

WOMEN FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS – NEW WAYS

SUMMARY REPORT of the IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY for THE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN (HREP), THE WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS TRAININGS (WHRT) and GENDER EQUALITY (GE) SEMINARS IMPLEMENTED IN 2012-2018¹

In addition to assessing the impact of its training programs via various internal mechanisms, Women for Women's Human Rights-New Ways considers it vital to periodically assess the impact of these programs via external assessment studies; in particular, the Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP). The first of such assessment studies covered the HREP implementations in 1995-2003, while the second covered the 2005-2011 period.² Findings of the third study covered the 2012-2018 period, and once again showed that the training programs and seminars contributed to women's gaining rights-awareness and beginning to exercise their rights, becoming empowered in both the private and the public spheres, and internalizing a gender equality outlook that transformed not only themselves but their environment as well. The findings of the most recent study related in particular to HREP are consistent with findings from the two previous studies, illustrating that HREP has continued to be effective and make significant contributions to women exercising their rights over the past two decades.

1. Introduction

Women for Women's Human Rights-New Ways (WWHR) was founded in 1993 as an autonomous and feminist civil society organization, to support women's empowerment and organizing in Turkey and across the world. WWHR advocates for women's human rights and equality in Turkey and internationally, and works to eliminate all kinds of discrimination; accordingly, WWHR takes an active part in women's platforms and coalitions nationally and internationally to promote and improve national legislation and international documents and mechanisms in support of women. WWHR believes that sustainable change and transformation can only be real and permanent if the fight for women's rights and equality is undertaken at all levels and in an interconnected way. WWHR takes a holistic approach to women's human rights, and focuses its work on issues such as violence against women, economic and legal rights, sexuality, reproductive rights, gender equality, children's rights on the basis of gender inequalities, and local organizing. To this end, WWHR employs various methods—advocacy and networking, running training activities, producing and disseminating publications and materials, monitoring and evaluation—together, and from 1995 onwards, has developed and implemented the programs described briefly below to support women's enjoyment of their rights, ability to live and equal and free individuals, and contributions to social change.

The Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP): Implemented in all seven regions of Turkey over the past 24 years, HREP is one of the most comprehensive and widespread human rights education programs in the world. Through participatory and feminist methods, HREP aims to support women exercise their rights in all spheres of life, become empowered through rights-awareness, and organize in accordance with their needs; it is a four-month program that consists of 16 modules. HREP has been implemented in 56 provinces in Turkey and in Northern Cyprus to date; nearly 16,000 women have completed HREP so far. Most recently, the 11th HREP Trainer Training was held in 2017, bringing the number of HREP Group Facilitators to 259.

¹ This summary was prepared by WWHR. For the full External Impact Assessment Report, see <https://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/WWHR-2018-Impact-Assessment-Report.pdf>

² For the 1995-2003 report, see http://kadinininsanhaklari.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/eval_report.pdf. For the 2005-2011 report, see <http://kadinininsanhaklari.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/HREP-2005-2011-Final-Evaluation-Report.pdf>

The Women’s Human Rights Trainings (WHRT): WWHR developed WHRT—a program based on HREP but shorter—to empower women in work environments, in collaboration with the Turkey Office of the International Labor Organization (ILO). WHRT was implemented in 2016-2017, in the context of the “More and Better Jobs for Women Project” run by the ILO Turkey Office in Istanbul, Ankara, Konya, and Bursa. WHRT aimed to support women attending vocational training programs run by municipalities in securing lasting employment possibilities, by adding to their knowledge of their legal rights. By collaborating with various municipalities in the provinces named above, 827 women attended the weekly four-hour WHRT group workshops over the course of 10 weeks.

The Gender Equality (GE) Seminars: WWHR still holds GE Seminars that were developed for women and men employed at municipalities that have signed the HREP Partnership Protocol, private companies, and various non-governmental organizations; it is a four-hour seminar that focuses on basic concepts and legislation pertaining to gender equality. A total of 2,104 people (1,061 women and 1,043 men) attended the 37 GE Seminars held by WWHR in the 2017-2018 period.

2. The 2012-2018 Impact Assessment Study

2.1 Scope and Objective of the Study

WWHR organized for a third external impact assessment study in 2018, to qualitatively and quantitatively measure the impact of the training programs and seminars held over the past seven years (between 2012-2018) on participants, group facilitators, implementing partners, and the husbands and male family members of the participant women; examine the expectations and satisfaction levels of said people; assess current strategies, policies, methods, and tools employed in each program; and review potential steps to be taken to maintain/improve the sustainability and expansion of the relevant field implementations. IPSOS Research and Consulting, a global market research and consulting firm, conducted the fieldwork of the study between October 2018-February 2019, and finalized its Impact Assessment Report in May 2019.

The study assessed the impact of the training programs and seminars held over the past seven years on participants and group facilitators in terms of awareness and rights-awareness, emotional changes, changes in approach, skills, actions, and activism. It also looked at changes in awareness, approach, and behavior in terms of violence against women, sexual and reproductive health, labor force participation, equality in the family and gender-sensitive parenting, and local organizing, with the aim of uncovering how the direct and indirect beneficiaries of WWHR’s trainings and programs were impacted in the domains and topics mentioned above. To this end, HREP, WHRT and the GE Seminars were all assessed separately.

2.2 Structure and Method of the Study

The study used a mixed methodology that brought together three basic data collection methods. Following a thorough desktop study of the HREP materials and past reports, IPSOS then employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods in conducting the fieldwork. Using these tools and methods, women and men who took part in the HREP, WHRT, and GE Seminars at various times and in various provinces in the seven years between 2012-2018 were contacted, in addition to HREP Group Facilitators and program partners. Different people were contacted in different ways during the data collection process.

- *HREP participants, telephone survey:* Participants who fully attended an HREP group in 23 provinces in Turkey and Northern Cyprus in 2012-2018 and whose phone numbers were known were called; of the targeted 500 respondents, the survey was administered to 472 women who agreed to participate in the study.
- *HREP group, observation:* An IPSOS representative attended the first session of an HREP group held at the City Council of Karabağlar Municipality in Izmir, as an observer.

- *WHRT participants, telephone survey*: Participants who fully attended a WHRT group in Istanbul, Ankara, and Bursa in 2016-2017 and whose phone numbers were known were called; 200 surveys were targeted and 202 surveys were administered.
- *HREP Group Facilitators, written questionnaire*: 126 HREP group facilitators were reached via e-mail; 83 filled out the questionnaire.
- *GE Seminar participants, written questionnaire*: 446 women and men who attended the GE Seminars were reached; 126 filled out the questionnaire.
- *HREP, WHRT, and GE Seminar participants, focus groups*: 13 focus groups were held in five provinces in Turkey.
- *Husbands or adult male family members of HREP participants, face-to-face interviews*: 16 in-depth interviews were conducted.
- *Representatives of implementing partners, face-to-face interviews*: 19 in-depth interviews were conducted.
- *WWHR administrators, HREP team, and HREP consultants, interviews*: The programs included in the study were evaluated from a variety of perspectives.

2.3 Summary of Study Findings

2.3.1 Overall Impact of the Programs on Participants and Group Facilitators

Study findings showed that the programs WWHR implemented in the field over the past seven years both generated high satisfaction in participants and group facilitators, and also had a strong impact on their personal lives.

Table 1. Basic Findings	HREP Participants	WHRT Participants	GE Seminar Participants	HREP Group Facilitators
Total Satisfaction	98%	91%	83%	95%
Total Impact	98%	96%	95%	83%
<i>Number of Respondents</i>	<i>472</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>83</i>

2.3.2 Impact of HREP and WHRT on Women Program Participants

Findings related to HREP and WHRT—an adapted version of HREP—will be provided together below. In all dimensions addressed in the study, both programs generated very high levels of satisfaction and impact (98% and 91% respectively for the 472 HREP respondents, 98% and 96% respectively for the 202 WHRT respondents). Demographic information of the respondents revealed that HREP participants were mostly high school graduates or higher (80%), married (65%), had children (71%), and were employed or retired (64%). Meanwhile, 60% of WHRT participants were high school graduates or higher, 78% were married, 82% had children, and 31% were either employed or retired.

According to qualitative findings, HREP was “transformative” for the participants. Some participants described this impact as “the difference between night and day” while others noted it was like “creating a new me.” In a similar vein, WHRT participants said the program taught them “how to stand on my own two feet” and “self-confidence.” A more in-depth look at such transformation suggests that this was not limited to gaining awareness, but reflects a holistic change and transformation that takes place in how people relate to their environment in terms of outlook, language, and means of communication. These assessments are supported by the quantitative data provided below.

Personal Transformation

Women’s primary reasons for attending an HREP group were to contribute to their personal development and transformation, and to learn their legal rights; these expectations were met at a rate of 85% and 86%, respectively. Meanwhile, women had attended a WHRT group primarily to learn about current legislation,

contribute to their personal development and transformation, and learn their legal rights; 86% said they learned about their legal rights and 81% said they benefited in terms of personal development and transformation. Eight women out of 10 in both HREP and WHRT said they experienced personal transformation in numerous ways:

- I became more self-confident (HREP 91%, WHRT 87%)
- I feel stronger and better equipped (HREP 88%, WHRT 89%)
- I express myself better (HREP 88%, WHRT 88%)
- I am more aware of gender-based inequalities (HREP and WHRT, 87%), and have begun to fight against them (HREP 81%, WHRT 79%)
- I am more at peace with my body (HREP and WHRT, 85%)
- I am more attuned to my wants and needs (HREP 85%, WHRT 84%)
- I am more aware about my sexuality (HREP 84%, WHRT 86%)
- I am more compassionate and understanding toward myself (HREP 82%, WHRT 80%)

“This program really surpassed my expectations in terms of developing myself, being in touch with myself and my environment, and learning about my rights.” (Izmir, HREP 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)

“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)

Both HREP and WHRT respondents stated that the program contributed to improved relationships with their spouses/partners, families, and children:

- I became more knowledgeable and better equipped about gender-sensitive parenting (HREP 86%)
- My communication with my children improved (HREP 84%, WHRT 83%)
- I began to use gender equality in my family (HREP 78%, WHRT 80%)
- My communication with my spouse/partner improved (HREP 71%, WHRT 73%)

“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)

“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)

“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 of HREP Participant)

Local Organizing and Political Participation

While Local Organizing and Politics are modules specific to HREP, both HREP and WHRT participants said they supported other women’s struggles to secure their rights (HREP 83%, WHRT 76%) and noted they became

a resource person whose ideas were sought (HREP 73%, WHRT 64%). While 67% of HREP participants became a member of or volunteered at women's organizations, this rate was 54% for WHRT. However, it might be said that compared to other dimensions of impact, program impact on political participation remained somewhat limited: While 46% became a member of a political party following HREP, 45% said the program contributed to announcing their candidacy in local or national elections. (These figures were 37% for both items in WHRT.) Nonetheless, given the recent political environment where the freedom of assembly is rather curtailed and an atmosphere of fear is ever present for organizations and people involved in organizations, obtaining these figures is quite noteworthy. Despite the present circumstances, study respondents have been taking action about local organizing and political participation.

“Following 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, Son of HREP Participant)

Work Life and Education

While returning to or entering gainful employment, and returning to or continuing with education are not among the specific objectives of HREP, it is notable that the program contributed to both, having a 59% and 62% impact, respectively. Moreover, both HREP and WHRT participants who were gainfully employed claimed that the training contributed to them adopting an equality perspective at their workplace (79% and 76%, respectively). Given the low rate of women's participation in the workplace in Turkey, and the obstacles to gainful employment, these findings are very valuable.

“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)

The Struggle against Violence

Findings related to violence over the past seven years shows that HREP (and WHRT) notably empower women when it comes to reducing discrimination and violence or ending violence (76% for both programs). HREP was found to contribute to 84% of the respondents in their efforts to struggle against violence (domestic or otherwise). This figure was 77% for WHRT. A statistically significant decrease was observed in all kinds of violence (emotional and psychological, physical, economic, and sexual) that respondents said they had been subject to prior to both programs. It was found that of the HREP participants:

- 57% reported being subject to words and actions reflecting emotional/psychological violence at home/in the family prior to HREP, and 34% was able to end said violence (rates for WHRT are 55% and 34%, respectively)
- 26% reported being subject to words and actions reflecting physical violence at home/in the family prior to HREP, and 21% was able to end said violence (rates for WHRT are 31% and 22%, respectively)
- 37% reported being subject to words and actions reflecting economic violence at home/in the family prior to HREP, and 24% was able to end said violence (rates for WHRT are 36% and 18%, respectively)
- 16% reported being subject to words and actions reflecting sexual violence at home/in the family prior to HREP, and 11% was able to end said violence (rates for WHRT are 15% and 8%, respectively)

“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)

“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)

Accordingly, due both to the transformation participants personally experience, and their overall satisfaction with HREP, 99% of the respondents said they would recommend HREP to other women; this rate was 100% for WHRT participants.

2.3.3 HREP Group Case Study

As part of the Impact Assessment, the IPSOS research team attended the first session of the HREP group held at the City Council held at the City Council of Karabağlar Municipality in Izmir as observers, and administered a post-test to 23 women at the end of the four-month group process. Findings supported the data obtained through qualitative and quantitative means. HREP was described as a very effective program that far surpassed expectations, and rights-awareness in particular was defined as a significant contribution of the program.

While very few of the group participants said they knew about their rights (citizenship rights, rights related to violence, reproductive rights, children’s rights, etc) prior to HREP, almost all noted they were informed about their rights at the end of the program. In fact, of the 23 group participants, the number of those subject to emotional/psychological or economic violence was much fewer than before HREP (four and five people, respectively). All of the participants claimed HREP impacted their lives 100%, and found all program modules beneficial. HREP contributed to almost all group participants to feel stronger and better equipped, more self-confident, more compassionate and understanding, more aware of and willing to fight against gender-based inequalities, better at expressing themselves, more at peace with their bodies, better informed about their sexuality, and more sensitized to their own wants and needs.

2.3.4 HREP’s Impact on Group Facilitators

HREP Group Facilitators are not only WWHR’s program partners, but also one of HREP’s beneficiary groups and the implementers of the program. HREP Group Facilitators, who start by experiencing HREP firsthand during an intense and lengthy trainer training before moving onto their own HREP groups, noted the transformative impact the program had on themselves, their social circles, their families, and their work life. Of the 83 HREP Group Facilitators who filled out the qualitative questionnaire, 61% were 36-years-old and above, 89% were university graduates or higher, 71% were currently employed, and 54% had no children.

HREP generated a 95% satisfaction among the group facilitators who actively implement the program. Aspects of HREP that garnered the highest satisfaction were the HREP content (96%), Trainer Training content (95%), the HREP modules (95%), HREP publications (94%), and the HREP advisors who provide the trainer training (93%). In the focus groups, Group Facilitators also underlined how well the training materials were designed and how they made it so much easier to implement the program. In addition to the motivating support WWHR provides, the quality of the supervision support was another fundamental factor that generated satisfaction. Moreover, it was noted that the content and methodology of the HREP Trainer Training succeeded in raising awareness and competence, regardless of the educational background of the participant. Almost all of the Group Facilitators reported an increase and growth in their professional work and job motivation, and noted that they brought a women’s perspective to all aspects of their work.

“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)

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

There were many reasons why group facilitators chose to be group facilitators; leading reasons were to contribute to building rights-awareness in participants, and support other women in their efforts to secure their rights (88% and 80%, respectively). Overall, HREP is a program that has contributed to the personal development and transformation of 70% of the group facilitators. An in-depth examination shows that 77% of the group facilitators felt stronger and better equipped, 71% felt more self-confident, and 66% felt more compassionate and understanding; in addition, 76% benefitted from HREP in terms of learning about their rights, while 75% referred to HREP as the reason they became a resource person in their social setting.

Of the group facilitators (97%) said they would recommend being an HREP Group Facilitator to other women; the fact that nearly all of them recommended being a group facilitator—which requires a lot of work and conviction—is another indicator that shows just how much HREP is held in high regard.

2.3.5 Impact of the GE Seminars on the Participants

As a result of recent demands both from the field and from partner organizations, WWHR developed and began to implement a short gender equality seminar program suited to mixed groups of women and men. The impact of the GE Seminars on participant women and men was assessed as part of the Impact Assessment Study. The demographic profile of the 126 accessed respondents revealed that most were 35-years-old and above and were high school graduates or above; 48% were still in school while 33% were gainfully employed, and 17% of the respondents were men.

According to the findings, 83% of the GE Seminar participants stated they were satisfied with the seminar. While 88% of the respondents said women and men should have equal say in everything, 87% noted that honor can never be an excuse for any kind of violence, and 83% reported that there should be more women in the workforce, domestic tasks should be distributed equally between women and men, and women should participate in social life outside the home more. It was found that the GE Seminars contributed to participants’ knowledge about emotional and physical violence against women (66% and 65%, respectively). While 66% of the respondents noted they learned the definition of gender, 60% said they became aware of gender equality and the articles related to gender equality in the Turkish Penal Code. Gender equality in Turkey’s Constitution was one area where the GE Seminars had a more limited impact, at 46%.

“For instance, they said ‘Those who like blue gather on one side, or those who like to drive gather on one side.’ It was as though they wanted to say liking to drive a car was not specific to men, there are also women who like it... They also asked, ‘Who doesn’t like to look after children?’ and then it was questioned, why is it the woman’s job to look after children. It wasn’t like other seminars, it was active.” (Istanbul, 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)

The major gain of the GE Seminars was that 90% of the seminar participants who were employed by the partner organization said they began to use their knowledge about gender equality at their workplace. Moreover, 95% of the respondents said they would recommend WWHR’s GE Seminar to others.

“Most of the participants probably had no idea that the municipality has an Equality Department, since it was established very recently. And municipality personnel are provided training on many technical issues. This was

the first training on this topic. And it was given to all municipal staff. This is a good thing.” (Istanbul, Participant)

2.3.6 Impact on Partner Organizations

The Impact Assessment Study also qualitatively examined the impact of WWHR’s HREP, WHRT, and the GE Seminars on collaborating organizations in the field. Interviews with program partners revealed that their primary motivation in collaborating with WWHR was to develop programs and projects on women’s human rights within the organization and train trainers. The impacts and outcomes summarized below illustrate how they are viewed by the partner organizations:

- Collaborating with WWHR brought prestige, visibility, and power to program partners. Almost all program partners noted that not only did the training programs boost their organizational capacity, but also augmented the knowledge and skills of their employees who were HREP Group Facilitators.
- WWHR’s training programs contribute to strengthening awareness about discrimination in municipalities that have Gender Equality, Women’s Issues, and LGBTI+ Issues departments, and shaping the equality policies of the relevant departments.
- Partner organizations, especially municipalities, reported an increase in the value given to women and policies against violence in the eyes of both female and male employees.
- Program partners that are women’s organizations were able to expand their activity area and thus contribute to other women organize locally as well. The support provided by WWHR during this process was very much appreciated.
- Stakeholders who were involved in local program implementation were observed to tend towards organizing and solidarity efforts; some were found to have joined/formed existing associations, act as a group, develop projects, put forward their candidacy in elections or support women candidates.
- Organizations and group facilitators stated that the women they served/supported were interested in attending HREP and thus they wished to continue to collaborate with WWHR.
- Since the impact and satisfaction generated by the GE Seminars that were geared to their female and male employees was higher than expected, there has been an increase in the number of organizations requesting these seminars.

Based on these findings, the points WWHR should take into consideration concerning future work also shed light on how to adapt WWHR’s programs in different formats and for varied beneficiary groups while also conserving aspects of the programs that contribute to their quality, impact, and sustainability. A comprehensive analysis of risks, stakeholders, and resources, as well as an approach that builds on past and present experiences, will help in developing new strategies.

3. Conclusion

According to the IPSOS research team who conducted the Impact Assessment Study that measured the impact of WWHR’s HREP, WHRT, and GE Seminars in 2012-2018, “A notable commonality was found among WWHR’s training programs that are all based on gender equality but differ in terms of content, participant profiles, how they were held, and objectives: The programs generated high satisfaction among participants and program implementers, and had a large impact on the personal lives of these people, as was their objective.”

What sets the 2012-2018 Impact Assessment Study apart from previous studies is that two new programs developed during this period based on needs from the field were also included in the assessment. Confirmation that HREP, WHRT, and the GE Seminars—each essentially an advocacy tool—had a very strong impact through an external assessment study was satisfying, as it demonstrated that these programs were having an effect in fulfilling WWHR’s mission to “spread awareness of feminist rights at the local, national, regional and international levels; contribute to women’s equal, influential, and unobstructed participation in life; and advocate for the protection and strengthening of women’s human rights.” Seeing that not only the long-term programs, such as the 16-week HREP and the 10-week WHRT that was adapted from HREP, but the short-term, 4-hour GE

Seminars also had a strong impact showed that different methods were effective in efforts to achieve WWHR’s vision of “a feminist, peaceful world where all power relations—those based on the patriarchal system first and foremost—have come to an end, and where women’s human rights are implemented, protected and defended; a world where substantive equality is the norm.” In this context, the participation and collaboration of the people who took part in the programs and seminars, the group facilitators who implemented the programs in the field, and partner organizations who made the field implementations possible was extremely valuable.

In terms specifically of HREP, it was again very gratifying to note that the program that has been consistently revised and updated according to the conditions in the field and in Turkey, and implemented for over two decades, has not lost any of its impact.

Table 3. Selected Impacts of HREP on Participants According to Three Different External Impact Assessment Studies	1995-2003	2005-2011	2012-2018
Overall I am more self-confident	93%	96%	91%
I am better able to express my ideas	91%	94%	88%
Physical violence became less or ended	85%	88%	84%
Emotional violence became less or ended	75%	80%	91%
Economic violence became less or ended	69%	74%	86%
Sexual violence became less or ended ³	-	-	95%
I began to spread information and advice about women’s rights with people in my social circle	96%	97%	73%
The program contributed to my taking on an active role in an existing women’s organization (organize a seminar, participate in signature campaigns, volunteer, etc)	41%	47%	67%

The fact that HREP’s impact is widespread and consistent constitute significant concrete indicators of the program’s success in terms of sustainability and transformative power, and its contributions over the long term to women in Turkey exercising their rights. Over 90 percent of the women who completed HREP said they now better understood the laws and regulations that protect women in Turkish legislation and could benefit from them; that they became more self-confident and courageous; that they felt more in solidarity with other women; and that they had gained skills related to augmenting their capability to demand their rights, such as effective communication, decision-making, and determining and resolving problems.

Findings from the study show that women not only internalized a women’s perspective and HREP’s objectives concerning women’s empowerment, but also that they have begun to make direct use of them in their daily lives. The exercising of rights was observed in both the private and the public spheres, and reveal that HREP’s emphasis on critical thinking and dialogue has come through in supporting women to determine problem areas and generate new objectives for themselves. Meanwhile, given the state of women in Turkey and ongoing rights violations and discrimination, findings related to ending violence, joining the labor force, returning to education, and political activism highlight HREP’s contributions both to women as individuals, and to societal transformation towards a more equal and just social order.

July 17th, 2019

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³ Disaggregated data in Turkey on sexual violence as separate from physical violence began to come forth especially following the 2008 and 2014 studies by Hacettepe University entitled *Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey*. Accordingly, it was found meaningful to include questions on stopping sexual violence in the 2012-2018 Impact Assessment Study for the first time, in addition to questions on sexuality and sexual rights that had been asked in previous impact assessment studies.