

The newspaper exercise

Length		30-50 minutes, depending on group size
Difficulty		Beginner
Group size		Small to medium
Aim	<p>To help participants to recognise human rights/freedom of religion or belief violations in different contexts, understanding that they occur all over the world and in all sectors of society.</p> <p>The exercise can also help trainer/facilitators to estimate the group's knowledge and understanding of human rights/FORB and of what a human rights/FORB violation is.</p>	
Description	A group work exercise in which participants try to identify and analyse human rights/FORB violations.	
Materials	Cuttings from recent newspapers, paper and pens	
Source	Adapted from Marc Toufayan	

Tips for facilitators

This is an adaptation of the newspaper exercise developed for a broader human rights theme. It can easily be used in relation to all human rights or any specific right.

Outline and instructions

Start up and introduction	5 min
Group work	10 - 15 min
Presentations and plenary discussion	15 -30 min depending on the number of groups

Preparation

In advance of the training choose a selection of cuttings from local and international newspapers, including cuttings from different sections of the paper (politics, economy, crime, classified advertisements, etc.) The cuttings chosen should all relate to freedom of religion or belief, either a positive or negative manner.

Group work and presentations

Distribute the newspaper cuttings and ask the participants to choose one excerpt each, reading it themselves.

Divide participants into groups of 6. Ask the groups to discuss their cuttings and then choose one cutting to focus upon as a group. Each group needs to prepare a 5 minute presentation for the rest of the participants. The presentation will need to be focused, highlighting only the most important points!

The presentation should answer the following questions:

- What is this news story about?
- In what way is the story linked to human rights and freedom of religion or belief?
- What human rights have been violated and how? Which elements of freedom of religion or belief do these violations relate to, (for example the right to have, change or practice a religion or belief, discrimination, rights for parents and children or conscientious objection)?
- Who are the main actors in the story?
 - o Who are the violators?
 - o Whose rights are violated?
 - o Who is supposed to protect people from these rights violations?
- Whose perspective is presented in the news story – the violators, the victims, the states or another perspective? What does this perspective imply?

Each group is given 5 minutes to present and is prepared to answer any questions from other participants or the facilitator.