

*“When the Constitution is up for debate in your country, you begin not to believe in the topics you cover, such as constitutional rights or equal opportunity.” (Istanbul, Group Facilitator)*



### 3.1.6. Assessment of Satisfaction with HREP

#### 3.1.6.1. Overall Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with HREP was very high for both the participants and the trainers, and on par with one another. Total satisfaction was 98% for the participants and 95% for the trainers; in other words, all who were involved in HREP report being satisfied with the program (see Table 19).

Table 19. HREP Overall Satisfaction	Participants Percentage (%)	Trainers Percentage (%)
1- I am very dissatisfied	0	0
2- I am somewhat dissatisfied	0	0
3- I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2	5
4- I am somewhat satisfied	28	41
5- I am very satisfied	70	54
Total	100	100
<b>Total satisfaction % (4+5)</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>95</b>

*Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with the Human Rights Education Program for Women?*

What is behind these statements is expectations having been more than met. HREP, which is a program which leaves both participants and trainers satisfied, means more than education for women. As a result of the dynamic interaction of many factors such as meeting the need for personal growth, being a part of a sincere social environment, to hear and be heard, to acquire and share knowledge, both participants and trainers feel a strong sense of satisfaction.

*“Essentially, we all (grow up) with the same education system, the same gender discrimination. It’s infused in our cells; we don’t recognize it and normalize it. It is reflected in our daily language. We think we are above others, we think we know it well, but then you realize it’s in the language you use. That is what I corrected.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

*“The best part is, it’s not like a lesson-based teacher-student relationship, but based on personal experiences and real feelings, it’s very nice.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

*“The difference I see between HREP and other means-methods within the women’s movement is that it touches all aspects of women’s lives.” (Istanbul, Group Facilitator)*

#### 3.1.6.2. Factors Leading to Satisfaction

##### a) HREP Participants

HREP succeeded in achieving high rates of satisfaction in all the examined factors (all factors were rated above 80%, see Table 20). The factor that generated the most satisfaction for the participants was the HREP Group Facilitators, at 97%.

Table 20. Satisfaction Factors for HREP Participants*	Total Satisfaction Percentage (%)
HREP group facilitators	97
HREP content	96
HREP modules	95
Attitude and interest of WWHR representative	93
HREP printed material ( <i>Purple Bulletin</i> , <i>We Have Rights</i> booklet series, brochures, etc.)	92
16-week total duration of HREP	90



Duration of individual HREP sessions	89
HREP participants	87
Videos and visual material shown within the scope of HREP ( <i>Purple Series</i> and <i>Women Exist</i> documentaries, etc.)	86

(\*) Total Satisfaction value is the sum of the values for 4-I am quite satisfied, and 5-I am very satisfied. Average was 92%. Question: Would you share how satisfied you are with each issue I will read you about HREP?

In fact, the group facilitators were the first thing the participants mentioned in the focus groups when asked about HREP. While HREP trainers were described with feelings of “trust,” “admiration,” and “closeness,” their breadth of knowledge, training methods, constructive style, and non-hierarchical approach to women were very much appreciated. The fact that group facilitators were easily accessible and available even after the group ended was another factor that generated satisfaction.

*“(The group facilitator) contributed to us so much. We were all aware of being women, of being oppressed, of our experiences, of our rights, but we became so much more aware with this program. I think this was because of the group facilitator.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

*“(The group facilitator) was very knowledgeable. She was tiny but we couldn’t take our eyes off her.” (Ankara, HREP Participant)*

*“We are still in touch with our trainer, we consult her when needed, she guides us and makes suggestions.” (Istanbul, HREP Participant)*

Other factors that generated high satisfaction in the participants were HREP’s comprehensive content that includes interactive case studies, and the HREP modules that take an in-depth, multi-dimensional look at equality and rights. HREP’s content and modules provided participants a notable vantage point to see behind the surface, defined equality in a non-conventional way, offered women a different way of looking at being a woman, and enabled them to feel stronger thanks to their increased knowledge.

*“Economic rights, sexual rights, political rights, rights related to founding an association... Years ago, an agreement was made between Turkey and European Human Rights. Afterwards, an entity came to formed. Turkey signed it. Then, a training program was created. We are (supposedly) equal, but we learned that we (actually) are equal in everything during this program.” (Ankara, HREP Participant)*

*“I had no idea about marriage until I was 40 years old. No lust, no love... I was all about football, it was my everything. I didn’t even know about the hymen. I didn’t know anything. I wish I had known before.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

#### **b) Group Facilitators**

As shown in Table 21, HREP group facilitators also reported satisfaction with the majority of factors pertaining to HREP.

The factors that generated most satisfaction for the HREP trainers were as follows: HREP content (96%), Trainer Training content (95%), HREP modules (95%), HREP printed material (94%), and the HREP consultants who provided the Trainer Training (93%). It was also highlighted in the focus groups that the training materials were very well designed, making it easy to provide the training. In addition to the motivating support by WWHR, the supervision support provided to trainers was another basic factor that generated satisfaction. Moreover, the HREP Trainer Training is structured in a way that creates



fresh awareness. Regardless of educational background, the content and methods of the Trainer Training supports personal development, raises awareness, and builds competence.

*“This is a well put together training program. It has a clear beginning and an end. Everything you need to do is clear, step-by-step. So even people who have never worked with women can attend this wonderful training and go on to do the work. Go into the room, do this for the meet and greet, say that. It’s very clear, so that we can all do it the same way.” (Ankara, Group Facilitator)*

*“For me, the Trainer Training was a terrific experience. Sticking to the manual, you probably couldn’t connect with (students) this much if you were a teacher. At the Trainer Training, the trainers explained to us when to do what, what to do if we got stuck, how to facilitate the group. It was a wonderful experience. I will always remember it fondly.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

*“We are women, we have university diplomas. But very few of us view ourselves based on gender. We were a woman or a human, that’s how we thought. But we found fresh awareness there.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

<b>Table 21. Satisfaction Factors for HREP Group Facilitators*</b>	<b>Total Satisfaction Percentage (%)</b>
HREP content	96
HREP Trainer Training content	95
HREP modules	95
HREP printed materials	94
HREP consultants conducting the HREP Trainer Training	93
Attitude and interest of WWHR representatives	90
HREP participants	87
Assessment meeting for HREP trainers	86
Supervision visit to HREP trainers	80
Videos and visual materials shown during HREP	59
Duration of HREP sessions	55
Total 16-week duration of HREP	48

(\*) Total Satisfaction value is the sum of the values for 4-I am quite satisfied, and 5-I am very satisfied. Average was 82%. Question: Would you share how satisfied with each issue related to HREP I will read to you?

Given that average rate of satisfaction for all factors was rather high at 82%, a few areas where satisfaction was relatively low is noticeable. These pertain to the difficulties experienced in relation to HREP implementation conditions: its 16-week duration and mandatory attendance (48%), duration of sessions (55%), and audiovisual materials (59%). The one that comes to the fore is the personal dissatisfaction of every two out of four trainers regarding the 16-week duration. The underlying reason for this is that trainers find 16 weeks long and binding, not only for the participants but for themselves as well. Four months can be challenging for the trainer due to reasons such as personal life and work.

*“Actually, people are hungry (for it), they would love to (participate). But because it lasts 16 weeks, I can’t commit, I can’t make that promise. My life is not an orderly one. Like today, after I leave here I’m going to take my mother to the hospital.” (Ankara, Group Facilitator)*

A common recommendation from both the participants and the HREP trainers in relation to audiovisual materials was to use films with current content. Additionally, one participant noted that it could be boring to watch a film, which is a passive activity, when the energy of the group was high.



*“There is a celebrity in the videos I don’t like, it creates a negative perception. Also it was made 20 years ago. New groups see themselves when they watch them. 20 years have passed and we still have the same problems, that is the effect it has.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

*“They look like videos from 15-20 years ago. (It would be better) if more current videos are recorded, it is obvious that the videos are old.” (Istanbul, HREP Participant)*

### 3.1.7. HREP Impact on Participants and Group Facilitators

#### 3.1.7.1. Overall Impact Assessment

As a program, HREP succeeded in having a very large positive impact on the lives of almost all participants and group facilitators in 2012-2018. All involved—98% of the participants and 96% of the trainers—reported the program had a positive impact (see Table 22).

Table 22. HREP Overall Impact	A) Participants Percentage (%)	B) Trainers Percentage (%)
1- It had a very negative impact	0	0
2- It had a partially negative impact	0	2
3- It had no impact	2	1
4- It had a slightly positive impact	24	13
5- It had a very positive impact	74	83
Total	100	100
<b>Total Positive Impact % (4+5)</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>96</b>

*Question: Overall, how would you evaluate HREP’s impact on your life?*

According to qualitative findings, this impact was a “transformative” one for the participants. While some described it as “the difference between night and day,” others called it “creating a new me.” In-depth examination reveals that this transformation does not only result from gaining awareness. A change perspective, in the language and communication methods used, in the way people relate to others all result in a holistic transformation.

*“I learned that I needed to be selfish. I learned that being too giving took too much away from me. I relearned the Civil Code. I learned the difference between those who married before 2002 and those married after. Many things, both abstract and concrete, emotional and conscientious... I can say that it created a new me.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

*“It was one of the turning points in my life.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

Described in terms of a milestone, HREP appears to be a program that encourages women to act in solidarity, while creating enthusiasm to change their surroundings and promising a snowball effect.

*“After the program (I learned) to look at things not emotionally but to look at people as humans, and that women shouldn’t be enemies to other women. If a woman is in a position (of power), we should support them! At the upcoming party council elections, I will vote for women. They’ve set off on a journey, so I will support them. Sometimes (even) if it is someone I don’t like at all, I will support them. I would like to give her a chance, plant a beautiful seed of gold in her heart. I want her to view those around her in the same way.” (Ankara, HREP Participant)*



*“For people like us who work in the field, programs like HREP actually function as a guide that truly strengthens our hand, makes our lives easier, finds its way onto the agenda of those who work professionally and in the private lives of many; especially in terms of the violence or conflicts women may experience in their private lives.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

### 3.1.7.2. Detailed Impact Assessment

To reach a comprehensive understanding of the reasons that fed into the high rate of overall impact, both participants and trainers were asked questions as to whether HREP had contributed to them personally, on the basis various components (see Tables 23 and 24).

#### a) HREP Participants

HREP contributed to the participants in various areas: learning legal rights (86%), gender-sensitive parenting (86%), personal development and transformation (85%), combating violence against women (84%), gaining a gender perspective (83%), supporting women in their environment in claiming their rights (83%), and employing a pro-equality outlook in my workplace (79%).

<b>Table 23. Components of HREP’s Contributions to Participants*</b>	<b>Total Contribution Percentage (%)</b>
Learning my legal rights	86
Gender-sensitive parenting (for those with children)	86
Aiding my personal development and transformation	85
Combating violence against women	84
Improving communication with my children (for those with children)	84
Supporting women in my environment in claiming their rights	83
Gaining a gender equality perspective	83
Employing a pro-equality outlook in my workplace (for those employed)	79
Applying gender equality in my family	78
Reducing or ending the discrimination and violence in my life	76
Becoming a resource person in my social circle whose ideas are sought	73
Improving my communication with my husband/partner	71
Becoming a member or volunteer at women’s organizations	67
Restarting / continuing my education	62
Returning to / starting paid employment (total sample)	59
Becoming a member of a political party	46
Being a candidate in local or national elections	45

*(\*) Total contribution value is the sum of the values for options 10+9+8 on a 10-point scale. Average value was 73%. Question: Did HREP contribute to you in any way in terms of the issues that I will now read to you?*

Qualitative findings also highlight that in terms of the inequalities and abuse suffered in the private and public spheres, HREP participants made gains in developing a gender equality perspective, becoming informed about their rights, and personal empowerment. Such gains form the basis for personal transformation. In the focus groups, it was observed that women who completed HREP defined themselves as *more confident, better informed, braver, stronger, more assertive, more results-oriented, calmer, more rational, better able to defend their rights, freer, and as activists and resource persons.*

*“Learning about things so that we can defend and protect ourselves gives (us) courage. Although naturally we feel pessimistic when we look at the state of the country, knowledgeable women will begin to guide the country as their numbers increase. Women (who defended their rights) in Iran are able to drive today.” (Izmir, HREP Participant)*



HREP also made meaningful contributions to improving communication with children (84%) and gender-sensitive parenting (86%). In the focus groups, it was observed that women noticed their mistakes in these areas and spent effort to correct them. However, they also noted that for years they had been following the traditional methods they had been taught, and that their husbands had final say at home, thus having an impact in children was a process that required time and harmonious effort.

*“These (traditional) habits are in our subconscious. Although we might say we know and that we are defending our rights, I realized that I was giving the same education to my children. I look at my daughter now, she is not like other girls her age; she is quiet, calm. Her father’s style of upbringing, the arguments and fights she witnessed made her withdrawn. Maybe she suppressed many of her talents. My son is also introverted and shy. I am unable to forgive myself or my husband for our mistakes and what we made our children go through.” (Izmir, HREP Participant)*

*“I think I changed due to the program. I think the way I act with my children has changed. When something changes with me, my children also change. Their relationships with others then improve. So will the children they will raise... That’s what I mean by circle! It’s not something that will change overnight, but when (HREP) touches a person’s life, that person grows, like the (story with) the starfish.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

*“Gender-sensitive parenting is important in every way. Ultimately, they become individuals and join society, that’s why it’s very important.” (Istanbul, HREP Participant)*

Areas where HREP has a relatively more limited impact are being a candidate in local and national elections (45%) and joining a political party (46%). It was also witnessed in focus groups that women were noncommittal particularly in terms of local organizing and political involvement. Negative reactions to organized movements, and unjust and discouraging cases that appear in the media generates feelings of deep despair regarding the political future of the country. Moreover, thoughts that the political arena is male dominated and tyrannical constitutes an obstacle to local organizing and political involvement. Instead, women prefer to be advocates in their own lives. They also were seen to embrace the idea of supporting women candidates for local administrative and municipal council member positions in the elections.

*“For instance, even when a woman becomes the leader of a political party, her actions fail to reflect a woman’s perspective; in that position, she assumes something masculine” (Istanbul, HREP Participant)*

*“I am presently a bit pessimistic about local organizing and changing Turkey. We are going through a period where the present atmosphere renders organizations like ours unable to work, causing many women’s organizations to lose ground, and weakening the hand of many rights advocates in the face of numerous rights violations.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

*“I have a very naïve spirit. Would I be crushed there (politics); could I do it? There needs to be a women’s perspective and politeness in politics, this has to be accepted. We have heard many insults, a parliament member said ‘like a broad;’ that perspective is missing in politics.” (Izmir, HREP Participant)*

Although HREP’s contributions to securing paid employment (59%) and starting education (62%) was relatively limited compared to other aspects, HREP is nonetheless a program that transformed the lives of six out of ten women in this area.



**b) Group Facilitators**

HREP was found to have had a very strong impact on group facilitators in six areas: Supporting women in my environment in claiming their rights (80%), learning my legal rights (76%), becoming a resource person in my social circle whose ideas are sought (75%), being more active in my personal development and transformation (70%), employing a pro-equality approach at my workplace (69%) and gaining a gender equality perspective (69%).

<b>Table 24. Components of HREP’s Contributions to Group Facilitators*</b>	<b>Total Contribution Percentage (%)</b>
Supporting women in my environment in claiming their rights	80
Learning my legal rights	76
Becoming a resource person in my social circle whose ideas are sought	75
Being more active in my personal development and transformation	70
Gaining a gender equality perspective	69
Employing a pro-equality approach at my workplace (for those employed)	69
Improving my communication with my children (for those with children)	63
Applying gender equality in my family	60
Reducing or ending the discrimination and violence in my life	57
Becoming a member or volunteering at women’s organizations	45
Improving my communication with my husband /partner	45
Restarting / continuing my education	31
Returning to / starting paid work (total sample)	25
Being a candidate in local or national elections	17
Becoming a member of a political party	17

(\* ) Total contribution value is the sum of the values for options 10+9+8 on a 10-point scale. Average value was 53%. Question: Did HREP contribute to you in any way in terms of the issues that I will now read to you?

In parallel to their wish to become trainers, in the focus groups HREP trainers stated that the experience of being able to touch many women’s lives was another gain facilitated by HREP. The most important factor that enabled them to experience this was their feelings of personal empowerment and transformation. HREP trainers who identified feminism with being human also reported identifying themselves as feminists after HREP, and considered this a gain. In addition, HREP Trainers highlighted being liberated, being themselves and being unique as a result of HREP, adding that they not only gained a gender equality perspective but a gender equality perspective devoid of prejudice as well.

*“I had not been working for three years. After three years, I took the plunge and started by own business from scratch. In a sense, this was due to HREP; it taught us how strong women are, that we can do many things on our own, it paved the way. It also touched our lives in all areas, in every aspect. There is too many things to count.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

*“We started using a female oriented language. When you internalize the concept of gender, you accept women as individuals and take women as your basis instead of saying, you are a woman, you should be like this, why did you do that. When you encounter a woman who has been subjected to violence, you can have prejudices based on your own past. Such as, if I had done this, would it have turned out like that. It was good in a professional sense also to be rid of these.” (Ankara, Group Facilitator)*



*“I learned to speak with I-language. I overcame the bossiness that comes from being a teacher. I lost the habit of bringing consciousness from without, which came from socialist teachings. My communication with people is easier. I have transformed myself. I have discovered the feminism within.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

Meanwhile, there were four factors where HREP’s contributions to the HREP trainers were limited: being a candidate in local or national elections (17%), becoming a member of a political party (17%), restarting/continuing education (31%), returning to/continuing paid work (25%). The reason these rates are low may be because the trainers are already engaged in politics or local organizing, are gainfully employed or have received an education.

**3.1.7.3. Assessment and Impact of HREP Modules**

**a) HREP Participants**

In general, participants stated that all modules of HREP were quite beneficial. While all modules were found to be beneficial by over 70%, the average benefit reaches 79% (See Table 25).

<b>Table 25. Assessment of Module Benefits by Participants*</b>	<b>Total Benefit Percentage (%)</b>
Meeting and Needs Assessment	80
Women’s Human Rights	83
Constitutional and Civil Rights	83
Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence	83
Strategies Against Violence	78
Economic Rights of Women-1	76
Economic Rights of Women-2	74
Communication-1	79
Communication-2	80
Gender Sensitive Parenting and Children’s Rights	83
Women and Sexuality-1	79
Women and Sexuality-2	78
Women’s Reproductive Rights	79
Women and Politics	73
Feminism and the Women’s Movement	75
Women Organizing	78

*(\*)Total contribution value is the sum of the values for options 10+9+8 on a 10-point scale. Average value was 79%.*

*Question: If you were to consider each individual module in HREP, could you share with me how beneficial the content of each module was for you?*

The contributions of the Women and Politics module, at 73%, was statistically lower compared to the average contribution of all the modules. Reasons for this relatively lower rate could be having concerns about engaging in politics and local organizing in the tense political climate in Turkey, and reservations caused by negative attitudes toward the feminist movement in society.

Modules pertaining to rights were among the first to come to mind in the focus group discussions on HREP’s modules. Of particular note included the right to inheritance, rights in marriage, and the right to travel. In fact, participants often underlined the need for all women and even all men to have this information before getting married. Knowing these rights makes women feel much more empowered, decisive and safe.



*“We didn’t know this; in marriage neither the woman nor the men can take out a loan or sell property without the knowledge of the other. I’m talking about shared property. I didn’t know that when women could claim three different kinds of alimony if they wished to get a divorce.”*  
**(Ankara, HREP Participant)**

Many women reported that thanks to the Communication modules, they were able to establish calm and effective communication in both their family and the public sphere. The boost of self-confidence that comes with HREP is one of the most significant bases for improved communication. As individuals who know themselves well and are generally aware, tools such as speaking with I-language, cleansing patriarchal expressions from their language, and generating solutions through dialogue further strengthen women’s communication skills.

*“I used to be quick tempered and irritable when I was outside. I would start an argument when I didn’t get my own way. Now, the way I communicate with people is really good. I manage to finish whatever I needed to do earlier and leave.”* **(Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)**

*“The arguments we have with my husband have changed. We’ve been married for 25 years, we always argue, and make up somehow. But we had never made up by talking or never talked about why we argued.”* **(Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)**

*“It was (effective in my communication) with my husband. In terms of understanding him, valuing him. When he says something, even if I don’t like it at that moment, perhaps not to hurt him, I say ‘OK, let’s look at it from this perspective as well, this is another way,’ and respect his ideas as well. As a result, we no longer raise our voices. When we’re happy, our child is also happy. This makes us more effective parents. I respect my child’s ideas as well.”* **(Istanbul, HREP Participant)**

The modules on Violence worked to give women perspective. Women who understand that violence is not only physical but can take other forms and dimensions, come away with strategic ideas on how they can protect themselves and feel empowered. Participants provided many examples where they had taken an active, informative, guiding role on encountering cases of violence in their environment, even if they had not personally experienced it.

*“This training is possible only thanks to WWHR, and it really gives us the courage to make decisions, even about ourselves. I seem to have experienced every kind of violence, I only noticed it after this program. Not just physical... The more we learned, the more aware we became and began to think retrospectively. We became more inquisitive.”* **(Izmir, HREP Participant)**

*“I witness many cases of violence against women in marriages around me. She doesn’t want anyone around her to know but goes through hell at home. She can’t leave because of the children. Even if she leaves, the family finds her. A friend of mine has been married for 20 years, she had black eyes for 18 of them. I told her I would file a complaint against that man and one day confronted her husband.”* **(Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)**

Although the modules on Sexuality were described as a topic people felt uncomfortable talking about, these modules contributed by the fact that HREP provided a platform for dialogue, helped women better know their bodies, understand their needs, and identify the injustices they experienced.

*“Sexuality is not a topic that is discussed often, a topic where people can express themselves easily. It is a topic where there is a great need to just talk among women. I don’t mean to*



*overlook the others, but the sexuality (module) is the most valuable; both due to its content, and because it is so vital to talk about these things.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

*“The best thing I learned is that we didn’t even know our own bodies all that well.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

**b) Group Facilitators**

HREP Trainers benefited from all the HREP modules equally (see Table 26). Average satisfaction rate for the modules was quite high at 92%, and met the trainers’ expectations to a great extent thanks to their holistic content, intricate design, and the fact they were updated as necessary.

*“The modules are actually all connected. You can’t have one (without the other). I also thought about it, but how can you leave out (the module on) politics; life is politics! Maybe we don’t benefit from all of them but all the modules are interconnected. It just depends on the needs of the group, their socio-economic status, their location. The modules are connected and cover the correct topics.” (Istanbul, Group Facilitator)*

*“(WWHR) has now sent material in relation to alimony. We will give them out to our groups. I like all modules due to their continued support.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

<b>Table 26. Assessment of Module Satisfaction by Group Facilitators*</b>	<b>Total Satisfaction Percentage (%)</b>
Meeting and Needs Assessment	93
Women’s Human Rights	92
Constitutional and Civil Rights	84
Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence	94
Strategies Against Violence	94
Economic Rights of Women-1	92
Economic Rights of Women-2	90
Communication-1	92
Communication-2	92
Gender Sensitive Parenting and Children’s Rights	94
Women and Sexuality-1	92
Women and Sexuality-2	92
Women’s Reproductive Rights	96
Women and Politics	93
Feminism and the Women’s Movement	90
Women Organizing	89

*(\*)The sum value of the items 5-Very satisfied and 4-Somewhat satisfied on a 5-point scale is provided. Average value was 92%.*

*Question: If you were to consider the content of each individual module in HREP, could you share with me how satisfied you were with the content of each module?*

Various aspects of the benefits of the modules were also voiced in the focus groups. It was said, for instance, that in the modules on violence, even women who claimed they had not been subject to violence opened up, which increased bonding and solidarity in the group. The Sexuality modules were liked for pushing against existing taboos. The Communication modules not only enable women to use I-language and feel a sense of equality in the group, but also to listen to each other.



*“Group (members) began to trust one another, bonded and (felt) solidarity in the Violence module. There were some who shared stories of violence after saying they had never experienced it in their lives. This brought with it a different type of solidarity. The Violence module is one of the modules that has the most impact.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

*“They are shocked in the Sexuality (module). My most recent group was a mixed one, with married and unmarried women. They all looked at each other. At the end of the module, they started saying it was a lot of fun. The married ones even started to joke, saying ‘I can say this and this about this topic’ by the end.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

*“Communication is a matter of understanding each other, empathy. (The modules) work to undo prejudices they might have. In particular, speaking with I language. They point it out to one another.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

Group facilitators also made a number of recommendations based on their implementation experiences that could support the content and implementation methods of the modules. These included transferring training materials onto a computer / digital environment, splitting some of the modules into two, updating video material, simplifying charts, making sections based on reading more dynamic, updating group games that are not effective, offering alternative group games to choose from, developing booklets for the modules, changing the order of the modules, using visuals in the Sexuality module, and shortening modules that are not suited to the participant profile.

*“The module on rights can be split into two. It becomes an overload for the women. When they are suddenly overloaded, it becomes difficult for them to digest the material. After one question, they feel as though they did not get a full answer in the other.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

*“I don’t have any difficulty with the content. It’s just that the Purple Series is very outdated, nobody likes it. I think it should be updated. The chart in Economic Rights is very confusing. They haven’t changed it.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

*“There are small group games in each of the group sessions. To increase this communication and ensure their participation, I sometimes use techniques outside the program. I would like it if they were included in the package program. There was always one in every session. Sometimes these need to be updated. There were several activities, we did them by distributing printed papers, I can’t recall which one but that wasn’t very clear. Clearer and multiple techniques need to be used.” (Ankara, Group Facilitator)*

*“I would move the Communication modules forward. The group needs to get to know one another. They also need to calm down, understand, and listen.” (Istanbul, Group Facilitator)*

*“The Women Organizing module was heavy. We were also unable to go through it well. One of the objectives was establishing an organization, organization management, etc. but this was meaningless in our group. Group members were already employed, they didn’t have that kind of a problem. They worked in the same place and were union members.” (Istanbul, Group Facilitator)*

### **3.1.7.4. HREP's Impact on the Fight against Violence against Women**

#### **a) HREP Participants**

According to quantitative data, words and behavior that incorporate emotional and psychological violence were types of violence that women experienced the most both at home and within the family, and outside the home prior to HREP (see Table 27). It is striking that one in every four women experienced violence outside the home.

A statistically significant decrease was found in all types of violence that women experienced both at home and outside the home after HREP. The fact that fewer women overall experienced violence after HREP can be read as another indicator that women become personally empowered following HREP. Hence, the fact that they display a self-confident and clear attitude as individuals competent with regards to legal rights and opportunities may be considered a factor that discourages violence. Improved communication skills may be interpreted as another factor that prevents the emergence of violence. Experiences of violence shared and successful strategies discussed during the group sessions are other valuable factors that allow women to feel they are not alone, and see that there are things that can be done against violence.

*"Violence against the artist Sila! The fact that a strong, down to earth person who society considers important advocated for her rights against violence by referring to (Law No.) 6284 and empowering women, also opens an important door for women who consider themselves saved."*  
**(Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)**

*"Instead of staying home at crying, you can go to the closest police station, call social services, claim your rights."* **(Istanbul, HREP Participant)**

*"Anything without a woman's consent, whether it be within or outside of marriage, is rape. Most women don't know this. There is a lot of abuse experienced in the context of marriage. Also, women are not obligated to have children just because their husband or mother-in-law or someone wants them to. I didn't know that. Additionally, a woman can never be married without her consent."* **(Ankara, HREP Participant)**

*"I know that I am entitled to alimony, but we didn't know that it could be claimed from the husband's relatives if the husband fails to pay it. I learned that in HREP. I don't receive alimony at the moment but after HREP it has become easier to share information at least with my children or women around me if they need it, or my neighbors and others I know. I made great strides. I wish I had attended it when I was younger."* **(Izmir, HREP Participant)**

*"After HREP, we learned not to exaggerate the problems in our lives. I have a story, you have a story, and we are strong enough to deal with them."* **(Izmir, HREP Participant)**

*"Economic violence... I learned about it in more detail."* **(Istanbul, HREP Participant)**



**Table 27. Violence Experienced by Participants Prior to and After HREP**

	In the home-family		Outside the home	
	Violence Experienced Prior to HREP (%)	Violence Experienced After HREP (%)	Violence Experienced Prior to HREP (%)	Violence Experienced After HREP (%)
A) Words or behaviors that contain emotional and psychological violence	57	23 (*)	42	21 (*)
B) Words or behaviors that contain physical violence	26	5 (*)	18	2 (*)
C) Words or behaviors that contain economic violence	37	13 (*)	18	7 (*)
D) Words or behaviors that contain sexual violence	16	4 (*)	25	8 (*)

(\*) denotes factors where a statistically significant decrease was found in comparison to the period prior to HREP. (Number of respondents: 472)

**b) Group Facilitators**

Group facilitators also most commonly experienced emotional and psychological violence in the family-home (72%). Also, exposure to sexual violence outside the home was rather high at 66% (see Table 28).

A statistically significant decrease was found in experiences of emotional and psychological violence in the home-family following HREP. Outside the home, a statistically significant decrease was found in experiences of economic and sexual violence in addition to emotional and psychological violence. In focus groups, HREP trainers reported that as women active outside the home they experienced various aspects of emotional violence, such as neighborhood pressure, and noted that they now knew how to stand against such pressures.

*“My husband said ‘feminism, that’s all we needed.’ There is a lot of criticism, criticism where people say how can a married woman go on her own.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

**Table 28. Violence Experienced by Group Facilitators Prior to and After HREP**

	In the home-family		Outside the home	
	Violence Experienced Prior to HREP (%)	Violence Experienced After HREP (%)	Violence Experienced Prior to HREP (%)	Violence Experienced After HREP (%)
A) Words or behaviors that contain emotional and psychological violence	72	49 (*)	84	64 (*)
B) Words or behaviors that contain physical violence	30	12 (*)	28	16
C) Words or behaviors that contain economic violence	35	22	33	17 (*)
D) Words or behaviors that contain sexual violence	19	12	66	37 (*)



(\*) denotes factors where a statistically significant decrease was found in comparison to the period prior to HREP. (Number of respondents: 83)

### 3.1.7.5. HREP’s Impact on Personal Empowerment on the Basis of Gender Equality

#### a) HREP Participants

While 91% of participants reported feeling more self-confident due to HREP, 88% felt stronger and better equipped, and began expressing themselves better. Ultimately, at least eight out of ten women became more empowered in various respects with HREP; they became more compassionate and understanding, more aware of and eager to fight for gender equality, better able to express themselves, body positive, aware of their sexuality, more sensitive to their own wishes and needs (see Table 29).

Table 29. HREP’s Personal Impact on Participants*	Total Impact (%)
I feel stronger and better equipped	88
I am more self-confident	91
I am more compassionate and understanding towards myself	82
I became more aware of gender-based inequalities in my life	87
I began to fight against gender-based inequalities in my life	81
I began to express myself better	88
I am more body positive	85
I am more informed about my own sexuality	84
I am more sensitive to my own wants and needs	85

(\*) The sum of the values for options 10, 9, and 8 on a 10-point scale are provided. Average value was 86%.

Question: When you think about HREP’s overall impact on you personally, can you please share with me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement I will read to you on a 10-point scale, where 1 refers to I definitely disagree and 10 to I definitely agree?

While a high level of impact was observed for all factors, an examination demographic breakdowns revealed that in particular, women with a high school education or less evaluated themselves with a higher score. This difference was statistically significant and clearly shows the empowering impact of knowledge:

- While 92% of respondents with a high school education or less stated “I feel stronger and better equipped,” the same was true for 85% of those with more than a high school education.
- 94% of those with a high school education or less, and 87% of those with more than a high school education stated “I am more self-confident.”
- 85% of those with a high school education or less, and 77% of those with more than a high school education stated “I began to fight against gender-based inequalities in my own life.”
- 91% of those with a high school education or less, and 84% of those with more than a high school education stated “I began to express myself better.”
- 89% of those with a high school education or less, and 82% of those with more than a high school education stated “I am more body positive.”
- While those who said “I am more sensitive to my own wants and needs” was 88% for those with a high school education or less, it was 82% for those with more than a high school education.

*“After moving to Izmir, I worked without insurance and was unregistered for 14 years. I always regret not attending HREP earlier. I had cancer, I beat it. Of course, it was hard to come to terms with at first. I later became withdrawn for a period, I could not accept my new body in that mental state. I then participated in HREP after a friend recommended it. I met the trainer, I really*



owe her a lot. I can say that she taught me to be myself. I had always lacked self-confidence, maybe due to the environment we grew up in or with the influence of the mentality passed onto us by society that sees women as the other—because I grew up experiencing gender discrimination to my bones.” **(Izmir, HREP Participant)**

“How can I be a good mother... What are my shortcomings, how can I be a better wife... I used to judge some things from my perspective only, saying I was right. In time, I tried to hear the other side, it (HREP) made me realize the other side might be right too. It made me look at what I might be lacking in a given area.” **(Istanbul, HREP Participant)**

“I could feel that even teams working specifically in social sciences didn’t have this information and weren’t equipped in women’s issues. So there have been things that really strengthened my hand, further enriched my foundation, enabled me to fight better on various platforms. Particularly in working with men. I opened the door to working with men as well as working with women.” **(Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)**

### b) Group Facilitators

HREP had a transformative impact on six out of ten trainers (see Table 30). Given that HREP group facilitators are people who have already been through a personal empowerment process and many work on social issues, HREP creates satisfaction in them by equipping them professionally.

“It contributed a great deal to my professional life. I’ve worked a lot in women’s shelters. One criteria I now have is that people who have taken HREP should work in shelters.” **(Ankara, Group Facilitator)**

“The fact that this training parallels my workplace makes me feel fulfilled. It makes me think about what more I can do. There was fulfillment in reaching people, but I feel a different sense of fulfillment here. HREP made me feel I can reach more people. It also transformed me. I feel more liberated.” **(Izmir, Group Facilitator)**

“Many of them were educated and knew their rights. But once the training began, I realized this was not the case. People just seem like that from the outside, but nobody really knows about their rights. And raising awareness gives one a good feeling.” **(Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)**

Table 30. HREP’s Personal Impact on Group Facilitators*	Total Impact (%)
I feel stronger and better equipped	77
I am more self-confident	71
I am more compassionate and understanding towards myself	66
I became more aware of gender-based inequalities in my life	60
I began to fight against gender-based inequalities in my life	70
I began to express myself better	65
I am more body positive	66
I am more informed about my own sexuality	69
I am more sensitive to my own wants and needs	66

(\* ) The sum of the values for options 10, 9, and 8 on a 10-point scale are provided. Average value was 86%.

Question: When you think about HREP’s overall impact on you personally, can you please share with me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement I will read to you on a 10-point scale, where 1 refers to I definitely disagree and 10 to I definitely agree?



### 3.1.7.6. Rate of Recommendation

HREP was described as a program that almost all participants and group facilitators would recommend (see Table 31).

Table 31. Recommending HREP (%)	Participants	HREP Trainers
1-I would definitely not recommend it	0	4
2-I would not quite recommend it	0	0
3-I would partially recommend it	4	10
4-I would definitely recommend it	95	87
<b>Total recommendation% (3+4)</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>97</b>

Question: (Participants) Would you recommend women around you to participate in HREP?

Question: (HREP Trainers) Would you recommend people around you to become HREP trainers?

Whether they participated in HREP because they had to or on someone’s recommendation, the fact that women were highly satisfied by the program and experienced many gains constitutes the primary basis for why participants and trainers so strongly recommend the program.

### 3.1.7.7. Expectations and Suggestions

#### a) HREP Participants

The primary suggestion was to further expand HREP and reach more women so that it can be more effective and beneficial (see Table 32). Similarly in focus groups, implementing HREP in villages, small towns, and neighborhoods was expressed as a matter of priority. In addition to making door to door calls, it was believed that television and social media channels could also be used to access women.

*“One suggestion might be public service ads. I say this without much hope, presently there is a lot of propaganda against women, but like I said, public service ads could be used. This could be done through the work of civil society organizations and rights advocates.” (Diyarbakir, HREP Participant)*

Table 32. Participant Suggestions for HREP*	Percentage (%)
It should be expanded/Publicized/Reach all women	22
Advertisements and communications work should be carried out for HREP	13
The topics should be clearer/more explanatory	8
It should reach villages/small towns	8
New methods should be developed to reach younger women	7
Trainings should be more frequent	6
The training should be longer than 16 weeks	5
Men should be included in the training	5
Visual materials and drawings should be developed for various modules	5
I have no suggestions	17

(\*) Multiple choice (closed-ended and open-ended). Factors with a value of 5% and above are listed.

Question: Could you share any suggestions you might have to make HREP more effective and beneficial?

#### b) Group Facilitators

HREP Trainers also made very enriching suggestions in the focus groups, and as can be seen in Table 33, primarily suggested developing methods so that HREP can reach young women, updating the videos shown, including HREP in the education curriculum, organizing events that bring trainers together regularly, and developing visual materials for modules.



<b>Table 33. Group Facilitator Suggestions for HREP*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
New methods should be developed to reach young women	75
Videos used should be updated	67
HREP should be included in the National Education curriculum	64
Meetings should be organized to regularly bring together trainers	61
Advertisement and communications work should be carried out for HREP	57
Visual materials and drawings should be developed for various modules	49
Printed materials should be updated	41
More frequent supervision support should be provided for trainers	34
HREP Training of Trainers should be organized more frequently	30
The training should be provided by experienced/competent trainers	18
The training should be longer than 16 weeks	7

(\*) Multiple choice (closed-ended and open-ended). Factors with a value of 5% and above are listed.

Question 1: We are interested in suggestions you might have to make HREP more effective and beneficial. Could you please share any suggestions that you consider a priority? Question 2: What are some other suggestions you might have to make HREP more effective and beneficial?

Group facilitators suggested the addition of various topics to the training program. While there was not a specific topic that stood out more than the others, the LGBTI+ movement/rights topped the list. Sex education, dating violence and awareness work for men were also suggested topics (see Table 34).

<b>Table 34. Topics Group Facilitators Suggested for Inclusion in HREP*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
LGBTI+ movement / rights	13
Sex education	7
Dating violence	7
Awareness work for men	6
Gender equality	6
No suggestion	20

(\*) Multiple choice (open-ended). Factors with a value of 5% and above are listed.

Question: If there are any topics you think should be added to HREP, would you share three topics you consider a priority?

As seen in Table 35, the top suggestion group facilitators made to increase the number of local HREP groups was advertisements and publicity. In addition to shortening the duration of the program, other suggestions included developing collaboration with potential partner NGOs and municipalities (explaining HREP in detail, improving relationships, gaining the support of superiors, signing protocols, training the women in local administrations and superiors within the scope of 'on-the-job' training, etc), and providing financial support and resources to the group facilitators (turning being a HREP trainer into a paid job, providing financial support to the trainers in terms of paying transportation costs and pocket money, etc). Another suggestion was to find venues for program implementation and ensuring the necessary physical conditions were met.

<b>Table 35. Group Facilitator Suggestions to Boost Local Organizing *</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Advertising / publicity	16
Shortening program duration	14
An increase in the number of NGOs that conduct serious / autonomous work	14



Providing financial support/resources	13
Increasing cooperation with local authorities	11
Providing better physical conditions / venues	10
Increasing the number of participants	7
Collaborating with all civil and governmental institutions /public offices	6
Collaborating with municipalities /district governors	5
Securing more support from superiors at the workplace / decreasing the workload to enable program implementation	5
No suggestions	8

(\*) Multiple choice. Factors with a value of 5% and above are listed.

Question: What do you need the most to organize more local HREP groups? Please share your three priority needs.

### 3.1.8. Opinions of Male Family Members of HREP Participants

This section sets out the qualitative findings obtained from in-depth interviews conducted with the husbands and adult sons of HREP participant women.

In general, HREP was found to contribute to raising awareness on gender equality and women’s rights in male family members. These respondents clearly stated that female family members who participated in HREP were empowered in many aspects, adding that they were especially pleased with improved communication in the family as one impact of the program.

While there were exceptions, it was observed that male family members generally viewed feminism in a negative and prejudiced light, and that a small number began to see feminism as “defending women’s human rights” due to HREP.

However, it can be said that there is still a long way to go in terms of internalizing issues related to equality and violence against women. It was observed that while men supported equality in words, more patriarchal reflexes came into play in matters of childcare or the division of domestic responsibilities. Similarly, it should be noted that even though these men reported being against violence against women, they thought violence was justified under certain circumstances.

#### 3.1.8.1. Views on Gender Equality: Husbands and Male Family Members of HREP Participants

Male family members of participant women associated the concept of Gender Equality (GE) directly with the equality of women and men. The view that being human is a common denominator for women and men was the most prominent definition of gender equality.

*“(Gender equality) means there is no difference between men (and women), don’t discriminate people in society based on sex.” (Izmir, Husband)*

*“Gender equality (means) addressing women and men as humans. Seeing them as individuals. For this to come before their sex. To not categorize jobs or social status in society. In general, these are what I associate with it. But, of course, this is still not the case.” (Istanbul, Husband)*

It was observed that young male family members in particular (brothers or sons) and some of the husbands and partners with higher education had a more egalitarian view on women’s rights.

*“Some say women are flowers, men are [as dense as] wood. I disagree. I see no difference between them because whatever men can do, so can women: this is how they are equal. There*



*are no characteristics specific to women because everyone can do the same work, everyone can do the difficult work. I think it's more about how you've educated yourself." (Ankara, Son)*

*"I think of differentiating between women and men when I hear the term gender equality. But if you ask me, it's wrong to even talk about this! In the developing world, women have also begun to work, to overcome various issues. They earn money, contribute financially and have financial power. So I don't think it's right to discriminate." (Ankara, Partner)*

*"Humans essentially consist of women and men. If everything is for humanity, then there should be no discrimination here either. I mean, whatever men can do in terms of their wishes and desires, women should similarly be able to do the same. I think there should be no discrimination. We should see women and men as humans." (Istanbul, Husband)*

It was frequently emphasized that women and men are or should be equal in social and legal terms as well. While there were some who noted there were positive discrimination laws geared to women, respondents generally highlighted the opinion that women's rights were being violated, with a few exceptions. In addition to patriarchal traditions and abuse based on religion that sees women as second class citizens, respondents referred to cases of violence against women and murder, and examples of unlawfulness where male perpetrators of these crimes received light sentences, as issues that made them think about the existence of gender inequality in practice.

*"(Women-men) are officially equal but not so in practice. All you need to do is to watch the news just once. Women suffer even in the simplest cases. Or we hear of, read about, listen to court judgments. Women are exploited, raped, attacked but men wear suits and ties and get away with two-year sentences instead of five. This is gender inequality." (Istanbul, Husband)*

*"Not equal before the law, unfortunately. I can say men are one step ahead. And we've been hearing of cases more and more recently; cases such as violence against women, rape..." (Ankara, Partner)*

*"What can a woman say... Women are seen as poor slaves. I mean, if you look at Islam, they are created to be servants for men. From a man's ribs. How can this be!" (Diyarbakir, Husband)*

Despite the awareness that comes through in these comments, in-depth analyses revealed that the male respondents had not yet fully internalized the concept of gender equality. In fact, references to biological and psychological differences, and attitudes related to division of labor at home present an unequal and discriminatory outlook.

*"In terms of (both) biology and character, women occupy a status that greatly differs from men. For instance, an inspector can be either a woman or a man; rights should be equal here. But in the case of moving furniture, for instance, we can't say women and men are equal because biological factors would prevent this. So there is equality sometimes but sometimes, there shouldn't be." (Ankara, Brother)*

While the difficulties women experienced in joining the workforce were said to be a reflection of gender inequality, some of the examples given and explanations made in describing this problem included discriminatory expressions that reproduce inequality.



*"I'm a civil servant. I didn't allow my wife to work because of how my male friends see women. Women are seen only as sexual objects. I'm sorry to say (they look at women thinking) how can I seduce her, I can seduce her if I want." (Izmir, Husband)*

*"If a woman wants to work she'll work, if she doesn't she won't. (If she works) she'll widen her social circle, speak to people. I also looked at it with humor; if a woman works at a job where she can talk as much as possible, then she'll be quiet when she comes home and you can have some peace of mind." (Izmir, Husband)*

In support of these discriminatory views, some male family members of the HREP participants even saw women as another source of inequality. For example, it was said that even educated women themselves choose to become housewives once they are married. Similarly, primarily mothers were held responsible for the discriminatory attitudes of sons as a result of being glorified by their mothers. Attitudes of defining inequality not as a societal issue but a women's "problem" and holding women responsible for it suggests that for some male family members, the concept of gender equality has yet to be fully internalized.

*"There are maternal types in society. This is actually a problem for women. It's women's own problem. For example, she goes to school, is educated, then she withdraws herself. She says, 'I will be the woman of my house.' I think this is one of the biggest problems." (Istanbul, Husband)*

*"(Feminism) is not something that can solve humanity's problems, it's not an ideology or a perspective that can solve women's problems. It's a rightful scream, a movement that should be supported. While men are blamed for creating this civilization, a lot of the blame must also go to women, they also have a role. They accepted it, found this role suitable for themselves." (Diyarbakir, Husband)*

*"They see themselves as the victims and dedicate (themselves). That is to say, they dedicate themselves to their home, their job, their child. This is more or less the profile of women in our country. Women's victim mentality takes away their liberty to live as women. This begins in childhood for men. Whenever boys do something, mothers say 'Great, son' and whenever girls do something, mothers say—excuse me for saying this—'Are you going to become a you know what.' This becomes internalized. Men take this and project this liberty all throughout their lives. Because this adds onto the subconscious, men think of themselves as being free." (Istanbul, Husband)*

During the in-depth interviews, some male family members viewed the financial contribution of women's employment to the family economy as something positive, adding that this gave women self-confidence and a social life. The majority, however, emphasized that family should be a priority for both women and men as opposed to a career.

*"It's all about the family. I see heaven in family." (Ankara, Husband)*

*"Family should be the priority for men also, I think family should come before career." (Izmir, Husband)*

*"This question should be directed to women. (For) most women, family comes first." (Diyarbakir, Husband)*

In fact, while it was argued that household duties or overall childcare after infancy (after around three years) should definitely be shared, some men tended to refer to the domestic duties they undertook in



terms of “support” and sometimes “a favor.” From this point of view, it can be said that while these male family members were egalitarian in discourse, this does not fully reflect in their actions.

*“Men have an obligation to do everything, women have an obligation to tell. She tells me, I don’t do it. Then she nags. I still don’t do it. She nags again. We go on like this. Sometimes I clean the house as a gesture. I vacuum, wash the dishes... We are a patriarchal society, it comes from the family, women do this and that. I think it’s something that comes from the family. Nobody says anything to anyone, but I say, for instance, this is my duty, I work, do you expect me to come and do this as well?” (Izmir, Husband)*

*“Women should care for [children] during the day. Men will handle the children when they come home in the evening, wrestle and joke with them; I mean, men should also spare a little time in the evening.” (Istanbul, Husband)*

Meanwhile, all respondents without exception said they were against violence against women, although they had different justifications for it.

*“As men are stronger than women, I’m against (violence against women).” (Istanbul, Husband)*

*“I think this is presently Turkey’s biggest problem! I mean, a lack of awareness and inadequate sentencing... There can be no justified reason for violence; against neither women nor men.” (Ankara, Partner)*

*“Violence is prevalent, it happens every day. It has increased over the last few years. It’s due to policies implemented by the government... It’s due to religion.” (Diyarbakir, Husband)*

*“There can be no justified reason for it. Here is why: If we find excuses particularly for violence against women or say ‘it was justified’ because ‘she wore this, did that, said that,’ then you have an environment where the strong use violence against the weak.” (Istanbul, Husband)*

The subjectivity of the conditions where violence against women was deemed justified by some male family members indicates that the basis for their stance “against” was not very strong: It was argued that theoretically, violence could be justified if the woman was disrespectful to the man, cheated on the man, or used violence against the man (for instance, talked too much).

*“There is no such as violence anymore! Women use violence, not men. Violence against women was repeated so often, and now women have started using (violence) against men. She uses it for no reason, when she’s bored.” (Ankara, Husband)*

*“This has never happened in 18 years and will not happen. If she was with another man, she will first get beaten and then maybe a divorce, I don’t really know.” (Istanbul, Husband)*

*“If she uses violence against you, that action (might generate) a reaction. Your wife cheats on you or does something, with that sudden anger you would do it.” (Izmir, Husband)*

### **3.1.8.2. Changes Observed in the Family After the Training Program**

Almost all male family members said the program had a very obvious positive impact on the participant women (see Table 36a). The reported impacts can be summarized under the heading “women became more empowered.” After HREP, women also undertook the role of “transforming” the communication language of the family, its decision-making processes, and how domestic tasks are shared inside and



outside the home. Additionally, these women participate in social life more, and the increase in time they spent outside the home also has an indirect effect on the dynamics at home.

*“I used to help before (my wife attended the training), but not to this extent. I used to help set and clear the table, but I wouldn’t (consider) doing the cleaning with her. Also, when I had to make a decision, I would do it on my own. Back then, I would think this is right according to my mind, and my wife has to comply. After she attended the training, my wife (said) ‘No, not like that, it needs to be like this.’ When I think about it, she’s right! Considering my past life experience, she’s right. We decide together, act together.” (Izmir, Husband)*

*“My sister graduated from university. (University graduates) are already self-confident. (My mother and aunt also attended the training). After the training, my mother in particular became extremely self-confident. She said ‘I can actually do this, I can actually do that’ and moved on to other things. My mother used to be very closed off. She’d built a shell around herself. She would keep to herself in her shell. Now she began to work in our grocery store, and relaxed even more. She very quickly removed that shell after attending this training. There is a local association, she began to go there, for instance. She might not have become involved in something else, but when it became necessary to file a lawsuit, she said ‘I’ll do it,’ and did. Or let’s say there is a show being put on in the village—normally she wouldn’t leave the house, she didn’t like things like that—but now she goes to see shows. So it was very beneficial for her in that sense.” (Izmir, Husband & Son of different participants)*

*“She was always sensitized to events in society. I can say that she became a little more interested after the training. Because she now knows more of the details (information), she is able to explain to other people in more detail.” (Ankara, Partner)*

There were also a few male family members who talked about certain negative changes in HREP participants (see Table 36b). In particular, they were most against the fact that women became sensitized to divorce. It was observed that these male family members felt weaker and under threat when faced with empowered women.

*“She says things like it’s my right, you will give me this, do that etc... She knows everything better than I do. She knows it all; that you can’t use violence, you can’t slap someone, you can’t beat them... She knows everything better than I do. She also knows about joint ownership, inheritance, school, she knows it all... It is a problem, her knowing so much.” (Ankara, Husband)*

**Table 36. HREP’s Impact on Women as Seen by Male Family Members**

a) Approved Changes	b) Disapproved Changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More self-confident</li> <li>• Braver</li> <li>• More talkative</li> <li>• Communicates better (uses “I-language”)</li> <li>• More understanding</li> <li>• More sociable/extraverted</li> <li>• Takes more initiative/has become a go-getter</li> <li>• Consulted more/offers guidance more/ helps others more</li> <li>• More sensitized/activist/joined an organization or is the organizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More reactive about violence and family unity, more informed about divorce</li> <li>• Used to be obedient, is now more dominant/ill-tempered</li> <li>• Used to be less informed, now knows a lot more, therefore talks more and asserts power more</li> </ul>



Basic areas of change that come to the fore in some families following HREP included stronger communication, more participatory and joint decision-making processes, and men taking on more responsibility at home. It was observed that some of the male family members were aware of HREP's modules on communication, women's rights, and sexuality, and considered the training important. Additionally, some male family members spontaneously reported the benefits of communicating with "I-language." For male family members, strengthened communication in the family was considered the most important gain, and the fact that the women defended themselves and claimed their rights in social life was defined as something to be proud of.

*"(My wife) gained self-confidence. Her communication skills improved. There was a sudden change. She realized the (importance) of sharing with her children. We notice the (change) towards us, towards her own field." (Diyarbakir, Husband)*

*"After this program my wife started using I-language more. Like shall we do this... This was beneficial to me as well. I wish she'd taken this training before. We would have been able to experience the positive things we experience today, at an earlier time. We would have been able to share certain difficulties, and make decisions together." (Izmir, Husband)*

*"She made a point of talking about how you can claim your rights (with people around her). My sister and brother-in-law were having problems. They actually got divorced! So my wife talked to my sister about where to apply, what to do, how to access a lawyer if she can't find one, and clearly (explained) what course of action she should take. I like (this situation) very much." (Istanbul, Husband)*

In conclusion, HREP raised awareness also among male family members about women's human rights and gender equality, and indirectly contributed to their transformation. In addition, women became more respected in their community thanks to the knowledge gained through HREP, which was a very well-received boost to the men's reputation.

*"She is able to express herself wherever she is. At some public institution or the hospital or in some other public space, if something that should be done is not being done, she stands firm until it gets done. And not just for herself, but for others in her social circle who haven't been able to do so. I like it that she's strong." (Izmir, Husband)*

*"She talked to me about communication. (She said) most of her friends at the training weren't aware of what it was. She told me that this training was very helpful to them. She said that they didn't know how to listen. She told me about how different group members would try to communicate, either by always trying to come out on top like in learning psychology, or by making no effort, or by yelling and intervening in conversations just to make themselves heard." (Istanbul, Husband)*

*"She saw that she has rights and freedoms, even that she holds certain sexual taboos, and broke them following the training. She used to view sexuality as something she did behind closed doors but with the training, she now sees it also has a social aspect." (Istanbul, Husband)*

*"In all honesty, I've always supported the idea of positive discrimination for women. Our women [the women in Turkey] have suffered a lot throughout the years and still do. As men, we at least have to make up for that. This transformation in me is thanks to my wife." (Izmir, Husband)*



### 3.8.1.3. Views on Feminism and the Women’s Movement

Overall, male family members did not know women’s organizations but considered organizations that implemented rights-based and training activities as necessary; nonetheless, some found it difficult to imagine that “women’s organizations” could be anything more than typical “women’s meetings” or play groups.

*“I really don’t know (women’s organizations)! I don’t know whether they’re meeting or doing something social. I imagine they meet, gossip, everyone has some tea, coffee, pastries, then they all leave.” (Istanbul, Husband)*

Male family members also had some concerns about women’s organizations. There were a few who viewed women’s awareness-building and empowerment via such organizations as a threat to their status, expressing this view as though it were the opinion of others. Additionally, there were some who had concerns that organizations may have hidden agendas. They were consequently worried that women from their family might become a part of the women’s movement or take part in protests.

*“Let’s say you’ve established a women’s organization, you aim to help women with problems, raise awareness. But some time later things come to a point (things change); this organization has a director, a board of directors, and they do shady things.” (Istanbul, Husband)*

*“We presently have a system where ridiculous things are done in the name of freedom; things that compromise its meaning.” (Ankara, Husband)*

Meanwhile, despite a few exceptions, male family members were observed to view the concepts of “feminism” and “feminist woman” rather negatively. In fact, the concept of feminism was basically perceived as the superiority of women, and thus a discriminatory concept (see Table 37).

**Table 37. Male Family Members’ Views on Feminism**

Perceived Feminism	Perceived Feminist Woman Profile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being men’s enemy / looking down on/alienating men</li> <li>• Defending women’s superiority</li> <li>• Group of women organizing against men/in order to manage men</li> <li>• Not judgmental of homosexuality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marginal, tattooed, short haired, scruffy dresser</li> <li>• Self-confident, self-assured</li> <li>• Able to stand on her own two feet and manage her own affairs</li> <li>• Prejudiced against men</li> <li>• Vengeful because of having been mistreated by men in the past</li> </ul>

*“The concept of what, sorry?” (Istanbul, Husband)*

*“I prefer humanism to feminism. I’m against the establishment of organizations under a feminist heading. There should be family organizations.” (Ankara, Partner)*

*“Where I come from, people who know everything are called ‘öpçe’.” (Feminists) know everything. Maybe you do, but everything has a time and a place. For instance, I’m a leftist, I can’t say ‘Revolution is the only way’ everywhere. They’re also trying to establish superiority but can’t manage it. As a country we’re still going backwards. The mentality that ‘men are superior’ still exists. And radically, they’re saying ‘women are superior,’ even if a little. There are such stories. But I don’t know how far it will go. I mean, they’re not unjustified in their cause.” (Ankara, Husband)*



*“(Feminists) are free about everything, and they are very condescending to men.” (Diyarbakir, Husband)*

*“I both agree and disagree with feminism to some extent. Feminism evokes in me the feeling that it’s about women’s superiority. To men, woman and men are equal. One can’t be superior to the other. They’re making this mistake. The same as men supporting violence or defending men. It’s a bit like advocating for women’s superiority.” (Istanbul, Husband)*

*“Feminism is something women do until they find a husband. They stand up for women’s rights, that’s only the positive side. It’s more that they (believe) women can do everything, are stronger. Normally, women are more tolerant towards women.” (Izmir, Husband)*

The fact that a few men whose wives, siblings or mothers attended the HREP training were no longer as prejudiced towards feminism was another factor pointing to positive change.

*“I used to think that it (feminism) was women being an enemy to men. My (perspective) changed after my wife attended HREP, I realized that it’s women claiming their rights.” (Izmir, Husband)*

### **3.1.9. Assessment of a HREP Group Process as a Micro Research Universe**

On 22 October 2018, an IPSOS Research Team observed the first session of a HREP group that started at the Izmir Karabağlar City Council, and made notes on the session.

There were 18 participants from different education and age profiles in the group session that began with a fun paper ball game aimed at participants getting to know each other. This method was observed to help the participants relax into the group. Next, WWHR was introduced to the group, and the fact that the trainer addressed the group as “dear friends” was observed to help establish a warm communication atmosphere. As the group facilitator shared the results of the previous impact assessment study, she also provided examples of transformation from her own life. This sincere sharing played an important role in establishing open grounds for communication between the participants and the group facilitator.

During the section on sharing group rules and needs assessment, participants were asked whether they had any requests about the order in which to cover the modules. At this point, participants suggested covering LGBTI+ individuals and rights, and women and religion.

The session ended with the assessment of the group work, and participants provided feedback on their expectations from the program. Contributing to and having an impact on people in their social circle was observed to be the strongest motivation for participating in the training.

The observed session appeared to verify participants’ high satisfaction with the trainers: The group facilitators’ sincerity, respectful address, non-hierarchical relationship with the participants and attitudes that encourage participation all bring great value to their role.

IPSOS representatives who attended the first session of this HREP group as observers as part of the Impact Assessment Study administered a pre-test to the participants that included both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Findings from the pre-test that come to the fore include the following:

- Participants heard about HREP mainly through friends who attended HREP, the municipality, the city council, the political party they were a member of, or their neighborhood working group.
- Prior to attending HREP, the vast majority of the 18 women strongly believed that more women should be in the workplace (15 people), domestic duties and child care should be equally shared

- between men and women (12 people), women and men should have equal say on all subjects (15 people), and women should participate more in social life outside the home (14 people).
- Consistent with these beliefs, over half the women were against the following statements: *if a family is experiencing financial difficulties, only the male children should be educated; if a family is doing well financially, the woman does not need to work; I do not think that women should be as free as men in some aspects; women should give more priority to being a good wife and mother instead of their career.*
  - Prior to HREP, participants mostly considered themselves informed about all the topics listed below, with the exception of Feminism and Women’s Movement (total number of those who stated I’m quite informed and I’m very informed are indicated in brackets):
    - Gender equality (10 people)
    - Feminism and the women’s movement (5 people)
    - Physical violence against women (10 people)
    - Emotional violence against women (14 people)
    - Economic violence against women (13 people)
  - Meanwhile, the women were observed to generally have limited knowledge on legal rights. The vast majority noticeably lacked knowledge on the following: The right to establish an organization, the right to demand from the government to fulfill its responsibility to its citizens and women, the right to participate in politics, children’s rights and reproductive rights. The topic on which women had the least knowledge was “the right to self expression” (10 people).
  - While almost all the women declared that they considered their rights important in various aspects (right to education, right to work, sexual rights, etc), only 10 people deemed reproductive rights as being important. This is followed by the right to establish an organization, with 13 people.
  - While 17 people stated they were self-confident, it was observed that more than half the women needed information and support in saying no to people, easily expressing their thoughts, and making easily decisions about themselves.
  - While 13 out of the 18 women noted they had experienced emotional and psychological violence prior to attending HREP, 10 women stated they suffered economic violence.

The following findings from the post-test administered to a total of 23 women after the four-month HREP process are noteworthy:

- While prior to HREP very few women had knowledge regarding their rights in various aspects, almost all (over 18 women) said they had become knowledgeable due to HREP. Although relatively fewer women stated to have knowledge on their right to establish an organization (11 people) and the right to participate in politics (15 people), considering that two and seven people, respectively, had said they were informed about these rights prior to HREP, the progress made is rather meaningful.
- More importantly, while only two women had said they had knowledge on “the right to demand from the government to fulfill its responsibilities to its citizens and women” prior to HREP, this number went up to 21 women after HREP.
- Similarly, the number of women who were informed about “the right to self-expression” doubled and reached 21.
- Reproductive rights and children’s rights were also among the lesser known topics, and almost all women (19 people) said they became informed on these topics as a result of HREP.
- A significant contribution of HREP was seen in the area of being subjected to violence: Of the 23 women, the number who experienced emotional and psychological violence and economic violence was much lower than the numbers prior to HREP (four and five, respectively).



- As a program, HREP succeeded in satisfying all the women who completed the group process. Participants appreciated the program overall, with HREP's printed materials, content, and the group facilitators being appreciated the most.
- Again, all participants stated that HREP had a 100% effect on their lives, and found all the modules beneficial without exception.
- HREP contributed to nearly all group participants to feel stronger and better equipped, more self-confident, more compassionate and understanding, more aware of gender-based inequalities, readier to fight for their rights, better at self-expression, more at peace with their bodies, more informed about their sexuality, and more sensitized to their wishes and needs.

At the end of the program, the general satisfaction and statements with regards to personal transformation provided by the Izmir HREP group—a small sample that was handled as a micro research universe—were very much in line with the macro research findings shared above. HREP was once again described as a very effective program that surpassed expectations. Raised awareness on rights was particularly noted as an important contribution.

*"The program really surpassed my expectations in self-improvement, being in touch with myself and others around me, and learning my rights." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"I attended (HREP) to become better informed about my rights. It more than met my expectations." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"I went to learn more about my rights, and learned that I had rights that I thought I knew but many that I hadn't heard of." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"I didn't know that our rights were so varied." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"I learned more about women's rights and our constitutional rights. I feel more confident." (Izmir, Participant)*

Increased self-confidence, improved self-expression skills, better communication in the family were other important areas of change that were referred to.

*"I used to have great difficulty in expressing myself and defending myself when I was right. Even when I was right, I doubted myself and took a step back. I now have knowledge." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"I think communication in my family was reinforced." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"My perspective of events changed and I feel more confident." (Izmir, Participant)*

Other components of HREP that were found satisfactory were its authentic style of facilitation, and the style and attitudes of the group facilitator.

*"I attended (HREP) because I thought it would be beneficial. It more than met my expectations. The way information was conveyed was very successful and it flowed." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"She was a perfect and hard to find trainer. Even being present in the same room with her was great." (Izmir, Participant)*



The manner in which HREP guided the participants and the impact it had resulted in the participants becoming a HREP spokesperson in their social lives, creating a snowball effect.

*"I became informed about women's rights. I learned many things that will enable me to share information with women around me." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"I had previously attended trainings in communication and citizenship. HREP is a more comprehensive training program. I talk about this program with women around me and contribute to raising awareness." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"A friend of mine was in a difficult situation, and I told about our rights, article by article. She is now self-assured and is able to stand on her own two feet." (Izmir, Participant)*

*"I would like to thank the group facilitator and everyone who worked on this program. I used to think I knew a lot despite being 73 years old. I wish I had been a bit younger. But you can learn at any age. Glad you are here, thank you!" (Izmir, Participant)*

### **3.2. Assessment of the Women's Human Rights Training (WHRT)**

This section analyzes the impact of WHRT through an in-depth examination of the quantitative data obtained from people who attended the program in 2016-2017, and the qualitative research findings from focus groups conducted in two cities.

#### **3.2.1. Brief Information on WHRT**

WWHR-New Ways, in collaboration with the International Labor Organization (ILO) Turkey Office, developed the Women's Human Rights Training (WHRT) on the basis of HREP with the aim of empowering women in the workforce, and implemented it in 2016-2017. WHRT was implemented as an important component of the More and Better Jobs for Women Project implemented by the ILO Turkey Office in 2013-2018 in Istanbul, Ankara, Konya and Bursa, in support of policies generated to create decent jobs for women in Turkey.

The purpose of WHRT was to support unemployed women who were attending vocational training courses provided by local authorities in securing and maintaining employment, by increasing their knowledge of their legal rights.

The training was provided in collaboration with some of the municipalities in the provinces named above, in the form of 10-week group work that lasted half a day (four hours). The training modules cover topics such as Women's Human Rights, Constitutional Rights, Civil Rights, Gender Equality, Communication Skills, Violence Against Women and Health, and Economic Rights.

While the WHRT modules were developed on the basis of HREP were similar to HREP to a great extent in terms of their titles, content and number, there were important differences in certain aspects. In contrast to HREP, Constitutional and Civil Rights were covered in two separate modules in WHRT. Also, Communication was one module instead of two. Moreover, the two modules on Women and Sexuality and the Women and Reproductive Rights module found in HREP are not included in WHRT, but the topics are briefly mentioned in the Women and Health module. In addition, HREP modules entitled Gender-Sensitive Parenting and the Rights of the Child, Women and Politics, Feminism and the Women's Movement, and Women's Organizing are not included in WHRT, while WHRT includes a module on Gender Equality that is totally different from HREP.



- Module 1 – Meeting and Women’s Human Rights
- Module 2 – Constitutional Rights
- Module 3 – Civil Rights
- Module 4 – Gender Equality
- Module 5 – Communications
- Module 6 – Violence against Women
- Module 7 – Strategies against Violence
- Module 8 – Women and Health
- Module 9 – Economic Rights - Section I
- Module 10 – Economic Rights - Section II

WHRT’s impact on participants was examined for the first time in this independent research report.

### 3.2.2. Profile of WHRT Participants

A quantitative questionnaire was administered to 202 women who participated in WHRT in Ankara, Istanbul and Bursa. The demographic profile of these participants is provided in Table 38; 70% attended WHRT in 2016 and 30% in 2017.

In contrast to HREP, the majority of WHRT participants had a high school education or lower (81%). Most were married (78%) and had children (83%). The total number of participants who were unemployed or unpaid domestic laborers was approximately double that of HREP Participants (66%).

	<b>a) Year of Participation in WHRT</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	2016	70
	2017	30
	<b>b) Age Group</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	15-35	28
	36-45	33
	46 and above	39
	<b>c) Education (last completed)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	Primary school or less	40
	High school / Vocational high school	41
	Vocational College	10
	University	9
	Masters Degree/PhD	0
	<b>d) Employment Status</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	Student	2
	Employed	21
	Unemployed but looking for a job	25
	Unpaid domestic laborer	41
	Retired	10
	Other	1
	<b>e) Marital Status</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	Married	78
	Divorced	6
	Widowed	2
	Not married	14
	<b>f) Children</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>



<b>Has children</b>	82
<b>Does not have children</b>	18

### 3.2.3. Sources of Accessing WHRT

One out of every two participants (48%) became aware of WHRT through local authorities, such as the municipality or city council. This was followed by women’s locale, at 29% (see Table 39).

*“I came across the women for Women’s Human Rights when I attended women’s art training. As the city council, we thought the training would be beneficial. I had the opportunity to examine WWHR closely.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

<b>Table 39. Participants’ Sources of Access to WHRT</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Through local authorities such as the municipality, city council, etc.	48
Through women’s locales	29
Through friends	7
Through direct contact from the trainer	5
Other	5

*(\*) Values of 5% and above are listed. Question: How did you first hear of the WHRT group you participated in?*

### 3.2.4. Motivating and Challenging Factors in Attending WHRT

Many factors were specified for participating in WHRT, but five of these were prominent (see Table 40): to obtain information on laws (34%), to contribute to my personal development and transformation (33%), to learn about rights/women’s rights (20%), to become actively involved in the women’s movement (15%), and to obtain information (15%).

<b>Table 40. Participants’ Motivations to Attend WHRT*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
To obtain information on laws	34
To contribute to my personal development and transformation	33
To learn about rights / women’s rights	20
To become actively involved in the women’s movement	15
To obtain information	15
To improve myself in the professional sense	12
To learn about strategies to combat violence against women	12
To be of benefit to others/help people around me	8
For work (it was mandatory at work, related to field of work, etc)	6
Because it was recommended	6
To improve my knowledge on gender equality	6
To fill my spare time	6
To meet new people	4
Because I was curious	3
Other	10

*(\*) Factors with value of 3% and above are listed. Question 1: What was the key motivation for participating in WHRT during that period? Question 2: What were your other motivations for participating in WHRT?*



Qualitative findings indicate that that participants’ motivations and gains overlapped. Obtaining information on rights, improving-empowering one’s self, and becoming resource women to others around them appears to be a primary objective for women.

*“My reason for coming here is to obtain information. I went to become more efficient in social life. I have no other expectations. Or how can I stand my ground against my husband? How can I express myself? Or how can I educate myself?” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“I work at the Yenimahalle City Council, so I went to learn and then spread what I learned. I had thought about this topic in the past. My intention was to be able to share information with others around me, rather than it making any contributions to me.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

It was observed that even the perceptions of those who for various reasons viewed training programs based on gender equality such as WHRT with prejudice, shifted to a rather positive stance.

*“When I went, I was expecting nonsense about women, because I don’t like discrimination... I was curious so I went. Women’s rights, blah blah blah; I viewed myself above that, I (said) I can always quit if need be, but things turned out very different. This program enabled me to get to know myself. It enabled me get to know women better. I (understood) that we need to organize better to claim our rights. At the end of the program, I now think that all women should attend it. There was a serious difference between how I started and how I finished the training.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

The vast majority of the participants (88%) said they experienced no difficulties with respect to participation (see Table 41). While no difficulties were determined in the quantitative research regarding WHRT participation, focus group discussions revealed that in some cases groups could not be started due to a lack of local group facilitators, and difficulties in transportation in case of outsourcing.

*“Presently, we are hesitant about starting a new group because we have been unable to resolve the transportation issue (of the trainer). When we encountered these problems, this was our wish: to have a team from Yenimahalle Municipality who attended the Trainer Training so that we can offer more training groups. The Women’s Assembly of our City Council is actually working toward this. We are trying to sign a protocol between the municipality and WWHR. We started a petition.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

<b>Table 41. Challenges Participants Experienced in Attending WHRT*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
There were no challenges	88
The training venue was far/transportation was difficult	3
Time constraints	3
Presence of a child/elderly/disabled person at home needing care	3

*(\*) Factors with a value of 3% and above are listed. Question 1: What was the basic difficulty in participating in WHRT at that time? Question 2: What were the other difficulties in participating in WHRT at that time?*



### 3.2.5. Assessment of Satisfaction with WHRT

#### 3.2.5.1. Overall Satisfaction

During the research, WHRT participants were asked about their overall satisfaction with WHRT. Overall satisfaction with WHRT was rather high, at 91% (see Table 42). Percentage of those who were not satisfied remained at 1%.

Table 42. WHRT Overall Satisfaction	Participants Percentage (%)
1- I am very dissatisfied	0
2- I am somewhat dissatisfied	1
3- I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	7
4- I am quite satisfied	39
5- I am very satisfied	52
Total	100
<b>Total Satisfaction % (4+5)</b>	<b>91</b>

*Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with the Women’s Human Rights Training?*

The fact that WHRT is rich in content that meets everyone’s various interests and needs, and is provided via a non-hierarchical and participatory style had a significant impact on the high satisfaction level achieved. In particular, employees at municipalities or city councils who attended WHRT spoke with admiration about WHRT’s effective teaching style compared to other trainings. As is the case with HREP, WHRT’s relaxing social atmosphere accompanied by snacks also generated satisfaction.

*“I can say that whatever a person’s issue is (that is covered by the modules), that person becomes oriented to that (module). I mean, that’s how it was for us. For instance, we had a friend who was experiencing violence, she expressed herself especially in that module. She talked about her complaint. At least, she learned relevant things about it. (I) learned to say no. I learned my rights; the ins and outs. So I can say that whatever issues each person had, they focused on them more.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“We experienced it to the fullest. For instance, our trainer would come from Izmir in the morning. She would get to where we were around noon. We had lunch break together, we had tea. Then we would begin our course. At the end of the course, we had coffee. They were happy times.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“We attended various programs due to the work we do; technical, commercial, numerous programs. There (atmosphere) here is great, everybody’s together, there’s no dais... It made everyone feel comfortable, be themselves. There was no embarrassment, no subordinates and managers, that kind of judgment. I saw that this was a very good method to learn things.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

#### 3.2.5.2. Factors Leading to Satisfaction

In addition to overall satisfaction, satisfaction with WHRT’s different topics was also questioned. In all the topical headings assessed, it is evident that WHRT succeeded in achieving a very high rate of satisfaction among participants (satisfaction rate for each heading was over 80%). Similar to HREP, the leading factor that generated the most satisfaction for the participants was the WHRT group facilitators, at 96% (see Table 43).



<b>Table 43. Satisfaction Factors for WHRT Participants*</b>	<b>Total Satisfaction Percentage (%)</b>
WHRT group facilitators	96
WHRT contents	95
WHRT printed material ( <i>Purple Bulletin</i> , <i>We Have Rights</i> booklet series, handouts, brochures, etc.)	95
Attitude and interest of WWHR representatives	92
WHRT modules	91
Videos and visual material shown within the scope of WHRT ( <i>Purple Series</i> and <i>Women Exist</i> documentaries, etc.)	89
10-week total duration of WHRT	88
WHRT participants	86
Duration of WHRT sessions	84

(\*) Total Satisfaction value is the sum of the values for 4-I'm quite satisfied, and 5-I'm very satisfied. Average was 90%. Question: Would you please share how satisfied you are with each issue I will read you about WHRT?

In the focus groups, there were many references to being satisfied with the trainers' warm, sincere, and respectful communication with the participants. Other satisfaction factors mentioned firsthand included WHRT's applied and awareness-raising structure that encouraged discussion, and its striking, groundbreaking content. Participants frequently mentioned the fulfilling printed materials that included actual cases, and noted that being able to share these materials with their family and people who might need them added to their satisfaction.

*"I was very satisfied with WHRT and left happy. I realized how much of a difference the trainer made. Our trainer was a lawyer, and so the way she covered laws, the examples she provided, and the way she acted were all good."* (Ankara, WHRT Participant)

*"We got along very well as friends. We already got along with my friends in the course but we connected with our teacher very well too; she sat down with us at the table, we ate and drank together. All our friends from the course participated in the activities there. I can say that we really looked forward to that day."* (Bursa, WHRT Participant)

*"When I encounter a problem, I look to see whether I can find it here, it's very good that we have the books."* (Bursa, WHRT Participant)

*"The examples stayed with me; there was something about not looking at something from a single point of view. Someone hits someone else, the woman thinks it's one thing, the person who hit the other person thought it was something else. The person who was hit has no idea. All three are right from their own point of view, and also wrong... There were these types of examples that explained the subject well."* (Ankara, WHRT Participant)

While the duration of the WHRT sessions generated less satisfaction than other factors to a statistically significant degree, it was still found satisfying by the majority, at 84%. Seven out of ten people stated in open-ended questions that the sessions should be even longer. This information is covered in section 3.2.7.6. of this report entitled Expectations and Suggestions.



### 3.2.6. WHRT Impact on Participants

#### 3.2.6.1. Overall Impact Assessment

WHRT also had an impact on nearly all the participants (95%) (see Table 44).

Table 44. WHRT Overall Impact	Participants Percentage (%)
1- It had a very negative impact	0
2- It had a partially negative impact	0
3- It had no impact	5
4- It had a slightly positive impact	36
5- It had a very positive impact	59
Total	100
<b>Total Impact % (4+5)</b>	<b>95</b>

Question: Overall, how would you evaluate WHRT’s impact on your life?

Examples of impact shared in the focus groups mostly covered positive experiences in the respondents’ private and social lives. Increased awareness, strengthened self-confidence, believing in oneself, and improved communication skills were the basis of this strong impact.

*“It taught me to say no. Because I used to say yes to everything. Yes, yes, yes...” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“Women learn to stand on their own two feet. From housewives to women who have been employed at various jobs; participants learn to stand on their own two feet, to be confident. Self-confidence is so important... And they also learn to listen. Communication is very important; no matter where you go, even the open-air market, communication is everywhere. Communication with your husband, your children, your mother, your father; it’s all so important.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

#### 3.2.6.2. Detailed Impact Assessment

When examined in detail, WHRT’s contribution came to the fore in five areas (see Table 45). While “learning my legal rights” emerged as the top contribution area at 86%, this was followed by “communication with my children improved” at 83%. In fact, communication with children was frequently mentioned in focus groups as an important gain, even though it was not among the list of motivations but was gratefully received by the participants.

*“Apparently, communication with my child was a very important thing. It was here that I learned about I-language and you-language. For example, saying ‘When you make a mess of this room, I feel upset,’ if you are scolding a child. I realized that I used psychological violence against both my child and husband without being aware of it, and stopped myself. At least, I saw its effects.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

*“I learned to stand against my husband. I used to before, but now it’s different. I even considered my shortcomings when caring for my grandchild.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

*“I have two sons, no daughters. To raise them as an informed mother... And treat their wives with respect accordingly... This is transmitted through the mother, also. I focused on strengthening myself in that sense.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*



<b>Table 45. Components of WHRT’s Contributions to Participants*</b>	<b>Total Contribution Percentage (%)</b>
Learning my legal rights	86
Communication with my children (for those with children)	83
Contributing to my personal development and transformation	81
Applying gender equality in my family	80
Gaining a gender equality perspective	79
Combating violence against women	77
Employing an equality-based perspective at my workplace	76
Supporting women around me in claiming their rights	76
Reducing or ending the discrimination and violence in my life	76
Communication with my husband/partner	73
Becoming a resource person in my social circle whose ideas are sought	64
Becoming a member or volunteering at women’s organizations	54
Being a candidate in local or national elections	37
Becoming a member of a political party	37

(\*)Total Contribution value is the sum of the values for options 10+9+8 on a 10-point scale. Average was 70%.

Question: Did WHRT contribute to you in any way in terms of the issues I will now read to you?

Other aspects where WHRT made noticeable impact were contributing to personal development and transformation (81%), applying gender equality in the family (80%), and gaining a gender equality perspective (79%). A strengthened gender equality perspective and the drive to transform rights-awareness into action were observed to be the underlying factors that were declared in the focus groups. Respondents displayed a tendency to analyze events from a brand new perspective and take action.

*“It was very important to use I-language. I always (used to) say we, we (but) no, it’s I. Using accusatory language in communication, aggressive attitudes of the other... I was able to overcome all then when I said “I.” It helped with issues I had both with my husband and my friends.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

*“My niece was getting a divorce, we made suggestions such as you have this right, you can do this, you can apply for this or get help from these organizations.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

Three basic aspects where WHRT had a relatively limited impact was similar to HREP: contributions to participation in mobilization activities such as becoming a member of a political party (37%), being a candidate in local or national elections (37%), and becoming a member or volunteering at women’s organizations (54%) were below the average contribution rate. However, examples of political involvement and organization that were provided in focus groups are rather valuable, as they indicate the extent to which WHRT offered encouragement and guidance toward self-improvement.

*“We have friends from the group who started their own business. (Because) they became more self-confident. Some became candidates in the local neighborhood head elections. Some became politically active, we were very supportive of them. I worked in the construction sector for 32 years; I had no problems financially, but in our group there was a primary school graduate who became a candidate to be the village head in the elections.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant )*



### 3.2.6.3. Assessment and Impact of WHRT Modules

Participants stated that all the modules were beneficial. So much so that the contribution rate of all the modules was over 70% (see Table 46). None of the modules stood out at a statistically significant degree; respondents valued them all similarly.

Table 46. Assessment of Module Benefits by Participants*	Total Benefit Percentage (%)
Meeting and Women’s Human Rights	78
Constitutional Rights	77
Civil Rights	77
Gender Equality	71
Communication	76
Violence Against Women	76
Strategies Against Violence	74
Women and Health	78
Economic Rights-1	70
Economic Rights -2	70

(\*Total Contribution value is the sum of the values for options 10+9+8 on a 10-point scale. Average was 75%.

Question: If you were consider each individual module in WHRT, could you share with me how beneficial the content of each module was for you?

Benefits of the modules on legal rights, communication, and gender equality were spontaneously reported in the focus groups, making them more noticeable. These modules were valuable because they touched on an important problem in the respondents’ lives and offered tools for their solution.

*“We learned about inheritance cases and that we have equal rights. (We learned that it was possible) among siblings, without discriminating against girls.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“(In the Gender Equality module) We learned what women can do, perhaps even surpass their own strength. They made us watch something, a middle-aged woman was changing a huge tire. So women can do anything if they want to.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

*“We realized the importance of organizing, reached women’s organizations and found the Turkish Women’s Assemblies group. We will join in their protest on Sunday to support them.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

While WHRT had no specific module on sexuality, what was learned about the topic was observed to be very important for the respondents. The need to address this topic in depth is highlighted in the following quote.

*“Each (module) contains something different, they are a whole in my opinion. We found something in each of them. Nobody can say sexuality is not important, you can’t say it.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

### 3.2.6.4. Impact on the Fight against Violence against Women

According to quantitative data, words and behavior that incorporate emotional and psychological violence were the types of violence women experienced most frequently both at home and in the family, and outside the home (see Table 47).



A statistically significant decrease was found in all types of violence women experienced at home and outside the home after WHRT. This can be interpreted as another indicator of women’s personal empowerment. In fact, women displayed a strong and self-confident attitude that would not allow for an environment of violence as a result of the gains they achieved through WHRT.

**Table 47. Violence Experienced by Participants Prior to and After WHRT**

	At home-In the family		Outside the home	
	Violence Experienced Prior to WHRT (%)	Violence Experienced After WHRT (%)	Violence Experienced Prior to WHRT (%)	Violence Experienced After WHRT (%)
A) Words and behavior that contain emotional and psychological violence	55	21 (*)	28	8 (*)
B) Words and behavior that contain physical violence	31	9 (*)	8	2 (*)
C) Words and behavior that contain economic violence	36	18 (*)	11	5 (*)
D) Words and behavior that contain sexual violence	15	7 (*)	16	5 (*)

(\*) denotes factors where a statistically significant decrease was found in comparison to the period prior to WHRT. (Number of respondents: 202)

In fact, in the focus groups, women frequently stated they were aware that the concept of violence included varied dimensions and practices.

*“For instance, I can tell the type of violence a man resorts to from the way he speaks to his wife in public.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

It was observed that on the basis of what they learned, the women had developed an attitude where they were able to determine and classify the type of violence they experienced, take a critical look at themselves and the violence they themselves used on other family members, and not stay silent in the face of others being subject to violence.

*“I helped my neighbor. She was a woman who constantly experienced violence. I showed her where to apply, which methods to use. I passed on the booklet. How she could get a protection order on the basis of what I learned... We saved that woman’s life, she took her child and escaped.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

**3.2.6.5. WHRT’s Impact on Personal Empowerment on the Basis of Gender Equality**

In line with the above, it is also evident in Table 48 that WHRT empowered women in many respects (all personal development statements were over 70%).

Table 48. WHRT’s Personal Impact on Participants*	Percentage (%)
I feel stronger and better equipped	89
I began to express myself better	88
I am more self-confident	87
I am more aware of gender-based inequalities in my life	87



I am more informed about my own sexuality	86
I am more at peace with my body	85
I am more sensitive to my own wants and needs	84
I am more compassionate and understanding towards myself	80
I began to fight against gender-based inequalities in my life	79

(\*The sum value for options 10+9+8 on a 10-point scale. Average was 85%.

Question: Did WHRT contribute to you in any way in relation to the issues I will read to you?

WHRT participants described themselves as feeling more aware, valuable, and self-respecting, and offered various examples of how they took control of their lives in many aspects as empowered individuals.

*“Valuing yourself. Standing on your own two feet no matter what happens. I mean, I really could gain financial independence even if only by making bread. It’s what keeps you standing.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“I learned to be patient. I don’t like interrupting people when they’re talking, but at least you learn to listen. These are really important things.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

*“We go to courses for instance, and when I do, that means I’ve set aside some time for myself, I value myself. There are friends whose husbands now respect them more as a result of these courses.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

### 3.2.6.6. Rate of Recommendation

WHRT was considered a recommendable program by all respondents. Those who stated “I would definitely recommend it” stands at 92%, pointing to the certainty of their attitude (see Table 49).

Table 49. Recommending WHRT	Percentage (%)
1-I definitely would not recommend it	0
2-I wouldn’t quite recommend it	0
3-I would somewhat recommend it	8
4-I would definitely recommend it	92
Total	100
<b>Total Recommendation % (3+4)</b>	<b>100</b>

Question: Would you recommend women around you to participate in WHRT or HREP?

While many focus group participants noted they already recommended WHRT to women around them, there were some who discussed WHRT with their husbands or children at home, even shared the materials.

*“We would discuss with my husband whatever the topic was that day. My husband also read the materials and we talked about them. If you don’t experience something personally, you know what they say, distance lends enchantment to the view. I mean, only those who live it know what it’s like.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“I gave all the books and magazines to my daughter. She was studying sociology, law. She kept them, still has them.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*



### 3.2.6.7. Expectations and Suggestions

The top suggestion to make WHRT more effective and beneficial was to increase its duration (16%) (see Table 50). Additionally, the need to organize the training more frequently was the second most popular suggestion, at 10%.

Table 50. Participant Suggestions for WHRT*	Percentage (%)
The training should be longer than 10 weeks	16
It should be more frequent	10
Advertising and communications work should be carried out for WHRT	9
It should be made more widespread	8
Topics should be clearer/more explanatory	8
They should provide job opportunities to those looking for work	8
Men should take part in the training	7

(\* ) Factors with a value of 5% and above are listed. Question: Could you share any suggestions you might have to make WHRT more effective and beneficial?

A frequently voiced suggestion in the focus groups was to increase both the number of weeks and the duration of the sessions. Participants share experiences in the WHRT sessions, and the fact that some did not find an opportunity to speak due to the time limits of each module points to an unmet need. Accordingly, participants suggested not only that the training last longer, but also with a fewer number of participants so as to open space for further sharing of experiences and exchange of ideas.

*“The content covers a lot, but I wonder if it’s too short? Or it seemed short to me. I had friends who had problems but it was over before they could resolve them. Perhaps that friend kept to herself up to that point, and continued to do so. Maybe she was able to express herself there, and just as she about to gain self-confidence, it was over.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“Topics should be discussed more slowly. They should be explained over a longer period of time, so that they last longer.” (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

*“There were problems about time. Groups have fifteen to twenty members, everyone loosens up, a lot of things are said. Sometimes there’s not enough time. You have to rush through some things. There was the time (issue) a bit, but we covered all we needed to cover.” (Ankara, WHRT Participant).*

### 3.3. HREP and WHRT Program Assessment and Impact Comparisons

HREP and WHRT differed in terms of participant profiles, conditions of participation, objectives, modules, module contents, duration of implementation, and opportunities provided. In this section, the achieved impact of both programs and the reasons for it will be evaluated together, despite their differences.

HREP lasts four months and consists of 16 four-hour sessions, and its main is to contribute to women becoming more empowered through rights-awareness, exercising their rights in all areas, and organizing according to their needs. The study found that the HREP participant profile consisted mostly of women over 36, who had a high school education or higher, and were employed or retired.

WHRT lasted 10 weeks and consisted of 10 four-hour sessions, and is a program that was implemented in the context of the More and Better Jobs for Women Project in partnership with the ILO Turkey Office and in collaboration with municipalities. The study found that the WHRT participant profile again



consisted mainly of women over 36, but these women were not part of the workforce and were unpaid domestic laborers.

What was common to both research samples was that participants were mostly married with children.

According to quantitative findings, HREP generated greater personal transformation in terms of political involvement, local organizing, and advocacy. The main reason for this is that HREP has three modules entitled Women and Politics, Feminism and the Women's Movement, and Women Organizing. While HREP participants said they obtained in-depth information on subjects such as how to establish non-governmental organizations—associations and cooperatives—or how to run for office for the position of village head, such statements were less frequent in the focus groups of WHRT participants.

Moreover, the module called Feminism and the Women's Movement in HREP makes women feel part of a movement. In fact, there were some who saw WWHR as an umbrella organization, and expressed the need for an "Association of HREP Participants" that would help maintain their sense of belonging.

While HREP has two and WHRT has one module on Communication, statements about its impact were very similar. The information that contributed the most to participants was "I-language communication" found in both programs. Learning to say no was another important and overlapping benefit of the module in both HREP and WHRT. Experiences pertaining to improved communication in the family were also similar. However, given that the biggest complaint of WHRT participants was that sessions were too short and more time was needed to share stories and exchange ideas, it could be concluded that there is room for improvement in the WHRT Communication module. In fact, group facilitators also agreed that the Communication modules were especially valued in HREP, and suggested covering them earlier in the program to encourage participation in the group process.

Improved communication with children in the family was a prominent and unexpected contribution of both programs. Although WHRT does not have a module on Gender-Sensitive Parenting and Rights of the Child, implementing gender equality at home was among the primary gains for the participants of both programs. Information on choice of colors and toys came to the fore not only among HREP and WHRT participants, but participants of the GE Seminar as well. Meanwhile, it should also be noted that while the Gender-Sensitive Parenting and Rights of the Child module was described as groundbreaking in HREP focus groups, it also notably encourages participants to unpack anti-gender equality norms found in societal culture, religion, and traditions. This, in turn, prompts participants to question and modify any problems they might have in their relationships with their children and their own parents.

While HREP participants made frequent and excited references to the Women and Sexuality modules, describing them as "awareness raising," WHRT participants did not specifically make note of the Women and Health module. Talking about sexuality, the contents of the modules, and the stories shared in the group made an unforgettable impression HREP participants, while there were no specific references to WHRT's Women and Health module. Yet according to the quantitative data, the Women and Health module was deemed at least as beneficial as the others.

Women who attended HREP stated that although they had been shy about talking about sexuality at the beginning of the module, they later became less inhibited, and that they had become much better acquainted with their bodies and more aware of their sexual rights by the end of the module.

Another area where HREP made a difference compared to WHRT concerns the fact that HREP participants became resource persons in their social circle and provided support to people around them more than WHRT participants. Underlying reasons for this include having become better equipped



personally due to HREP's richer informational content, having had the opportunity to digest the information over 16 weeks, and having had the chance to reinforce the acquired information through fulfilling group discussions.

Nonetheless, HREP and WHRT have one aspect in common: While participants were extremely happy with the 16-week and 10-week duration of the programs, they suggested extending the programs even further. WHRT participants in particular suggested shortening session times and reducing participant numbers, but extending the number of weeks in the program. The reason for this was to ensure that especially the women who had certain problems had enough time and information to resolve them.

*"I think that had the sessions been shorter and the weeks longer, people might have been able to digest and contribute more... Classes are very enjoyable, because you enjoy them you want them to be more frequent. Groups would say, 'we wish we had it again tomorrow.'" (Ankara, WHRT Participant)*

*"(The training) should be brought to people with more problems, and it should be longer... There were very good topics but they could have been covered over a longer period... For instance, it wouldn't be bad if there was a class every week from the beginning of the school year to the end." (Bursa, WHRT Participant)*

The biggest criticism regarding HREP's 16-week duration came from the group facilitators. HREP is a 16-week program with weekly four-hour sessions and requires mandatory attendance, and this was said to be the most significant obstacle in finding participants to form a group, even though it is considered highly satisfactory in terms of content. There were also some group facilitators who had difficulty adapting their own personal lives to the program. While this was not a statistically significant problem according to the quantitative data, there were also some participants who recommended reducing the number of weeks, provided that the 16 modules were retained.

*"Although 16 weeks is normal for HREP, it is not convenient for a woman to attend for 16 weeks, she might be caring for someone sick, looking after a child. (Also) while there are 15-20 people in a group, it would be more comfortable and effective to reduce it to 10. The number of groups would go up, the total number of people reached may go up... If (HREP) were to be held twice a week, it would be completed in eight weeks rather than 16." (Ankara, Participant of both HREP and WHRT)*

In contrast to the satisfaction and requests of the WHRT participants, ILO representatives stated that they considered the 10-week duration long. It was noted that especially in terms of WHRT implementation in parallel with vocational training courses, it would be necessary to make it more suited to the existing conditions.

### **3.4. Assessment of the Gender Equality (GE) Seminars**

This section analyzes the impact of the GE Seminars through an in-depth examination of the quantitative data obtained from 126 GE Seminar participants, and the qualitative research data obtained from focus groups held in three cities.

#### **3.4.1. Brief Information on the GE Seminars**

The GE Seminar developed by WWHR is geared to women and men working at municipalities, private firms, and various non-governmental organizations; lasting four hours, the seminar includes content on basic concepts regarding gender equality and legislation pertaining to women's human rights.

The impact of the GE Seminars on participants was examined for the first time with this independent research report.

### 3.4.2. Profile of the GE Seminar Participants

The demographic profile of the 126 respondents who attended the GE Seminars is provided in Table 51. The respondents were from 18 different provinces, concentrated in Çanakkale (29%), Istanbul (21%), and Izmir (15%).

The main characteristics of the profile of the GE Seminar participants is that the majority were under the age of 35, had a high school education or higher, were mainly students (48%) or employed (33%). The percentage of married participants (24%) and those with children (27%) were low. Of the respondents who attended a GE Seminar, 17% were men.

		<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>a) Gender</b>		
	Female	81
	Male	17
	Other	2
<b>b) Age Group</b>		
	35 and below	71
	Above 35	29
<b>c) Education (Graduation)</b>		
	Primary school and less	2
	High school / Vocational high school	46
	Vocational college	9
	University	37
	Master's degree / PhD	6
<b>d) Employment Status</b>		
	Student	48
	Employed	33
	Unemployed but looking for a job	6
	Unpaid domestic laborer	2
	Retired	6
	Other	4
<b>e) Marital Status</b>		
	Married	24
	Divorced	9
	Widowed	2
	Unmarried	65
<b>f) Children</b>		
	Has children	27
	Does not have children	73

The views of the GE Seminar participants on the roles of women and men were questioned on the basis of various adjectives, and are provided in Table 52. With the exception of "athletic," all other personality characteristics were identified more with women to a statistically significant degree. According to the results, women were perceived as being more emotional, stronger, braver, having leadership qualities, smarter, better groomed, good at housekeeping, more compassionate, and more virtuous than men.



Considering that about half of these adjectives are traditionally identified with women and the other half traditionally identified more with men, it can be stated that participants of the GE Seminars had a more egalitarian view of general gender roles; in this respect, it can be said that the GE Seminars had a positive impact.

**Table 52. Opinions of GE Seminar Participants on Female and Male Personality Characteristics\*\***

Adjectives	Percentage who said "suited to women" (%)	Percentage who said "suited to men" (%)
Emotional	62 (*)	38
Strong	72 (*)	53
Brave	75 (*)	51
Leader	71 (*)	52
Smart	82 (*)	49
Well groomed	60 (*)	37
Good at housekeeping	60 (*)	35
Compassionate	73 (*)	40
Virtuous	48 (*)	33
Athletic	48	57

(\*) Items where the rate of those who said "suited to women" was higher than the rate of those who said "suited to men" to a statistically significant degree are marked with a (\*).

(\*\*) The sum value of options 10, 9 and 8 on a 10-point scale.

Question: There are various personality characteristics listed below. In your opinion, to what extent are the listed qualities suited or not suited to women and men?

The differences between perceived female-male personality characteristics revealed in demographic breakdowns were striking:

- While respondents above the age of 35 described men as "Strong" (61%), "Brave" (57%), and a "Leader" (60%), the rates for the same items were much lower (all 35%) in the younger age group, to a statistically significant degree. This big difference is an indication that the younger generation's perception of men is moving away from traditional definitions.
- According to participants with a high school education or less, men were "Emotional" (48%), "Strong" (62%), "Brave" (67%), "Smart" (62%), "Well groomed" (46%), and "Compassionate" (54%), those with a university degree described men with these qualities at a much lower rate (29%, 45%, 35%, 37%, 28%, and 26%, respectively).
- According to participants not in the workforce, men were "Strong" (60%), Brave" (57%), and "Smart" (56%), while participants in the workforce identified these adjectives with men at a statistically significant much lower rate (40%, 38%, and 36%, respectively).
- While participants with a high school education or less described women as "Smart" at a rate of 90%, this figure was lower among university graduates to a statistically significant degree, at 74%.

Table 53 shows how much the respondents' views overlap with gender equality values. Accordingly, it can be said that a majority had a gender equality perspective in the areas questioned in the survey: 88% stated that women and men should have equal say in all matters, 87% stated honor cannot be used to justify any type of violence, and 83% stated more women should participate in the workforce, domestic duties should be equally shared between women and men, and women should participate more in social life outside the home.

Table 53. Participant Views on GE Values*	Percentage (%)
Women and men should have equal say in all matters	88
Honor cannot be used to justify any type of violence	87
More women should participate in the workforce	83
Domestic duties should be equally shared between women and men	83
Women should participate more in social life outside the home	83
Childcare is the responsibility of the mother	6
If a family is doing well financially, there is no need for women to work	5
Women cannot work in certain types jobs	4
Politics is a man's job	2
Women should prioritize being a good wife and mother over their career	2

(\*The sum value of options 5 and 4 on a 5-point scale.

Question: After carefully reading the below statements, please share on a 5-point scale how much you agree with each statement, where 1 refers to Definitely disagree, and 5 refers to Definitely agree.

Having a gender equality perspective was observed to differ according to demographic structure:

- While 24% of the respondents over 35 years of age said “childcare is the mother’s responsibility,” this rate was zero for the younger participants.
- Again, while 14% of participants over 35 stated “women should prioritize being a good wife and mother over their career,” this rate was zero for the younger respondents. A similar outlook was observed between those who were and were not in the workforce; while 12% of those in the workforce agreed with the statement, this rate was zero for those not in the workforce.
- Accordingly, the percentage of participants in the workforce who stated “childcare is a woman’s responsibility” was higher than those not in the workforce (17% and 2%, respectively).
- Respondents not in the workforce agreed with the statement “Domestic duties should be shared equally between women and men” to a larger extent (94%). Agreement with this statement among those in the workforce was 79%.

### 3.4.3. Sources of Access to the GE Seminars

Sources of hearing about the GE Seminars was varied. The main sources were NGOs (18%) and women’s organizations (17%), school/university (17%), directors at the place of employment (14%) and friends (11%) (see Table 54).

It was observed that particularly at municipalities, the perception of WWHR was positive. It was noted that there was an overlap between the objectives of the municipality and the GE Seminars.

*“This system has a history at Çankaya Municipality. We see it as community centers of the twenty-first century. We do this to enable women living here to participate in social life. Although it might seem like getting a hobby, in the last two, three years we have been directing it toward potential sources of livelihood. We also have a Jobs and Employment Division under our Human Resources Directorate. We cooperate with them too. Any reference to ‘women’s human rights’ touches our soft spot. Any reference to ‘New Ways’; ‘new ways’ are very important for a modern, democratic, and cultivated municipality such as Çankaya Municipality. In that sense, we sat down with our friends and studied them online.” (Ankara, Participant)*



<b>Table 54. Sources of Access to the GE Seminars</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Non-governmental organization I'm a member of	18
School/University	18
Other women's organizations /non-governmental organizations	17
Directors at my workplace	14
My friends	11
Colleagues at my workplace	6
Women's Human Rights- New Ways	6
Internet	4
Social Media	4

(\*) Sources with a value of 3% or above are listed.

### 3.4.4. Assessment of Satisfaction with the GE Seminars

#### 3.4.4.1. Overall Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with the GE Seminars was quite high, at 83%. Those who were not satisfied remain only at 2% (see Table 55).

<b>Table 55. GE Seminars Overall Satisfaction</b>	<b>Participants Percentage (%)</b>
1- I am very dissatisfied	1
2- I am somewhat dissatisfied	1
3- I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15
4- I am quite satisfied	45
5- I am very satisfied	38
Total	100
<b>Total Satisfaction % (4+5)</b>	<b>83</b>

Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with the Gender Equality Seminar you attended?

Although the GE Seminar covers topics most of the respondents said they were familiar with or had already internalized, the primary reasons the high level of overall satisfaction were that the seminar was participatory and fun in terms of content and method, which distinguished it from other seminars, and that it was able to prompt participants to think differently and question themselves.

*"For instance, (they said) those who like blue or those who like to drive should go on one side. It was as if they wanted to say it was not only men who liked driving but there were women who did too... (They asked) who doesn't like looking after children; it was as if (they questioned) why it was considered women's duty to look after children. It was different from other seminars, it was dynamic." (Istanbul, Participant)*

*"It made me think about how my brain works on the matter of women and men. Somebody said something like 'I help my wife at home.' People there said 'you're not helping, it's your job too.' I then realized how often I use that sentence and that it was something I did not think about too much. There are adjectives used for women and men. I realized things about myself there. It was good for me to see how naïve I let myself be, how I thought about men." (Ankara, Participant)*

#### 3.4.4.2. Factors Leading to Satisfaction

The GE Seminars generated high satisfaction among participants in all aspects (all factors were over 60%, see Table 56). The factor that generated the highest satisfaction was the attitude and interest of



the team organizing the seminar on behalf their organization, at 96%. Satisfaction regarding the duration of the seminar was still high at 69%, but below average rate of satisfaction.

<b>Table 56. Factors of Participant Satisfaction in the GE Seminars*</b>	<b>Total Satisfaction Percentage (%)</b>
Attitude and interest of the team who organized the seminar on behalf of my organization	96
Attitude and interest of the trainer	92
Attitude and interest of WWHR representatives	91
Knowledge and experience of the seminar facilitator	87
Seminar content	84
Seminar venue	83
Applications, games and exercises in the seminar	80
Seminar time	79
Seminar duration	69

(\* ) Total Satisfaction value is the sum of the values for 4-I am quite satisfied and 5-I am very satisfied. Average was 84%. Question: Please share to what extent you were satisfied with each subject in the Gender Equality Seminar you attended?

In the focus groups, mostly made up of municipal staff, it was stated that municipal directors, women’s directorates, and community/public centers had organized the seminars on behalf of the organization. Focus group participants were observed to be pleased about the fact that their municipalities were organizing awareness-raising trainings and seminars.

*“Human Resources usually sends (us) to them (trainings). I would have attended a seminar like this even if it hadn’t been mandatory.” (Istanbul, Participant)*

*“Without realizing, (I said) ‘Oh, yes! They are so right.’ There were times when I said my family instilled this in me, or I do that without realizing it. Yes, it was a bit long, a bit boring. But still I said (I’m glad) I attended.” (Izmir, Participant)*

The fact that the GE Seminars addressed legal rights, explained concepts through examples, had a dynamic structure, and used visual materials were other aspects that were raised spontaneously in terms of generating satisfaction.

*“These seminars also teach people what their legal rights are. In the end, nobody knows what their legal rights are. We live in this society but there are many laws and rules that regulate society we don’t know about. This is why trainings by NGOs like this are very important. I understand they also go to Anatolia.” (Istanbul, Participant)*

*“I was also generally satisfied, the facilitator was good in her role, didn’t make the group go to sleep.” (Izmir, Participant)*

*“(The facilitator) also gave personal examples, from her own life. And so people listened more carefully. Her style was very good. The participants also joined in (the conversation), it was more like a chat. They also expressed their thoughts.” (Izmir, Participant)*

*“There were visual presentations, examples. They were quite relevant to the subject, well-suited.” (Izmir, Participant)*



Meanwhile, despite the positive effects of the GE Seminars, it was observed that participants’ belief that personal transformation would contribute to societal transformation was weak, and that there were gaps in knowledge on how to put theory into practice. The basic obstacle at this point is the seminar consists of a single session that lasts at most four hours, and is short in duration. Although the seminar opens a space for awareness, it also left many participants with the feeling that there is still a long way to go. From this perspective, there were requests for an expanded version of the seminar, structured according to participant profiles, with added examples of practical applications.

*“In the end it only lasted a few hours. Who can apply how much, depends on the person... This is a societal thing. It’s not something we can solve as individuals.” (Ankara, Participant)*

*“Something more practical, with games can be organized.” (Ankara, Participant)*

*“There are 3000 personnel in Kadıköy Municipality. It should be mandatory for three days. Maybe a survey, questions and answers beforehand, and groups divided according to their profiles... There are too many of us, that’s why... It would have been a lot easier if there were only 100 of us. It might have been better if the content of the seminar had been shaped accordingly.” (Istanbul, Participant)*

### 3.4.5. Impact of the GE Seminars on the Participants

#### 3.4.5.1. General Impact Assessment

The majority of the participants (83%) said the GE Seminars had a positive impact on them (see Table 57).

Table 57. GE Seminars Overall Impact	Participants Percentage (%)
1- It had a very negative impact	0
2- It had a somewhat negative impact	0
3- It had no impact	17
4- It had a somewhat positive impact	43
5- It had a very positive impact	40
Total	100
<b>Total Impact Percentage (%) (4+5)</b>	<b>83</b>

*Question: In general, how would you assess the impact of the Gender Equality Seminar on your life?*

Despite the high positive impact revealed by the survey results, it also needs to be noted that in the focus group discussions, some participants were uninterested in the topic, and were unable to clearly describe the content and potential impact areas of the seminar; in addition, overall participation in the discussion was low. Considering the target audience and the limited duration of the seminar, it can be said that this outcome is understandable. Yet some focus group participants had difficulty differentiating the GE Seminar from other trainings they had attended. This group of people said they had recently attended numerous trainings on gender equality, and had difficulty differentiating the GE Seminars from the other trainings. On the positive side, some GE Seminar participants in the focus groups defined the concept of gender equality as freedom of expression, freedom to be yourself, equal opportunities, breaking traditional gender role stereotypes, women’s employment, positive discrimination geared to women, and men’s liberation, and described their gains from the seminar as raised awareness, looking at issues at depth, and having gained new perspectives.



*“Before the seminar I thought gender equality was women and men being equal, but after the seminar it turned out to be something different. We (learned) things like gender equality refers to the weight of the roles imposed on people that put everyone at a disadvantage, allowing people to undertake the tasks they are capable of, and enabling positive discrimination where they can’t.” (Izmir, Participant)*

Aspects of the seminar that stayed with and made an impression on the participants included parenting styles related to raising girls and boys, the impact of parental attitudes on children, using the colors pink and blue, choosing toys on the basis of children’s sex, the weak and strong aspects of women and men, and areas where positive discrimination may be used. Exercises carried out during the seminar on these issues were remembered the most.

*“Giving boys cars or buying Barbie dolls for girls was interesting. Or the issue with colors; for instance, getting pink clothes for daughters, blue for sons. It created awareness on that topic.” (Istanbul, Participant)*

*“We (learned) why pink (clothes) are bought particularly for girls and why blue is chosen for boys, and that mothers and fathers are the first discriminate without even realizing it. Speaking for myself, we make that judgment ourselves without realizing it.” (Izmir, Participant)*

*“There are things that we are stuck on, for instance we still refer to women as ladies. Why? They say it’s rude (to use the word woman). This is what I mean when I say awareness! How can I explain, it’s like waking up.” (Istanbul, Participant)*

*“It contributed to our lives about matters such as colors, helping each other, learning legal regulations a lot better, and the need for positive discrimination.” (Izmir, Participant)*

### 3.4.5.2. Detailed Impact Assessment

To a great extent, the GE Seminars succeeded in informing participants on the topics it aimed to contribute to (average contribution 58%). The topic that the GE Seminars contributed most to was on the subject of “emotional violence against women,” at 66%. This was followed by “the definition of gender” and “physical violence against women,” at 65%. “Gender equality” and “equality of women and men under the Turkish Criminal Code” were other subjects that made a considerable contribution, at 60% (see Table 58).

Table 58. Components of the GE Seminar’s Contributions to Participants*	Total Contribution Percentage (%)
Emotional violence against women	66
Definition of gender	65
Physical violence against women	65
Gender equality	60
Equality of women and men under the Turkish Criminal Code	60
Institutions to apply to in combating violence against women	58
Economic violence against women	57
Equality of women and men under the Turkish Civil Code	56
International legislation and conventions on gender equality	51
Feminism and the women’s movement	49
Equality of women and men under the Turkish Constitution	46

(\*) Total contribution value is the sum of the options 10, 9 and 8. Average was 58%.



Question: Did the Gender Equality Seminar you attended contribute to your level of knowledge on the following topics?

Participants in the focus groups were observed to be more expressive about the contribution of the seminar in relation to subjects such as the definition of gender equality and different types of violence. They mostly gave examples about experiencing inequality in their private lives without being aware of it, and spoke often about how they transformed in terms of gender equality due to increased awareness that resulted from the GE Seminar.

*“If we’re doing domestic tasks (my husband) helps me. But after (the GE Seminar, I began to think) why do I say is he helping me, he was doing what he was supposed to do in his own way, but I still thanked him.” (Ankara, Participant)*

*“I have red shoes for instance. I wouldn’t wear them if I saw them on someone else, red sneakers that men wouldn’t wear, for instance. I mean, it’s easy to wear them and I’ve been wearing them for 2-3 years, nobody says anything.” (Izmir, Participant)*

*“I used to think (to clean) you always had to hire a woman, it’s a woman’s job, there is no way a man can clean windows, that would be shameful. But (another male participant who said he cleaned windows) said he and his wife shared a very strong and loving bond. What he said really changed how I look at that. My fixed views shifted. Now, men can also do it if need be.” (Izmir, Participant)*

### 3.4.5.3. Using the Acquired Information at the Workplace

Forty-two participants were employed, and 90% of them said they used the information they gained in the GE Seminars at their place of work (see Table 59).

Table 59. Using the Information Acquired at the GE Seminars at the Workplace	Percentage (%)
1-I never use it	0
2-I don’t use it very often	10
3-I partially use it	52
4-I use it very often	38
Total	100
<b>Using the Information Acquired at the GE Seminars at the Workplace in Total (%) (3+4)</b>	<b>90</b>

Question: Do you use the information acquired at the Gender Equality Seminar you attended in your work?

Focus group participants who said they talked about the content of the GE Seminar both at home and at work stated adopting a more positive discriminatory attitude both in the matter of increasing GE awareness at work and towards women.

*“The same performance is expected from everyone at work; the same performance from women, and the same performance from men. The same performance is expected from someone who is 20 and someone who is 50. Moreover, there are not many women in management positions, they hold less senior positions. I think the reason women are unable to advance, unable to be upwardly mobile, is because women are on their own. Women are not united.” (Izmir, Participant)*



*“All our women are organizers in the active women’s movement.” (Ankara, Participant)*

*“Most participants probably didn’t know that the municipality has a Gender Equality Division. Because it’s been established only recently. And municipal staff are provided numerous trainings on technical subjects. It was the first time a training was provided on this topic. It was for all personnel. It’s a good thing.” (Istanbul, Participant)*

**3.4.5.4. Rate of Recommendation**

Almost all participants (98%) reported that they would recommend the GE Seminars to those around them (see Table 60).

*“I recommend it every day anyway. But we had another project that was developed after it. The Butterfly Project. There was the matter of legal aid signed between the Ankara Bar Association and our Women’s Directorate. That seminar pushed us to remind them of it. The Butterfly Project was signed after that.” (Ankara, Participant)*

<b>Table 60. Rate of Recommendation for the GE Seminars</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
1-I definitely wouldn’t recommend it	0
2-I wouldn’t quite recommend it	2
3-I would somewhat recommend it	15
4-I would definitely recommend it	83
Total	100
<b>Total Recommendation (%) (3+4)</b>	<b>95</b>

*Question: Would you recommend the Gender Equality Seminar you attended to those around you?*

**3.4.5.5. Expectations and Suggestions**

On the matter of how to make the GE Seminars more effective and beneficial, the top suggestion in the quantitative survey was to present the material more clearly (31%, see Table 61). However, it should be noted that there were no findings in line with this view in the focus groups.

*“It was very clear. I mean, it was simple. Easily understandable. She asked as she explained; for instance, she would show it on the screen and ask “What do you think is the sex of this baby?” ... Right there, she included us (in the seminar). There were discussions after we covered the topics.” (Istanbul, Participant)*

Respondents were observed to be polarized in terms of the length of the seminar. While 14% of them suggested extending the duration of the seminar, 10% suggested shortening it. There were also participants who requested examples be provided during the seminar (12%), as well as suggestions to improve the venue where it was held (10%).

<b>Table 61. Participant Suggestions for the GE Seminars*</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Clearer explanations	31
Seminar should be longer in duration	14
Examples should be provided	12
Seminar should be shorter in duration	10
The quality of the venue/place where seminar was held should be improved	10
Number of participants should be increased	8
It should be more interactive	6



Number of speakers should be increased	5
Male participants should be reached	5
There should be videos / visual materials	5
<i>I have no suggestions</i>	13

(\*) Coded answers to open-ended questions. Factors with a value of 5% and above are listed.

Question: In your view, what could have been done better in the Gender Equality Seminar you attended?

### 3.5. Program Partners' Assessment of Training Programs and Seminars

In this section, findings from the in-depth interviews carried out with the representatives of WWHR's program partners will be presented, including Municipalities in Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, and Diyarbakir; Non-Governmental Organizations, and International Organizations.

#### 3.5.1. Evaluation of Training Programs and Seminars by Program Partners

Almost all of the program partners interviewed within the scope of the Impact Analysis Study were very knowledgeable and highly aware of WWHR's field of work. In particular, their level of knowledge in relation to WWHR's activities geared to planning and implementing trainings in the field of women's human rights, improving laws through national and international advocacy, and work on influencing the policies on women in Turkey was impressive.

All program partners were observed to have a rather positive impression of and experiences with WWHR. WWHR was described as a institutional and successfully organized structure. Its professional functioning and system was met with appreciation.

WWHR's employees and volunteers were also admired for having strong communication skills and friendly relationships; showing interest; being solution-oriented, hardworking, altruistic, non-hierarchical, good at their jobs, and well-equipped; having strong personal skills, and being open to cooperation. Factors that generated positive experiences with the training activities developed and run by WWHR also included the following:

##### a) In relation to trainings:

- Programs are free of charge
- Modules differ from those provided in trainings by other organizations (such as legal rights, gender-sensitive parenting, and children's rights)
- Materials and documents that make the group facilitators' job easier are readily available; training programs are well-structured, including times, which makes life easier for people who have attended the Trainer Training
- Supervision support is provided to people who have attended the Trainer Training
- Practical methods are included in the group work, which gives participants the opportunity to discuss topics
- WWHR directs group facilitators to the program partners if they do not have group facilitators within the organization or existing group facilitators in the organization are not available due to workload
- Has a team of group facilitators who understand women from different backgrounds and can speak the same language
- Does not discriminate among participants on the basis of their educational backgrounds / social status during the training programs
- Training programs have an empowering effect on women
- Motivates and honors women by providing a Certificate of Attendance to those who complete the programs



b) In relation to operations:

- Quick response to requests
- Information and experience sharing
- Provision of materials
- Provision of support on proposal writing and budget planning upon request
- Provision of up-to-date information on laws upon request

*“Until now, I had never come across any organization that voluntarily worked so much for women, for people. So many women together and voluntarily, willingly... I had never seen women working on behalf of humanity by making personal sacrifices.” (Adiyaman, NGO Representative)*

*“They have an orderly operation anyhow. It is an association that knows very well what they will do. Things they do, they know very well. The documents are great! Everything is ready; where, how, for how long... After examining the documents, the fact that they are printed in various languages, they are a remarkable source of data. We should benefit from that. Because it’s a very good thing. It’s a very well organized program in explaining women their rights.” (Izmir, Municipal Representative)*

*“I had heard of many education programs on women’s health, reproductive health, sexuality. Witnessed them, even; but adopting a program on women’s rights, geared to women’s empowerment, seemed very different.” (Mardin, Municipal Representative)*

While experiences regarding the collaboration processes with WWHR were mostly mainly positive, one person among municipal representatives underlined that non-governmental organizations in general should have good command of municipal legislation and carry out relevant processes accordingly.

*“It is like this with non-governmental organizations in general, they do not know the public sector. There are legal limitations to what we can do. We are bound by them. We could do certain things in other ways, but it would not be how they want it. When I’m budgeting, I need to develop a project and write it in accordance with the budget codes provided by law. Legal considerations, receipts of costs, everything. When certain things are requested and we say ‘we can’t do it,’ I don’t think this is understood well enough. If an organization is working with a municipality, they should know municipal legislation.” (Izmir, Municipal Representative)*

While issues raised in relation to improving and further developing HREP varied from province to province, these areas have been grouped under four headings: implementation, group facilitators, participants, and materials.

- Providing people who have attended the Trainer Training with instructions on what to do and how to contain cases where participants talk about emotionally difficult subjects, or having a psychologist present during the program; the fact that people who have attended the Trainer Training feel pressurized due to the obligation to start a group within a certain period of time/not having a job description or venue suitable for running a group; difficulties in sustaining regular attendance due to living in a big city and the lengthy duration of the program (**Istanbul**)
- Being dependent on one person because the training was provided only by that person; experiencing breaks in the program because the group facilitator left the city before completing the training; delays in sending the certificates; modules on women’s history and feminism were covered superficially; needing further information on legal rights and gaps in the law (**Urfa**)
- Needing materials in Kurdish so as to be able to implement the program in villages in particular; difficulties in women attending evening programs; difficulties in regular attendance by women with children (**Diyarbakir**)



*“We organized vocational courses in an organization affiliated with the municipality in the evening. The group consisted of university students because they were available at those hours, those days. It was not possible to attract homemakers and employed women.” (Mardin, Municipal Representative)*

### 3.5.2. Motivations for Collaboration and Partnership Processes

The basic motivation for collaboration for the interviewed program partners was observed to be a desire to develop programs and projects on women’s human rights in their own institutions, and train trainers. How the collaboration began varied depending on the manner in which the relationship was established and its history.

The development of first contact with WWHR varied. Program partners met WWHR and learned about HREP through either an assignment while previously working at the General Directorate for Social Services and Child Protection, or positive references from people they knew who attended HREP or HREP consultants, or having met a WWHR staff member at meeting on women, or being contacted by WWHR with a proposal for collaboration.

*“Friends who are social workers knew about the program, (WWHR representatives) had probably met with to them. There was a request from our own employees. When they said ‘We are doing this,’ the first thing that attracted me was the fact that we would be training our own trainers at our own institution. I don’t think that it’s good for the institution to be permanently dependent on another.” (Istanbul, Municipal Representative)*

*“I hadn’t heard of (WWHR) when I was at the district municipality, but two-three friends had attended the Trainer Training. I became acquainted with the training my friends had attended and (WWHR) after I started work at the Metropolitan Municipality and met (WWHR Representative). They had come to Diyarbakir for a meeting about the Trainer Training. They had got together and I met them at that meeting. They reached out to us.” (Diyarbakir, Municipal Representative)*

*“I have known the (WWHR Representative) for a very long time. We met in a meeting, I don’t remember which one. It was a meeting in Istanbul, I think it was six-seven years ago. I became aware of the women’s human rights caravan. It was talked about in the region too, women’s human rights. I spoke with (another WWHR representative) at the Women’s Shelters Convention. In fact, in our organization, HREP was carried out during the winter. We are now starting the second group in the organization.” (Urfa, NGO Representative)*

Although steps taken during the collaboration process can vary depending on the organization, training programs organized with the support of WWHR within organizations were observed to be the basic component of partnership processes. Collaboration protocols signed with some municipalities form an important official basis to ensure that these partnerships are sustainable and long lasting.

*“Previously when I worked at the Ministry, I didn’t know (about WWHR) since work there was more stagnant. I heard about them after I came here and started at the municipality. We signed (a protocol) and we’re trying to work accordingly. We actually signed the protocol to provide continuity. Ahmet will leave Mehmet will start, Ayşe will leave Fatma will start; we wanted continuity so that it would not depend on personal issues. There is this organization, it provides a valuable training. It offers Trainer Training on women’s human rights, educates people. This is how we try to reach many women locally, and we do.” (Izmir, Municipal Representative)*

Difficulties in the collaboration process mainly point to the impact that the anti-equality shift in governmental policies has had at the political and societal levels. Experiences related to participation conditions of the training were also mentioned:

- 1) The negative shift in governmental policies regarding women over the past decade, the increase in discriminatory policies and decrease in political and financial support to work related to women in the process.

*“The government cut 30% of the funding allocated to the Municipality. When that happened, our Municipality asked us for cutbacks as well. We already made the sacrifices that we could. There was a 30% decrease. But I can say that overall, this has not affected the work related to women. We are able to print our materials, use our vehicles. Or find backing for an activity. We did sacrifice some things, but we’re mostly in a good place.” (Izmir, Municipal Representative)*

*“After the trustee (was appointed), work related to women took a serious blow. There were things done to purposefully block the path we had been trying to clear.” (Diyarbakir, Municipal Representative)*

- 2) The financial crisis taking priority over women’s rights on the agenda.

*“I am unsure as to whether we are moving towards a place where rights acquired at women’s organizations until now will gradually be lost. I mean, we’re just watching... For years, (women’s organizations) have been in a long lasting struggle to change the lives of women. There are women whose only focus is this, who are working to change and transform women’s lives so that they can claim certain rights. Unfortunately, though, the majority of women are dealing with daily life; how can I care for my children, send them to school, feed them. Most of society is dealing with these issues.” (Istanbul, Municipal Representative)*

- 3) Increased overall fear to participate in and implement activities on gender equality due to reasons such as government policies that aim to deter NGOs, or in the field of gender equality, the dismissal of employees in organizations, similar to what happened at municipalities and universities that were appointed trustees especially during the State of Emergency period.

*“To be honest, like all training programs, (HREP too) was being blockaded. Women had to go through identity checks to attend the training. The number (of participants) decreased and fell. Friends who were not afraid, who were sure of themselves began to attend. We went from twenty people down to seven or eight.” (Urfa, NGO Representative)*

*“This is a period where the ties between universities and municipalities has been cut. Particularly with women’s research centers. We decided to hold a workshop. We decided on how to plan it, but it came to a standstill, because one of the professors was dismissed. We are seeing that professors in the field of gender are being dismissed.” (Izmir, Municipal Representative)*

*“At this point, it would be meaningful to do it with somewhat less political language, because politics has now become our nightmare, in the true meaning of the word. Even a reference (to politics) causes serious recurrence (of traumas). This can sometimes cause us to withdraw. Many of us are now trying to earn a living. As I said, we are not uninvolved in politics, but if (the program) at least appeared free of it from the outside, it would open space for other things. After opening that space, creating a strong space, then all sorts (politics) can be talked about. It*



would become difficult to fear. This is what I wish for during this time, at least.” **(Mardin, Municipal Representative)**

- 4) For NGOs, difficulties in finding venues that enable continuity and paying rent.

*“Of course there are financial difficulties. Our association is experiencing the same, for instance. When there were projects, that at least covered the rent. We handled other things by ourselves, but now got a place, and again it wasn’t paid. When it isn’t paid, I have to pay for it. I experience the problem personally.”* **(Adiyaman, NGO Representative)**

- 5) Difficulties participants and group facilitators encounter from their husbands, the fact that some conservative and traditional male family members do not want “strong women” and therefore, transformation being unilateral.

*“Group facilitators who took the training were really affected by it, became better equipped, and did the group work with much greater self-confidence. But women would make a request, saying we attend the training, it’s very good, and we learn a lot of new things, become aware of many things, but when we go home our husband is still at the same place. They wanted their husbands to attend the training. We encountered this on often; our husbands should also attend the training, talk about all this with them too. Unilateral awareness can sometimes cause pain for women after a point.”* **(Diyarbakir, Municipal Representative)**

- 6) For municipalities, the duration of the program being too long and having to implement the program during work hours.

*“We sent our friends to the training, and when they returned, we spent effort to form their groups here, because our first goal was to organize it at our institution. It was naturally a little difficult at first to form groups during work hours, also because the training is long. Because we started with the tea room and security. We started with the cleaning personnel. People didn’t really understand it at first. Then the mayor came to the certificate ceremony of the first group, we had organized quite an impressive ceremony, and the participants expressed themselves really well. Of course, the fact that the mayor came and said, ‘these trainings are important, we should continue with them, let’s give them the support they need’ enabled other directors to get the message, and then they began to say, ‘this is important, let’s focus on it.’”* **(Istanbul, Municipal Representative)**

- 7) The fact that continued attendance is required for the training, which is not compatible with women’s daily life conditions, especially in rural/less developed areas and regions where women are relatively more oppressed.

*“Women’s attendance in the training can be a bit difficult. She has a baby, something happens. Because (the program) requires attendance. When she misses a class, I mean a session, she’s one step behind the others, this happened once or twice.”* **(Adiyaman, NGO Representative)**

Faced with these difficulties, the most noticeable emotion that program partners feel can be described as “helplessness.” Program partners who worked in civil society noted that the changing political climate and government policies that trigger regression in the area of women’s human rights, the State of Emergency, and the created atmosphere of fear had a negative impact on them.



Although both NGO staff who fear losing both their jobs and their freedom, and municipal staff who are directly impacted by the political agenda frequently drew a pessimistic picture of the future, these stakeholders were observed to maintain their belief and willingness to fight and stand strong in the field of women’s human rights.

*“We can’t talk about rights or liberties at a time when freedoms have been extremely curtailed, the State of Emergency is still felt even though it has been lifted, and we have moved to a one-man regime. Yet we also see the court judgments, which is precisely the reason we do this work and stand up straight.” (Ankara, Municipal Representative)*

*“I can only suggest one thing; continue to fight! My mother was a woman who fought, I am a woman who fights, my daughter is also a woman who fights; in other words, gender inequality is not something that can be resolved in one generation, and regardless of whether the problems and the pain caused by this discrimination touch your life or not—I mean in every sense, it’s not as if something touches you and another thing doesn’t—everyone gets their fair share. We will continue to fight.” (Izmir, Municipal Representative)*

*“I’m afraid, for instance, that something might happen to my profession at any time! Because as you know, many lawyers have been dismissed from their professions, same with doctors. It seems as though (the next five years) will be very difficult. We need to be both financially independent and give up on institutionalization. This is how we get shut down. There should be more initiatives, collectives, legal entities. I think women should stick together more. We can even do this as neighbors. It is not absolutely necessary to institutionalize.” (Van, NGO Representative)*

### 3.5.3. Impact of Collaboration on Partner Institutions, Individuals within Institutions and Participants

All interviewed program partners stated that collaborating with WWHR had positive impact in many respects at both the institutional and personal level. Aspects of impact on institutions, institutional staff, group facilitators, and participants are provided in detail in Table 62.

**Table 62. Impact of Collaboration on Program Partners**

I) <u>Impact at Institutional Level</u>
<p>✓ <b>Partnership with WWHR provided program partners prestige, visibility, and power. They gained a well-equipped team as a result of staff members who attended the Trainer Training, as well as the competency to take the initiative and run the program on their own behalf. While they achieved visibility by advertising the training programs they held, they also reflect a prestigious image by focusing on women’s human rights. Also, since the ability to organize a successful training serves as a reference and opens the door to the creation of new programs, it strengthens the institution.</b></p>
<p><i>“(Our association) began to be taken a bit more seriously. The organization makes big things happen, it (offers) very good trainings. For example, I implemented HREP for the first time last year. It created a bigger reaction last year. Why; because there were people from different political groups. People who are prominent there... They came, saying they had heard about HREP’s reputation.” (Adiyaman, NGO Representative)</i></p>
<p><i>“This topic has gradually been gaining prestige. As you know, (subjects) like women’s rights, gender equality used to be (on the back burner) especially in male dominated departments, but they began to surface as problems.” (Istanbul, Municipal Representative)</i></p>
<p><i>“HREP contributed to our organizing locally. Women who had taken HREP and who hadn’t, we came</i></p>

together and (established an association). Then the association grew and developed a lot. It worked in Turkey on an international level. We even opened a women's information center and a shelter. Many people from the association attended the HREP Trainer Training. I always had a group, until our association was shut down." **(Van, NGO Representative)**

- ✓ **It was reported that there was an increase in the perceived value and policies against violence in institutions. Particularly in municipalities, while women's value both from female and male employees' perspective went up, policies for positive discrimination began to be developed and be visible. For instance, one municipality developed a policy in order to prevent violence against women where a part of the salary of male employees using violence against their spouses would be cut and paid to their spouses. HREP trainers also had a contribution in developing this practice which was created as a result of the efforts of women within the municipality. In some NGOs, HREP is a compulsory education program for membership and activism and has played a role in defining communication standards within the NGO.**

*"I think an understanding where this institution and women are valued differently has emerged."* **(Istanbul, Municipal Representative)**

*"Provisions relating to personnel who use violence against their spouses being subject to various sanctions have been inserted in the contract, for instance, payment of half a salary to the spouse. Many municipalities here have inserted this in their contracts."* **(Diyarbakir, Municipal Representative)**

*"Our Charter included a condition for membership providing for attendance at Women's Human Rights and Solidarity Education Program. Those who did not attend could not work as an activist in the organization. HREP had brought limitations and arrangements on subjects such as language style etc. Those who didn't attend the mentioned program could not speak to women who came to the information centre. In other words, no counselee could get in touch with people who didn't attend the mentioned program."* **(Van, NGO Representative)**

- ✓ **Through programs run via group facilitators competent in their respective fields, WWHR strengthens municipalities by contributing to better equipped municipal human resources. While training group facilitators is an endeavor that requires both time and costs for municipalities, the fact that WWHR provides the HREP Trainer Training, supervision support, and materials free of charge renders this collaboration even more valuable. Since municipalities consider it suitable to train their own group facilitators for sustainability, the Trainer Training is particularly important.**

*"I don't think of it in terms of non-governmental organizations coming and determining a topic for us, but joint collaboration with a non-governmental organization that fits our policies in a given area is enriching for our human resources."* **(Istanbul, Municipal Representative)**

*"Collaborating with NGOs is very comforting, both institutionally and personally. Because you're able to have direct contact with experts on the topic."* **(Ankara, Municipal Representative)**

- ✓ **NGO representatives who attended the HREP Trainer Training find opportunity to expand the scope of the activities of their own institutions, thereby contributing to other women to organize locally. WWHR's support in this process is very much appreciated.**

*"We implemented HREP with women in Muş, Bitlis, Hakkari. Afterwards, these women established associations; in Muş, in Hakkari, in Bitlis. World Women's Association was founded in Tatvan; they*

also organized locally after taking HREP. We even worked in districts and villages. We also partnered (with WWHR) in other activities.” **(Van, NGO Representative)**

- ✓ **At municipalities that have Gender Equality, Women’s Issues, and LGBTI+ Issues departments, WWHR’s training programs increase awareness on discrimination and contribute to shaping equality policies in the relevant municipal departments.**

*“It made a big personal impact on me, so naturally it affected the structuring work being done in the equality department.” **(Istanbul, Municipal Representative)***

- ✓ **WWHR’s training programs provide not only ideas and inspiration for additional programs to be added to the trainings organized by the municipality and NGOs, but also the opportunity to enrich these programs by integrating suitable HREP modules into existing and new programs or implement HREP with a different structure (camp / festival etc).**

*“It paved the way for mixed education programs. This was something that overlapped with my personal point of view to a great extent. I was able to explain this to men more easily. Always women, women, women... Now it’s very clear. We provide training to mixed groups. We provide training to father groups. These activities support women but also opens men’s minds.” **(Ankara, Municipal Representative)***

*“It’s especially useful as a resource in training programs. When they requested communications training in a different area, (for instance) for the 112 City Health Directorate personnel, I benefited from the training resources. I made use of the handouts; anyway, it was a mixed thing. It went really well. People in their fifties role playing, there were fun moments too.” **(Mardin, Municipal Representative)***

*“We organized a 5-day camp called ‘Women’s Human Rights’ for 50 women. As you know, HREP is not a didactic program. We provided the training also through other methods. For instance, we had two 4-day camps. We were going to continue but unfortunately couldn’t, because we were shut down.” **(Van, NGO Representative)***

- ✓ **While implementing the programs, the relationship between municipal employees running the programs as group facilitators and municipal directors strengthened.**

*“I think it served as a bridge between us and the staff members involved in trainings. There (at the training), they (the group facilitators) shed their work identity and assume another identity. They express themselves very well.” **(Istanbul, Municipal Representative)***

## **II) Impact on Organizational Staff and Group Facilitators**

- ✓ **WWHR’s training programs generated increased awareness and sensitivity on discrimination, feminism, women’s rights, and gender equality among staff members involved in organizing the trainings and the group facilitators attached to the organizations.**

*“They became more aware of gender equality when examples were provided from the modules to male staff members who had children.” **(Izmir, Municipal Representative)***

*“For instance, it was the first time I met such a feminist group, that was good. There is a feminist in every woman. I had been thinking like a feminist, without being aware of it.” **(Adiyaman, NGO)***

**Representative)**

*“We saw (gender equality) a bit as something that was higher level and official. For many people, the definition of women’s human rights made great contributions not just because we were women, but because we were able to learn about our existing rights. This allowed us to incorporate it into our own space, our own lives.” (Mardin, Municipal Representative)*

*“My life and my view of life changed considerably. (After HREP) I have a more difficult life compared to my old life. Why? Because I am aware; I am aware of discrimination as a woman, be it in the workplace, at school, on the street, or wherever. Because a third eye opens and sounds an immediate alarm when we experience it.” (Van, NGO Representative)*

- ✓ **The women took on more active roles as a result of gained awareness and increased self-confidence.**

*(After HREP) We had 16 (village head) candidates from the Woman Friendly Cities Project (Adiyaman, NGO Representative)*

- ✓ **While using language sensitive to gender equality became more widespread, these individuals also encouraged people around them to be sensitive to this matter.**

*“The language you use outside changes. Language use has been the thing we’ve paid the most attention over the past year.” (Ankara, Municipal Representative)*

- ✓ **Advocating for women’s rights began to take hold both within the organization and outside it. Disseminating training materials with other people also came to the fore as an act of advocacy.**

*“I steer (the subject) towards women’s human rights everywhere and in every situation, to both advocate for them and try to raise awareness.” (Ankara, Municipal Representative)*

*“For instance, if my group has 22 members, I ask for 24 (booklets). Those who come, my colleagues, they all have these (booklets). Our booklets, We have Rights, etc. I also resort to humor, I gift (the booklets) by saying they are our dowries.” (Mardin, Municipal Representative)*

- ✓ **An increase in the propensity to organize and show solidarity was observed among the stakeholders involved in implementing the program. Some have taken action to establish an association, join/follow existing associations, act as a group, develop projects, participate in elections, or support woman candidates.**

*“I’m not a member of any associations but we are considering establishing one. We’re thinking about establishing a Women’s Solidarity Association (soon).” (Istanbul, Municipal Representative)*

*“The modules on economy and local organizing are very important. Program participants want to organize locally. In the elections, they wanted to support women candidates. They’re developing projects to have their voices heard.” (Izmir, Municipal Representative)*

- ✓ **There was an increase in self-confidence, both among people who attend the Trainer Training, and people from the organization who backed the training and spent effort to organize it. The visibility of HREP’s success from both the inside and outside was effective to this end.**

*"It makes one happy to see the change in self-expression among all the women following the program. Their self-confidence gives you self-confidence." (Istanbul, Municipal Representative)*

*"I used to have a simpler and more straightforward outlook, my perspective broadened. I became more self-confident, my dialogue with my husband was affected very positively." (Diyarbakir, Municipal Representative)*

*"I didn't know what it meant to say I. So I was lacking that as well. It raised serious awareness in me in that sense. There was also this; I wanted to be useful, to volunteer (at something) but didn't have a key to open doors at that point. It served as a key for me." (Mardin, Municipal Representative)*

### III) Impact on Participants

- ✓ **An increase in self-confidence and awareness was observed in participant women who benefited from the program organized by the institution. In a framework of claiming-defending rights, just the fact that there were women who requested the program be continued was considered a reflection of increased self-confidence.**

*"For one thing, the training is being demanded. This is great! The fact that people ask for it to go on, to be longer, shows how successful it is. I'm sure those women stand taller in their lives." (Ankara, Municipal Representative)*

*"(Women say) If he's human, so am I; if he can benefit, so can I. They have learned this equality." (Adiyaman, NGO Representative)*

- ✓ **Improved self-expression skills among the participant women was described as a very noticeable contribution. Improvement in communication skills also contributed to strengthening communication in the family for women who attended HREP.**

*"(There was) a friend who was very introverted, who couldn't express herself, who had various problems. I noticed that she became better at expressing herself and gained more awareness." (Urfa, NGO Representative)*

*"Many applicants who come to use are usually women who have been subjected to violence. Particularly, when they wanted to express their emotions, many of them couldn't. (With the program) We obtained more visible results. I now assign homework to people who come to me for counseling, geared to saying 'I' or writing down their emotions, getting to know themselves." (Mardin, Municipal Representative)*

*"Women who attended the training (at our association) sometimes had conflicts with their husbands (prior to the program). We learn about good communication skills in HREP. There are lengthy activities, etc. I've come across many people who attended HREP here, whose husband, family, and social circle were against it at first but were later glad that they did." (Van, NGO Representative)*

- ✓ **With increased self-confidence and knowledge, an increase in the women's participation in the workforce and politics was also observed.**

*"All women lack self-confidence. They want to do things but don't have the courage. Can't trust themselves. People will talk (they say). Some entered the workforce after attending (the program)." (Adiyaman, NGO Representative)*

- ✓ **The positive change in how feminism is viewed can be described as another aspect of HREP's contribution. Despite the negative perception in society, the fact that participants called themselves feminists without hesitation was interpreted as an indicator of personal empowerment.**

*"A feminist is an enemy of men, she'll do anything she likes. I don't know, (there were) many different views. These views shifted, to an extent (with the training). Consider them all talking about it with people in their social circle. Now everyone is able to say they're feminists." (Adiyaman, NGO Representative)*

*"There are only two men in my family and we're all feminists." (Van, NGO Representative)*

- ✓ **Women's strengthened communication and relationships with their husbands, in the family, was expressed as another aspect of HREP's contributions.**

*"We also covered how the participants can express themselves better. There were so many women whose communication skills improved; there were some who were at the brink of getting divorced due simply to a misunderstanding because they didn't know communication techniques, who ended up not getting divorced." (Istanbul, Municipal Representative)*

- ✓ **Women's increased awareness about their legal rights motivated them into taking action.**

*"For instance, annotations on deeds was an explosive topic here. Participants went to the Land Registry. They all have property registered in their name (had annotations added)." (Adiyaman, NGO Representative)*

- ✓ **Increased sensitivity to raising children with gender equality values was another attainment that was considered noteworthy. Sensitivity to making sure they did not make their daughters experience not putting did was rather valuable as another desired gain.**

*"There was feedback where they said they would engage in more gender-sensitive parenting. We heard from facilitators running local groups that in particular, women who felt great regret due to not being allowed to continue their schooling were more supportive of their daughters." (Istanbul, Municipal Representative)*

- ✓ **The observed increase in breaking sexuality-related taboos and in awareness of being a "woman" was important in illustrating women valued themselves more.**

*"We have two sessions on sexuality in HREP. Colleagues say that they receive many questions. Since we look at it as a taboo; it's (a subject) that is never talked about, (the perception is) women won't want it, it's shameful for women, it's unattainable for women. Because it (sexuality) was discussed as something natural, we heard there was a lot of feedback to the effect that some wanted it (the module) to go on for longer, let's talk about it more." (Istanbul, Municipal Representative)*

*"There is a friend whose way of expressing herself, self-confidence, and how she named her experiences (changed) ever since she began to attend the training. For women encounter real difficulties in naming or accepting their experiences. I saw that it helped this friend get to know herself better and confront her personal reality. I noticed that her self-confidence increased even more in these sessions. Because we had never had a training on sexuality." (Adiyaman, NGO Representative)*



The mainly positive experiences gained during the collaboration process contributed to partners becoming women's human rights advocates with participatory responsibility not only in their own organizations, but in their personal lives as well.

*"I asked my colleagues to distribute the booklets we were given within their apartment blocks."  
(Izmir, NGO Representative)*

It was noted that following the training, a few people said they experienced alienation in society as a feminist and a person who was aware of discrimination.

*"Thinking about it in terms of the region, when my friends and I didn't see eye-to-eye on matters, I began to feel somewhat lonely in Mardin. In personal relationships as well, because a strong woman always scares men. It can also vary in a social sense, and a personal sense; I became a bit reactive in my personal life and I began to address things differently. I was able to put this into my actions. At that point, you don't hear all that many good things. But while I grew lonely with respect to the opposite sex, I was empowered in relating to fellow women."  
(Mardin, Municipal Representative)*

### **3.6. Program Implementers' Assessment of Training Programs and Seminars**

The development processes of the programs, their successful aspects, potential for development, and prospects were assessed on the basis of the opinions and future predictions of WWHR program implementers and consultants Damla Eroğlu, Duygu Dokuz Şahin, Gülşah Seral, İpek İlkaracan, Liz Erçevik Amado, Nigar Etizer Karacık, and Zelal Ayman, as well as ILO program partners Ebru Özberk Anlı ve Özge Berber Ağtaş.

#### **a) Assessment of HREP from the Perspective of Program Implementers**

The period where WWHR partnered with GDSSCP was referred to as a mutually productive period in many respects.

*"Missions overlapped. We contributed knowledge and expertise, by making constant revisions to increase impact."  
(WWHR Representative)*

*"We had organized the first Trainer Training in August 1998. We launched the first Trainer Training fieldwork with staff members from community centers and women's shelters. We quickly saw on the field that this was a very good match."  
(WWHR Representative)*

*"There were things I couldn't find the strength to set down on paper by myself, and it was wonderful to find them all available in one place. We used to have community center coordination and assessment boards, I wrote to them straight away and said: This needs to reach each and every woman in the neighborhoods."  
(WWHR Representative)*

It was stated that the Protocol signed with the GDSS in 1998 had lead to gains such as training HREP group facilitators who were professionally equipped in areas such as social work and psychology, using community centers that were open to the public as group venues, ensuring that HREP groups were held at these centers during work hours, and being able to form groups easily; the fact that there is presently a severe bottleneck with regard to all these matters was also expressed, in different ways. Changes in governmental policies especially after 2012, and the impact these changes had on public institutions and municipalities was said to be the reason for this bottleneck, leading to fewer program partnerships and an uncertain future.



*“After 2012, we encountered a clear you can’t do it (attitude). There were no written grounds. There was nothing written telling us we couldn’t do it. They were verbally saying we couldn’t do it, but group facilitators employed by the ministry have a written protocol in their hands; a duty order. Say they comply with written orders, and there is a hundred petitions from the public to register (for the training); what happens then?” (WWHR Representative)*

According to WWHR representatives and consultants, HREP’s greatest success is its ability to empower and ultimately transform women, as is the objective. It was noted that this transformation becomes observable from the sixth week onwards, while program impact on the lives of participants could emerge after six months in some women, and one year in others.

*“You are presently conducting the third impact assessment of HREP. If I’m not mistaken, the rate of women who said their self-confidence increased in the first and second assessments were 94% and 96%. My guess is that it is this confidence that enables a woman to go and set up a business, or complete her education. For another to say ‘I no longer stir my husband’s tea.’ These are all the same to me. If a woman is able to get to that point, she will know how to take and use that empowerment.” (WWHR Representative)*

Leading factors underlying HREP’s success are primarily that it was shaped in the field from a feminist perspective, has comprehensive and correct content that was painstakingly prepared with a lot of effort, flows on the basis of a well-calculated time plan, and includes participatory/interactive group activities in terms of method. Secondly, the time plan of the program was said to enable participants to internalize the topics covered by the program, state their opinions and share their experiences, and feel valuable and strong. The third factor for success was described as selecting the group facilitators with great care, and the intensive training and supervision processes. The fact that group facilitators fostered belief in the program’s transformative impact was another factor that supported its success. Finally, the constant effort spent by WWHR representatives to sustain HREP in the field also played a vital role. It can be said that the utmost motivation for WWHR representatives was that HREP is a sustainable program thanks to its content and methods, which greatly differ from other training programs.

*“Transformation results because its content was determined in the field, and its methods are based on awareness-raising through group facilitation techniques that have both psychological and social aspects, provided within a feminist framework.” (WWHR Representative)*

*“Group work is like a small living mechanism. We know that whatever women experience in the group, how they react, what they talk about and become aware of will naturally come forth in some way outside the group as well.” (WWHR Representative)*

Meanwhile, it was often noted that in parallel to the difficulties in implementing HREP, which itself is a program that is constantly transforming and being updated, there was a need to format it in a way that would enable it to be implemented given present-day conditions. In this context, WWHR has been giving serious thought to addressing the 16-week duration of the program. For instance, according to feedback from the field, mandatory attendance for 16 weeks has been difficult in field implementation.

*“HREP is a very special program in that it last 16 weeks. This is because its aim is transformation. A 16-week, 3-to-4-hour system makes transformation possible. Yet this is not the only method. It doesn’t have to be the only method, if we can’t do this, we will find other ways, generate other solutions. In 1998 there was no internet, now there is. Perhaps the transformation aspect will take second seat and the knowledge part will come the fore, I don’t*



*know. This doesn't mean we change according to the changing environment, but we are smart women who have the brains to think of and generate different things according to the circumstances of the environment." (WWHR Representative)*

Another agenda item was motivating the group facilitators. While WWHR would like them to hold at least two groups a year, it also underlines that in principle, group facilitators should not be pushed to do so since the group process is a voluntary one that requires intense effort. It was noted that not being able to form a group was highly de-motivating for the group facilitators as well. Making good future projections and urgently generating strategies accordingly was also said to be important. In this vein, developing ways to collaborate with municipalities, women's organizations, private companies and ILO after the GDSSCP partnership was considered an achievement.

*"2012 was when many group facilitators last opened a group. This was very devastating and sad. An important achievement of the feminist movement could no longer be realized; as an association, we have the ability to find new ways and generate solutions, but we struggled to ascertain what is happening where, who is able to (open groups) and how, where are the cracks we can take root in. It took a while to understand what was going on, how we might resolve it, what else could we do. Gradually, as we began to hear (group facilitators) were being told they can't (open groups), we started to think about what we could do. We had already begun to include non-GDSS group facilitator candidates in the Trainer Trainings from 2005 onwards." (WWHR Representative)*

In conclusion, WWHR representatives were deeply concerned about the future of HREP. They underlined the problem of sustainability, and hoped to reach at least 500-600 women a year while they used to reach 750 women annually on average. The fact that some municipalities stayed away from matters related to women's empowerment in an environment of lawlessness and a lack of belief in the law, was said to be another aspect of the sustainability issue.

As another obstacle to sustainability, it was said that forging long-term partnerships with local governments had become more difficult due to the political circumstances, and that in response, adopting a flexible attitude was a necessary strategy. WWHR representatives emphasized that the primary aim was to reach women, and seemed to favor developing new strategies to this end. Due to the unstable political climate, women's organizations and organizations from the private sector were indicated as possible venues for new partnerships rather than governmental institutions.

*"We don't know, do you know where we will be in six months? This very tough terrain makes it difficult to carry out long-term work. The socio-political process is unpredictable, at any moment it might become necessary to proceed with new strategies. We've established partnerships with municipalities; if it doesn't work out, we'll deal with it. In any case, the presence of women's organizations and the relationships they form in the field have an empowering impact, we could move forward with them. We could consider other partners; I am more flexible in this respect. It doesn't have to be so specific, just as long as HREP reaches women." (WWHR Representative)*

Another factor that renders the need to develop new strategies urgent is that holding fewer groups and reaching fewer women has made HREP implementations costly in terms of WWHR's resources.

*"If 100 people a year attend, the cost would be very high." (WWHR Representative)*

*"Should the situation in the field become grueling and challenging, the program's content, implementation method, and the tools used in implementation can be reviewed to see what can*

*be modified. We need to think about what approach would be more effective to further improve sustainable partnerships.” (WWHR Representative)*

Taking all these factors into account, WWHR representatives made numerous suggestions with regards to sustainability in terms of both the content and style of the program, and where it is implemented:

- Strengthening local women’s organizations who embrace the program
- Enabling HREP to reach women through local women’s organizations was a joint suggestion by many WWHR representatives. Also, creating a program in the context of “Supporting the Economy”:
  - One suggestion was to revise the content of WWHR programs and implement them with less of a focus on sensitive topics, so as to be able to collaborate with institutions such as the ILO and the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), etc.
- Implementing the program content via other channels:
  - Several WWHR representatives noted that there was a need to reach young people via the communication tools they used, i.e. social media, and that it would be appropriate to work with a social media team to this end.
- Producing a TV – internet series:
  - One WWHR representative said this was the era of the “series” and suggested producing interactive, participatory series/films by collaborating with digital content/media providers.
- Reaching out to professional associations, universities, work centers, and women’s groups to build partnerships
  - A joint suggestion was to reach out to organizations and institutions that shared WWHR’s principles in order to form new partnerships.

#### **b) Assessment of WHRT from the Perspective of Program Implementers**

ILO Representatives stated that they had started out in 2008 with a view to empowering women, that WHRT was inspired by HREP, and that ILO was the implementer and WWHR was the supplier of WHRT.

*“HREP is a program mobilized through the Ministry and the GDSSCP. This is a big advantage.” (ILO Representative)*

ILO representatives underlined that WWHR’s protocol with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies played a key role in the collaborations with Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, and the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR). They reported that they received very favorable feedback both from participants and program partners regarding WHRT, adding that it was the training referred to the most, and that they both continued with WHRT at the end of the first round after strengthening certain modules, and also began to organize GE Seminars for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.

According to the ILO, WHRT not only paved the way for the GE Seminars, but also created an opportunity to establish close contact with municipalities and meet new actors, and reach women from different political and cultural backgrounds. In fact, a WWHR representative confirmed that WWHR’s programs and materials made it possible to reach women from many different backgrounds.

*“During this process, I had the opportunity to experience groups with people from many different socio-economic levels, cultural structures, and age groups, and to understand how the program flows. I feel as though I have run groups with almost all kinds of people, that’s how I feel. I worked with 14,000 families. I made sure that something related to WWHR made its way into each family. Not everyone could come to the groups, but something reached them. I think it’s a big achievement.” (WWHR Representative)*



According to WWHR, due to its duration, condensed content, and format based more on imparting information, WHRT did not promise as transformative an impact as HREP. Some WWHR representatives also stated that HREP's last few weeks were designed to bring closure to the group in terms of what participants might do after the program and how they might organize locally, and that it was not possible to include this in WHRT due to its shorter duration; finding this conscientiously wrong, they adapted WHRT'S content accordingly.

*"I am not for it (shortening the 16 weeks). This is a process. There are some who say can't we have meetings twice a week and finish it in eight weeks. It's necessary to allow time for transformation to occur. HREP is a program where participants have to face themselves. After facing themselves, if participants move on without internalizing whatever it is they saw and liked or disliked about themselves, they will at some point be left wondering what they are supposed to do with it all. We don't have the right to do this. WHRT, for instance, is a lighter program compared to HREP. Because that's the way it was designed. It's fieldwork is different, it's shorter, and we have no right to stir things up and just leave them in that shorter period. There's need for the time and space to let the grains of sand settle in that murky water, and find a place for themselves if they will." (WWHR Representative)*

WHRT was run in parallel to vocational courses held by municipalities WWHR collaborated with; scheduling and venue-related logistical problems that arose were another reason WWHR believed its impact would be limited.

*"On the one hand, it had the women's empowerment aspect. On the other, there were problems with the attendance of women who were taking vocational courses at the municipalities, and scheduling issues. Issues such as changing the venues where groups were held or merging different groups all affected group dynamics." (WWHR Representative)*

After learning from the field that WHRT participants wanted the program to be longer, WWHR representatives assessed the knowledge and experiences gained from WHRT and noted that the missing modules (particularly the Sexuality modules that generate significant transformation) were very valuable, adding that one alternative could be to implement HREP in two stages (8 weeks+8 weeks).

*"Some women want even more. But 16 weeks in the field is not that easy. Ten weeks may easier in the field. In particular, institutions sometimes are unable to do it, to commit to it, to get into it, saying it's a long process. I wonder if we could do something like this? Divide the program duration into two, do eight weeks first and then another eight weeks with those who request it, it can be done in two blocks." (WWHR Representative)*

Nonetheless, some WWHR representatives stated it would be wrong to compare HREP and WHRT due to the differences in their objectives and structures, but still noted that WHRT was an effective program on the basis of its own aims.

*"I also feel it made an impact, and feel it in my groups too. If you ask me about comparing the two, as someone who's done both, I don't think it's right to make a comparison. Because I think they are different." (WWHR Representative)*

Given the present circumstances where governmental support is not forthcoming and program implementation is a challenge, ILO representatives said they found the 16-week HREP too long; they even believed that the 10-week WHRT, adapted from HREP, needed to be shortened. They added the



need to be flexible depending on the target audience, and underlined that it was important to develop new and flexible programs to suit different organizational structures, pointing especially to needs in the private sector.

*“HREP is a transformative program. It’s not just a program that educates women. It is meaningful for women to be being. I understand the sensitivity to keep the 16-week duration. But there is a difference between the Turkey of 2009 and 2019. There’s a difference in public institutions. It should be 16 weeks, but today that’s no longer possible.” (ILO Representative)*

*“It was so that sometimes (in 2009) we provided HREP as a 10-day program. The program needs to have flexibility. For instance, if İŞKUR is prepared to integrate it as is (16 weeks), it can be implemented. But in the private sector, if it is be provided to employees-employers, 16 weeks is unrealistic. There should be different versions based on target groups.” (ILO Representative)*

Taking the demands and conditions of the business world into account, the ILO representatives made the following suggestions to WWHR for future program implementation, without making concessions to WWHR’s principles:

- **Seminars geared to firms and trade unions:** The objective of the 3-to-4 hour seminars that would be on various subjects and geared to mixed groups of employees and management teams was described as raising question marks on the topics covered, and providing tools to find answers. It was noted that these kinds of seminars attracted attention from global textile firms, making it possible to reach many suppliers as well. It was noted, for instance, that one such firm was under an obligation to work with suppliers that complied with certain rules. The global firm expects suppliers to have policies on issues such as discrimination, organizing, and work health and safety. Firms like this create potential collaboration opportunities for WWHR.
- **Programs that bring women and men together on the same platform:** It was suggested to generate modules that cover the issues below, under the heading of “work life” from a gender equality perspective:
  - Violence at the workplace
  - Economic rights
  - Communication at the workplace
  - Right to organize
  - Maternity rights, paternity rights, and the right to breastfeed
  - Work life
  - Family and work life balance
  - Work health and safety
  - Union rights (salaries-wages, collective labor contracts)

The ILO representatives stated that as an international organization ILO had strict work principles, and suggested that WWHR insist establishing collaboration with institutions they could work closely with. Three targets were named to this end: municipalities, trade unions, and big private companies.

- It was noted that big international firms in particular were subject to global rules and regulations, and that local supply chains were obliged to apply these rules. It was believed that HREP could be implemented at these firms if it were spread out over a year and participation was kept flexible. It was also noted that conducting preliminary interviews with these firms and developing programs to suit individual needs might be appropriate.



- It was suggested to include representatives from trade unions and confederations in the pool of trainers, so as to improve collaboration with these institutions and thus expand the accessible target audience.

The ILO representatives also noted that seeing the impact of training programs on women who recently entered the workforce was very important to them.

A WWHR representative noted that they considered collaborating with institutions such as İŞKUR important, and that they saw İŞKUR as a potential since the institution now had a management team different from the past and under less pressure.

*“Because İŞKUR is a governmental organization (WHRT) didn’t flow, but I think there is potential for development. The Ministry of Labor and İŞKUR continue to provide professional consultancy and training for finding employment. They have nationwide branches and offices. They have logistical infrastructure. The profile of their women participants is very good, eager to attend trainings. Therefore, WHRT could quickly make an impact there.” (WWHR Representative)*

### **c) GE Seminars from the Perspective of Program Implementers**

The GE Seminar is described as a four-hour program geared to both women and men, implemented by imparting information that is centered on equal rights, and designed to both raise awareness on gender equality and support a work environment sensitive to gender equality.

Some WWHR representatives argue that the GE seminars have limited impact on participants since they are comparatively less interactive and only four hours long. Yet, it is noted that the feedback from the field is positive.

*“According to the feedback I heard, ‘it’s going well.’. In any case, the expected impact is different.” (WWHR Representative)*

Some WWHR representatives were of the opinion that it was right to organize short seminars, since attendance was much easier for the participants and enabled WWHR to be in the field. WWHR representatives noted that it would be possible to organize seminars and workshops on the following topics in the event that HREP implementation became more difficult for various reasons:

- Economic rights
- Communication without violence
- International rights
- Gender-sensitive parenting

*“We are also considering a training on gender-sensitive parenting, running a few pilot implementations. But our main axis will be to emphasize equality.” (WWHR Representative)*

In fact, ILO representatives reported that they continued to develop and run new programs with various organizations from the private sector, on the basis of their inspiring experiences of WHRT and GE Seminar implementation.

## **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **a) Recommendations in Relation to WWHR**

Group facilitators, whose paths initially crossed with WWHR’s training programs, who were first a HREP participant, then attended the Trainer Training and became a HREP volunteer/representative, and began



to reach other women were united in their view of WWHR: beautiful people; strong, informed women who advocated for rights!

In fact, the mention of “WWHR” recalls to mind firstly the names of WWHR team members and the persons who carry out the Trainer Training. The most admired aspect of WWHR was its sincere, egalitarian, and non-labeling approach to people, characterized by an attitude that valued and motivated them.

WWHR’s contributions to making and improving egalitarian laws in the area of women’s human rights were inspiring and motivating for participants, group facilitators, and some program partners. The fact that feedback from the field is taken into account in shaping the program was met with appreciation. WWHR’s constant contact with the local and monitoring of progress in the field was one of the aspects that was pleasing especially for the group facilitators, in the context of responsibility and solidarity.

- **Recommendation 1:** Given the positive perceptions of WWHR, maintaining its sincere attitude that promotes solidarity in line with its existing values will play a key role.

*“It’s not a seasonal goal, they have made it a life’s goal. This is the part that impresses me the most! I don’t wish to repeat all the things we said. I just want to hold WWHR, give it a hug and a kiss.” (Istanbul, Group Facilitator)*

*“They care; they care about the participants too, this is the most important thing, but they care about the group facilitators as well. They are not always concerned with doing the impossible, they care that the facilitators are well. They care about morale and motivation being high. Maybe the Trainer Training boosted our morale, and so our connection is still ongoing.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*

*“HREP has a democratic structure. I recently attended a workshop by a foundation (that does similar work). I felt so suffocated within the bureaucratic structure there that I questioned why I was there.” (Izmir, Group Facilitator)*

Feedback in relation to WWHR varied depending on personal circumstances and needs. Group facilitators from the Southeastern Anatolia Region, who were in need of greater camaraderie due to governmental policies, also expected moral support from WWHR regarding the losses in their personal lives. In particular, group facilitators who lost their jobs wished to feel they were part of a network. It was also observed that support from WWHR is expected in terms of the financial costs of forming and running a group. Moreover, the fact that the group facilitators had to carry the heavy program folders was mentioned in several provinces as an issue WWHR could resolve. There was also specific reference to the most recent Trainer Training; it was noted that group facilitator candidates found the very intense program rather tiresome.

- **Recommendation 2:** It might be beneficial to establish platform(s) that would enable regular contact with the group facilitators in particular. These platforms could be effectively used to assess needs and provide support. Examples of positive experiences, group experiences, suggestions could be shared and increased through these platforms. WWHR could develop a special scheme for trainers experiencing difficulties.

*“They can meet with the group facilitators once a year. Positive and negative local experiences can be expressed and steps can be taken, projects can be developed, I think good work would come of it.” (Diyarbakir, Group Facilitator)*



## **b) Recommendations in Relation to HREP**

While HREP is almost a perfect program in the eyes of the women who completed it, there appear to be two significant bottlenecks according to the information provided by the group facilitators and the program team. These problem areas are detailed below, and when the suggestions made for each are brought together, it would seem that while efforts to run HREP in its current format should continue, another alternative could be to generate different formats as well.

### **Problem Area 1: Difficulties in Finding Program Partners**

The main obstacle to establishing partnerships with municipalities and governmental organizations in the present political climate is that government policies on gender equality have shifted in a negative direction, and egalitarian and feminist work is generally not supported. Difficulties in finding program partners in turn lead to other difficulties. These can be listed as follows: Obstacles to democratic participation, freedom of expression, and the right to association; difficulties in reaching women from different backgrounds; obstacles that potential participants face regarding attendance; difficulties experienced by group facilitators and participants in finding suitable venues for group work; low morale among group facilitators due to not being able to implement HREP; the risk that WWHR might not be able to maintain the balance of costs pertaining to these activities, etc. Establishing new partnerships, and if necessary, reshaping HREP from a more flexible perspective was addressed as the most important way to overcome these difficulties.

- **Recommendation 3:** Softening the sensitive issues in the names and content of the modules for strategic reasons may be considered, as recommended particularly by the ILO and some from the program team.
- **Recommendation 4:** To implement HREP as is, the idea of signing a protocol with the central offices of politically more amenable political parties may be reconsidered.
- **Recommendation 5:** Initiatives to increase collaboration with universities and NGOs that work on women's issues can be strengthened. These organizations are generally defined as being the most suitable program partners.
- **Recommendation 6:** Advantages of the information and experience WWHR provides free of charge can be emphasized to all potential program partners. For program partners, it is an important advantage to train their own group facilitators and independently run the training programs at their organizations. Thus, the Trainer Training and supervision support WWHR provides to the employees of program partners make these programs rather attractive. Material support, which was considered very helpful, could continue to form one aspect of the protocol.

### **Problem Area 2: Difficulty in Finding Participants**

According to feedback from the group facilitators regarding HREP—which seems to spread through word of mouth—the fact that it lasts 16 weeks, with each module lasting four hours, constitutes an obstacle to forming a group.

- **Recommendation 7:** HREP is a program that is greatly appreciated, impactful, and highly recommended; more announcements, local activities, and public service announcements can be used to ensure more local women hear about it.
- **Recommendation 8:** Conditions of attendance may be reconsidered. Alternatives and flexible solutions to mandatory attendance can be evaluated.
- **Recommendation 9:** The 16-week duration may be extended upon request via new and/or more in-depth modules; it may also be restructured as a tiered program (for instance, 8 weeks + 8 weeks + 8 weeks). In terms of sessions times, 2.3-to-3-hour sessions may be considered instead of 4 hours, to keep concentration levels up and make attendance easier.

- **Recommendation 10:** The fact that women who have decided to attend HREP leave the program highly satisfied points to an opportunity. Enabling women to experience HREP at least once can create a bonding effect. Therefore, a meeting format may be developed for potential participants (for instance, a single session HREP pilot meeting), so that they have a sense of what they will experience. Providing snacks, introductions, and sharing would be important in such a meeting. Offering snacks make women feel better and relaxed. It may also be beneficial to have quotes from a module such as Communication, which corresponds to a need in everyone. HREP's promises may be highlighted by providing useful information within the framework of "I-language" and "misconceptions."
- **Recommendation 11:** Considering that young people are much more present on social media, adapting HREP to fit a digital environment may be considered. New tools may be developed to compensate for the absence of interactive applications in a digital environment (for instance, a digital blog, WhatsApp groups, video meetings, face to face implementation meetings).
- **Recommendation 12:** It may be possible to collaborate with TV channels and digital content providers to include basic information on women's human rights in popular programs such as TV series.
- **Recommendation 13:** WWHR can provide further support to group facilitators during group work in all aspects, and overcome the difficulties they encounter together.
- **Recommendation 14:** Given that there were a number of highly motivated participants who asked "what does WWHR expect from us now?" or wished to form something like "Organization for HREP Women," WWHR could consider establishing a platform for all participants that can be used to find new participants and organize campaigns.

A number of important areas to improve HREP's modules and content, point to the need of an update:

- **Recommendation 15:** Making videos and visual material suited to current topics and present-day visual quality may ensure participants view them without boredom.
- **Recommendation 16:** Being aware that the modules make up a unified whole, removing any of the modules was not recommended. However, the overall lack of belief in legal rights, and reservations on local organizing and political participation could be addressed with a view to modify the relevant modules.

### c) Recommendations Specific to WHRT

While data collected from WHRT participants indicated that it is a very effective and highly recommended program that does not bring with it any specific challenges, ILO and WWHR representatives focused primarily on finding program partners as being a significant obstacle. In this respect, the recommendations made for HREP are applicable to WHRT as well.

However, ILO representatives did mention the increasing needs of the private sector, and indicated that WHRT could be modified from a more flexible perspective. From this point of view, it was stated that doing so would diversify the opportunities to implement WHRT.

- **Recommendation 17:** In WHRT implementations, shorter sessions and elective modules may be considered for participants attending vocational training or employed. This modular structure could be offered to the private sector. In the event that session times are long (over 2-3 hours), it may be advantageous to employers if training times were set to fall outside of business hours.
- **Recommendation 18:** Given that there is a potential group of people who would like WHRT modules to be covered more in-depth and thus for the duration to be extended (over 10 weeks), offering WHRT in tiers may be considered (for instance, beginner WHRT, advanced WHRT, etc).

- **Recommendation 19:** Training programs may be designed according to the life stages and needs of the target audience and offered in systematic/standard structures: As frequently underlined by the majority of HREP participants, if young women and adult women were able to attend these programs prior to significant periods of change in their lives (before starting university, marriage, having children, or entering the workforce, etc), they could be much more alert to the inequalities and injustices they encounter, stand against them should they encounter them, raise awareness in their social circles, and raise their children accordingly. New program partners may be considered in line with these objectives.
- **Recommendation 20:** Modules missing from WHRT may be softened and integrated within the modular structure.
- **Recommendation 21:** Taking into consideration the gender structure of work life, offering WHRT to men or mixed groups may be considered.

#### **d) Recommendations Specific to the GE Seminars**

The GE Seminars were also considered effective but had room for improvement. The most important need for greater impact is to make it more specialized.

- **Recommendation 22:** The GE Seminars can be diversified according to demographic features such as education and age group. Number of seminar participants may be varied accordingly. A seminar structure that has less participants and is more interactive may further increase attendance levels and the impact of the seminar.
- **Recommendation 23:** The GE Seminars may be offered to many private sector companies that have GE on their agenda. In case of demand, WHRT or HREP may additionally be offered as long-term programs. The GE Seminars may also be suggested to universities, and public institutions and organizations. The ILO may be consulted to discuss new collaboration opportunities.
- **Recommendation 24:** In addition to the GE Seminars, seminars on work life, work safety, violence, and communication may be designed for the private sector, supply chains and unions.
- **Recommendation 25:** To help distinguish the GE Seminars from other similar trainings, visual designs that aim to make the seminar more memorable and boost knowledge about WWHR may be used. Additionally, more striking colors, visuals, and especially videos may be used in the presentation file of the GE Seminars.



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