

Update on Current ERT Projects

I. Thematic Projects

Applying Equality and Non-discrimination Law to Advance Socio-Economic Rights

This project started in July 2011 and, through the publication of a report, will contribute to building strategies of better enforcement of economic and social rights through drawing and communicating lessons from a global review of jurisprudence and policies which have used equality and non-discrimination law to advance the realisation of social and economic rights.

During this period, research has continued. Post-graduate students of the University of Cambridge Pro Bono Project have assisted with the research produced a first draft of the case compendium for use as part of the

report. Research and drafting of the report by ERT is ongoing. An expert roundtable consultation on a draft of the report will take place on 6 June 2013, co-hosted with UCL in London. The report will be finalised in 2013.

Developing Resources and Civil Society Capacities for Preventing Torture and Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment of Persons with Disabilities: India and Nigeria

This project commenced in November 2010 with partner organisations in India (Human Rights Law Network - HRLN) and Nigeria (Legal Defence and Assistance Project - LEDAP). Its objectives include the development of legal and policy guidelines on the prevention and remedy of torture and ill-treatment of persons with disabilities, based on documentation of abuses and test



Researchers Anisa Rahim, Veena Kumari, Shampa Sengupta and Ratnaboli Roy speak about evidence gathering techniques at ERT workshop, Delhi, February 2013.

Photo credit: HRLN

litigation, as well as capacity building related to the intersection of disability rights and non-torture rights.

Since September 2012, the key activities under this project have been:

- Finalising the first drafts of the Resource Packs on Disability and Torture for both India and Nigeria.
- Continued progress of strategic litigation in India and Nigeria.
- Conducting of training for CSO activists and lawyers in Delhi and Lagos.
- Hosting of roundtable stakeholder meetings on the findings of the project in Delhi and Lagos.
- Press conferences in both Delhi and Lagos to announce the findings of the project research and the recommendations agreed by stakeholders at the roundtable meetings in the respective jurisdictions

ERT has prepared first drafts of the Resource Packs on Disability and Torture for both In-

dia and Nigeria, in conjunction with HRLN and LEDAP, for consultation with key stakeholders. These Resource Packs describe patterns of torture and ill-treatment of people with disabilities in the respective country identified in the course of field research, present legal research and analysis, bringing together relevant international, regional and domestic law and jurisprudence on disability and torture, and make recommendations for change. In February 2013, ERT consulted with activists and stakeholders on the findings and will now use the output from these consultations to further develop and finalise the drafts.

The strategic litigation component of the project continues to progress. The project is supporting 10 legal cases which are currently before the courts in India and the development of 13 cases which are due to be filed before Nigerian courts. It is intended that ERT will submit amicus briefs where possible, and a number are being prepared.



ERT's Joanna Whiteman (4th from right) with participants at training workshop, Lagos, February 2013.

Photo credit: Oliver Lewis

The project also involves training to equip CSOs and lawyers in India and Nigeria to tackle problems of ill-treatment of persons with disabilities. ERT has worked in collaboration with two senior advisors and partner CSOs to design and deliver a workshop for CSOs and lawyers working in the fields of equality, disability and/or torture in India and Nigeria. Following up on a first round of workshops held in January 2011, a second round of workshops took place in February 2013 in both India and Nigeria, building the capacity of more than 70 CSO activists and lawyers.

Also in February 2013, stakeholder roundtable meetings were hosted by ERT in both Delhi and Lagos. Each brought together representatives of government departments to discuss the findings of the research. In both cases, recommendations for action that needs to be taken by various branches of the government in each country were agreed. ERT will finalise and circulate the agreed recommendations for use in advocacy and directly by the government representatives in their relevant ministries. The stakeholder roundtable events were followed by press conferences. The result has been good national press coverage of the research findings and the agreed recommendations for policy change.

Empowering Human Rights Defenders in Central Asia to Combat Discrimination on the Basis of Ethnicity and Religion

This project started in January 2013 in partnership with two NGOs based in Central Asia, and the participation of further local activists and experts. Its purpose is to address ethnic and religious discrimination in some Central Asian countries, and publicise studies on the subject. In February 2013, ERT travelled to the region to engage in detailed discussions

with its partners, interview prospective collaborators, and conclude project agreements. ERT also held an international strategic planning meeting in Bishkek, attended by approximately fifteen human rights defenders from the region.

Greater Human Rights Protection for Stateless Persons in Detention

Since the publication of Volume 9 of the ERR (in September 2012) the key activities on this project have been:

- The launch of ERT's *Guidelines to Protect Stateless Persons from Arbitrary Detention*.
- The use of these *Guidelines* as a training resource around the world.
- The publication of the Special Issue on Statelessness of the *European Journal of Migration and Law*.
- The activities of the European Network of Statelessness (ENS) of which ERT is a founding organisation.
- The formation of a Working Group on Statelessness at the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) of which ERT is a founding member.

The *Guidelines to Protect Stateless Persons from Arbitrary Detention* accompanied by a detailed (26,000 word) Commentary to the *Guidelines* authored by Amal de Chickera were launched in mid-July at an event in London. Since their launch, the *Guidelines* have generated a great deal of interest. 200 copies were shipped to the International Detention Coalition headquarters in Australia, 200 copies to Lawyers for Human Rights (South Africa) and 100 copies to the Greek Refugee Network, for training purposes. Consequently, the *Guidelines* have been and will be used to train participants at regional training workshops on immigration detention in Asia, Africa and Europe. In November 2012,

the International Detention Coalition utilised the *Guidelines* to train the participants of the European regional training workshop on immigration detention which was held in Athens. The *Guidelines* were also used as a training material at the inaugural statelessness training workshop organised by the European Network on Statelessness in Budapest, also in November 2012.

The Special Issue on Statelessness of the *European Journal of Migration and Law* was published in late July. The issue, co-edited by Amal de Chickera, contains articles by leading academics, activists and experts on statelessness in Europe, an interview with Thomas Hammarberg and the ERT's *Guidelines to Protect Stateless Persons from Arbitrary Detention*. It also contains articles by Claude Cahn, René de Groot and Olivier Vonk, Gabor Gyulai, Mark Manly, and Laura van Waas.

The *European Network on Statelessness* – of which ERT is a founding member – continued its activities during the reporting period. Amal de Chickera attended many ENS meetings and has contributed to the growth of the network through recruiting new members, developing its law and policy pillar and contributing to policy development, awareness-raising and capacity building activities of the Network. The primary activity in this regard was the hosting of the inaugural ENS Training workshop for European statelessness advocates in Budapest in November 2012. ERT contributed via Skype link.

ENS also issued a statement to mark international human rights day on 10 December 2012. This statement, which called for greater inclusion of stateless persons in Europe, was initiated and drafted by ERT. The statement was widely publicised by ENS member organisations (68 at the time), translated into Danish, French, Italian, Serbian and Slo-

venian, and was covered by national media in various European countries including Belgium, Denmark and Italy.

The fourth Asia Pacific Conference on Refugee Rights was conducted in South Korea in August 2012. However, a statelessness working group was established at the conference and ERT is a founding member of the working group. This means that ERT has played a key role in establishing the only two regional statelessness networks in the world – ENS and the APRRN Working Group, another example of the leadership role ERT continues to play on the issue of statelessness.

ERT has similarly played an active role in having the International Detention Coalition prioritise statelessness as one of its key focus issues.

Strengthening Human Rights Protection of the Rohingya

The period since September 2012 was extremely busy for the team of this project, primarily due to the human rights and humanitarian crisis faced by Rohingya in Rakhine state of Myanmar where they have been subject to discriminatory violence and abuse and have been denied freedom of movement and restricted to camps where they receive little or no humanitarian aid.

During this period, ERT's research has been carried out and completed by team members working in the six project countries: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Saudi Arabia and Thailand. Bangladeshi senior researcher Ranajit Dastidar conducted a 10 day field visit in Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts in September 2012. Saiful Huq Omi, Project photographer and researcher, did research in Malaysia also in September. The Malaysia and Thailand research is being finalised, under the guid-

ance of ERT's Project partner, the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies of the Mahidol University (Bangkok).

In September 2012, ERT participated in a conference on the Plight of the Rohingya organised by the Perdana Global Peace Foundation in Kuala Lumpur. Saiful Huq Omi made a multimedia presentation on the Rohingya issue which was well received by the audience. Additionally, senior research consultant Sriprapha Petcharamesree spoke about the situation faced by Rohingya populations in Malaysia and Thailand, and the ASEAN response to the crisis.

In October, ERT hosted a panel discussion on the Rohingya crisis at the South East Asia Human Rights Network Regional Human Rights Conference in Jakarta. The panel comprised presentations by members of the project research team, including Zam Askandar, Natalie Brinham, Pei Palgrem, Sriprapha Petcharamesree (chair), Yanuar Sumarlan and Veerawit Tianchinin.

During the report period, ERT has also played a lead advocacy role in bringing together different civil society voices and conducting advocacy on the Rohingya issue. In September 2012, ERT attended a roundtable discussion on the issue hosted by the US Embassy in London. Similarly, ERT briefed the European Delegation in Brussels on ERT's findings, before their visit to Myanmar. ERT has also conducted meetings with the UK FCO and other representatives of the diplomatic and INGO community during the reporting period.

Since 21 October 2012, Muslims in Rakhine state, including stateless Rohingya and Kaman Muslims who are citizens of Myanmar, have been subject to intense, large-scale and sustained violence including killing, burning of homes and property, forced displacement

and the denial of humanitarian aid. In response to this most recent spate of violence, in early November ERT wrote to the President of Myanmar and issued an emergency report. ERT urged the President of Myanmar to take immediate action to end the violence, provide protection and aid to all victims, allow full access to the international community and ensure that all perpetrators are brought to justice. ERT also issued an emergency report, drawing attention to the role played by Myanmar and the failure of the international community to respond to the situation in a strong and decisive manner. ERT appealed to key figures in the international community to act in accordance with the doctrine of responsibility to protect and address this crisis as a matter of urgency.

In November 2012, ERT in collaboration with SOAS hosted a panel discussion on the Rohingya crisis chaired by Stefanie Grant. Speakers were Amal de Chickera, Tun Khin, Phil Rees and Maung Zarni. A multimedia presentation by Saiful Huq Omi was also screened. The event was well attended (about 70 people) and well received.

In November 2012, ERT also submitted a memo to the U.S. Department of State prior to President Obama's visit to Myanmar. The memo called on the USA to exercise more pressure on the Burmese government to address the Rohingya issue, protect Muslims in Rakhine state and end statelessness. In a speech made at Yangon University, President Obama made direct reference to the Rohingya crisis – and became the first public figure to use the word "Rohingya" at a public event in Myanmar.

The project team met at the Mahidol University in Thailand on 16-17 February 2013 for a second research and advocacy workshop. The workshop reviewed progress in the

drafting of a series of reports envisaged to be published under this project, discussed key issues and themes to be addressed the reports, and agreed the publication schedule. With regard to the advocacy and training components of the project, the team identified national, regional and international advocacy opportunities, discussed advocacy strategy, planned training workshops and a project conference, and finalised the advocacy and training schedule.

II. Country Projects

Azerbaijan: Developing Civil Society Capacity for Preventing Discriminatory Torture and Ill-treatment

This project began in November 2011, and is implemented in partnership with the Azerbaijani women's organisation Tomris. The project seeks to (1) increase the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and other professionals to understand and apply anti-discrimination and human rights law in challenging discriminatory torture and ill-treatment; (2) create an institutional framework for civil society dialogue and advocacy on issues relating to discriminatory torture and ill-treatment through establishing a CSO Forum; and (3) increase awareness and understanding among CSOs and other key stakeholders of the link between discrimination and the occurrence of torture and ill-treatment. The project features training workshops in three major cities in Azerbaijan (Baku, Ganja and Kurdemir), the publication of a report on discriminatory torture and ill-treatment in Azerbaijan, the establishment of a CSO Forum, and an advocacy campaign.

Following the second round of regional CSO forum meetings in Ganja and Guba, the second meeting of the Eastern region CSO forum was held in Baku in August, attended by 12

local CSOs. At the meeting, participants discussed and agreed a number of priority areas for joint action combating discrimination.

In September 2012, ERT conducted training workshops in three cities (Baku, Ganja and Guba). The training focussed on familiarising participants with the key concepts related to discriminatory torture and ill-treatment. It included sessions on: (i) basic concepts in equality law; (ii) basic concepts on torture and ill-treatment and associated international law; (iii) Azerbaijan's international obligations with respect to equality and to torture and ill-treatment; (iv) Azerbaijani law, policy and practice with respect to equality and to torture and ill-treatment; (v) practical exercises in identifying discriminatory torture and ill-treatment; (vi) human rights monitoring and evidence gathering techniques; (vii) submissions to international and national human rights monitoring mechanisms on discriminatory torture and ill-treatment; and (viii) developing advocacy and awareness-raising strategies relating to discriminatory torture and ill-treatment. Feedback from the training was extremely positive, and trainers were pleased both with the level of learning exhibited by training participants and their interest in incorporating an equality perspective into their work.

Following the training workshops, a third round of CSO forum meetings were held in the three host cities. After a brief review of the training workshops and a restatement of the project's aims and objectives, the meetings focused on identification of issues of joint concern and the formulation of collective responses. Issues discussed included the treatment of political prisoners, and the approach of the authorities to issues of domestic violence. Participants also began the process of identifying potential advocacy opportunities at both the national and interna-

tional levels. The Forums were well attended by a mixture of civil society organisations, media organisations, lawyers, and representatives of local and national authorities.

This project has had a significant positive impact on the capacity of civil society to combat discriminatory torture and ill-treatment and has delivered – or is in the process of delivering – on each of its objectives. The three

and Guba, each of which has convened three meetings attended by a number of civil society actors, media and legal representatives, and representatives of the local and national authorities. Participants at these meetings have, as planned, shared their experiences of discriminatory ill-treatment, identified common problems and agreed joint actions to address these problems. The result is that civil society dialogue and cooperative working on



Novella Jafaroglu, Chair of the Society for the Protection of Women's Rights, at ERT training in Baku, September 2012.

Photo credit: ERT

planned training workshops successfully provided participants with grounding in key concepts relating to torture and ill-treatment, equality and non-discrimination law, and the nexus between the two areas, followed by discussion of effective strategies for combating discriminatory ill-treatment within the context of the CSO Forum. The result is a significant increase in the capacity of these organisations to apply anti-discrimination and human rights law in challenging discriminatory torture and ill-treatment. ERT and Tomris have successfully established three regional CSO Forums, based in Baku, Ganja

and discriminatory torture and ill-treatment has been established.

Belarus 1: Empowering Civil Society in Belarus to Combat Discrimination and Promote Equality

This project is implemented in an informal partnership with the Belarusian Helsinki Committee (BHC) in Minsk. The project's objectives are to improve knowledge of anti-discrimination law among NGOs in Belarus to enable them to monitor and report on discrimination and to bring discrimination

cases to courts; and to create a coalition of NGOs with a joint advocacy platform on issues of discrimination.

Since June 2012, ERT's work under this project has focused on finalising a comprehensive report on addressing discrimination and inequality in Belarus. Materials to be incorporated in the report were produced by BHC in the first half of 2012 and since then ERT has worked to revise, update and expand the report for publication. This has included a thorough review of available literature on discrimination and the situation of different groups exposed to discrimination, a comparative analysis of laws and policies on equality and non-discrimination and consultation with civil society stakeholders.

This project has had a major impact in highlighting the nexus between discrimination and the ongoing political repression in Belarus. Through providing training, expertise and material support, the project enabled Belarusian human rights defenders to challenge state-sponsored abuses through the courts; to resist the victimisation of the political opposition and their supporters, including defence lawyers, following the disputed presidential election in December 2010; and to successfully overturn the imposition of travel bans on prominent dissidents and human rights defenders, including the members of ERT's partner NGO. As importantly, this project has enabled civil society in Belarus to coalesce around the right to equality, providing a vital space for joint work and activism. In late 2011, ERT and BHC agreed to continue their successful partnership, and in April 2012 launched a second project which aims to build on the achievements of this project.

In January 2013, an independent expert was appointed to carry out an evaluation of the

project's impact. The expert visited Belarus and completed the evaluation in February 2013. The evaluation is very positive and confirms the feeling that the project has achieved its objectives in a cost effective and efficient manner.

Belarus 2: Empowering Civil Society to Advocate Collaboratively the Adoption of Anti-discrimination Legislation

This project began in April 2012, in informal partnership with the Belarusian Helsinki Committee (BHC). The project aims to build on the Belarus 1 project by: (i) providing training on the development of advocacy campaigns and engaging in international advocacy on equality issues for civil society organisations; (ii) establishing a National Equality Forum; (iii) developing and implementing a strategic paper and action plan for the National Equality Forum; (iv) creating an online equality forum; (v) supporting international advocacy actions by Forum members; and (vi) generating new evidence of discrimination through documentation and research.

The first Equality Forum meeting under this project was held in September 2012. In advance of the meeting, BHC developed a strategy paper on strengthening cooperation between Belarusian civil society organisations (CSOs). The paper set out a proposal to establish an Equality Forum, defining the goals, objectives and areas of work of such a Forum. It also examined options for further cooperation between CSOs, and made practical proposals on how to schedule and manage meetings. Following this meeting, it was agreed that the paper would be amended to reflect the agreements reached on the values, goals and approaches for the Forum. Participants also agreed to a BHC proposal that a website should be developed to provide a

virtual platform for consultation and interaction between member organisations.

The first training workshop under the project took place in November 2012, and was deliv-

given an understanding of the unified human rights perspective on equality, and the important differences between this approach and the traditional non-discrimination approach with which they were more familiar. Finally,



Dimitrina Petrova (ERT) and Aleh Hulak (BHC) at seminar on procedural aspects of discrimination law, Minsk, November 2012.

ered by the Executive Director of ERT, assisted by the Executive Director of BHC. The workshop focused on developing participants' capacity to identify and document cases of discrimination, and to advocate for the introduction of comprehensive anti-discrimination law in Belarus. The first day of the workshop focused on ensuring that participants had a strong understanding of the right to non-discrimination, by discussing grounds, forms of prohibited conduct and their definition, material scope and relevant exceptions. The final session of the day included an extended exercise where participants worked in pairs to identify different forms of discrimination in 16 case studies. On the second day, the programme focused on extending participants' understanding of many of the other key substantive and procedural elements of effective and comprehensive anti-discrimination law, as outlined in the Declaration of Principles on Equality. In so doing, participants were

the workshop included a session on techniques for successful advocacy at the national and international levels. Feedback from the training was extremely positive, and 85% of participants reached the pass mark on the post-workshop test designed and administered by ERT.

The primary impact of this project to date has been in increasing the capacity of staff from civil society organisations to understand and apply anti-discrimination law. Representatives of Belarusian civil society have received training in identifying and documenting cases of discrimination, and techniques for advocating for the introduction of comprehensive anti-discrimination law in Belarus. As a result of the training – which provides the foundation for future work under the project – the capacity of civil society organisations to effectively advocate for greater protection from discrimination has been increased.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Developing Civil Society Capacity to Combat Discrimination and Inequality in Bosnia and Herzegovina

This project began in December 2011 with two partners, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina (HCHR) and the Centre for Informational and

vulnerable to discrimination including ethnic and religious minorities, women, LGBT persons, the disabled and returnees.

In July 2012, ERT travelled to BaH to consult with civil society organisations and produce an updated action plan for the project. As part of this visit, ERT conducted an extended



Director of BHHCHR Vera Jovanović and ERT expert Adnan Kadribašić at training, Sarajevo, August 2012.

Legal Aid (CIPP). This project seeks to (1) increase the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and other professionals to understand and apply anti-discrimination and human rights law in challenging discrimination and inequality; (2) create an institutional framework for civil society dialogue and advocacy on issues relating to discrimination and inequality through establishing an Equality Forum; (3) enhance and strengthen the implementation of the new anti-discrimination law in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BaH) through training, advocacy and strategic litigation; and (4) positively influence social attitudes towards minority groups and those

focus group with a sample group of CSOs to assess their knowledge of anti-discrimination law. As a result of these activities, a revised Baseline Study was completed in mid-August, which contributed – as intended – to the planning of civil society training workshops and the development of a comprehensive report on discrimination and inequality.

Two civil society training workshops were conducted on 27-28 August 2012 in Sarajevo and 29-31 August 2012 in Banja Luka. The training was delivered by ERT together with a local consultant. In total, 44 persons participated in the two workshops, repre-

senting 42 organisations. Over the course of two days, each workshop covered: (1) introduction to the theory of equality law from an international and national perspective; major ideas and trends; (2) the right to non-discrimination; (3) scope, rights-holders and obligations; and (4) enforcement. In each of these areas, the trainers examined international law and best practice and the legal framework in BaH, followed by a comparative analysis highlighting gaps and inconsistencies between international best practice and the laws and policies in BiH. After each workshop, participants completed a test to assess the impact of the training. The training was highly effective in increasing participants' knowledge, as evidenced by the fact that 87% of those who completed a post-workshop test devised by ERT reached the pass mark.

Between the two training workshops, on 29 August 2012, HCHR and CIPP held, in Banja Luka, a second meeting of the Equality Forum which had been established in May 2012. In total, 30 organisations attended the Forum meeting, with 5 of these participating as observers. An additional 6 organisations were accepted as members of the Forum, taking the total number of Forum members to 29. Topics discussed included: identification of cases for strategic litigation, research methodology for collecting information towards a country report, and development and finalisation of a draft advocacy plan.

On 30 November 2012, HCHR and CIPP held a third meeting of the Equality Forum. In total, 34 people representing 27 organisations attended this meeting. The meeting included a review of research undertaken by Forum members, which was followed by a discussion on the most important discrimination issues identified by participating organisations in their respective areas of work. Issues

raised included the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by the Roma community, issues arising for the country's different major ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs), and the lack of support for disabled persons in education.

In preparation for the launch of an advocacy campaign, HCHR and CIPP developed a draft advocacy plan. The draft plan focused on local and national level advocacy and awareness-raising. ERT contributed elements on international advocacy and awareness-raising and the plan was discussed by participants at the second Equality Forum in August, with a view to collecting the input of CSOs in the target group. The action plan was finalised in September 2012.

A stakeholder Roundtable convened by HCHR and CIPP took place on 30 October 2012, in Vogosca. It brought together members of the Equality Forum with representatives from key government departments and agencies. The Roundtable was attended by a total of 30 people, representing civil society organisations, government ministries and institutions – including the Ministry of Justice, the Institution of the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Association of Judges, as well as the media. The keynote presentation was made by Adnan Kadribašić, an expert in anti-discrimination law, who spoke about the legal and political framework governing equality and non-discrimination in BaH. He also gave a review of relevant international standards on non-discrimination and equality, the previous practice of CSOs in advocacy and litigation in this area and the work of government institutions in protection from discrimination. Participants then discussed the implementation of the Law on Prevention of Discrimination and considered steps to improve enforcement mechanisms, sharing their own experiences and problems in the

practical application of the law. Participants agreed a number of conclusions in the form of proposals to improve implementation and enforcement of the Law on Prevention of Discrimination. It was agreed that these proposals should form the basis of advocacy efforts in the later months of the project.

Research for a report on discrimination and inequality in BaH began in October 2012, being managed through the framework of the Equality Forum. HCHR and CIPP have asked Forum members with a particular expertise or area of focus (on women, disability or sexual minorities, for example) to form working groups on these areas to undertake research. From October to December, each working group reviewed relevant existing literature, including their own research, and undertook interviews to collect first-hand testimony from victims of discrimination with whom they work. This research was shared with ERT in January 2012, and work towards the production of a draft report is currently ongoing.

In its first year of implementation, this project has had a significant impact in increasing the capacity of civil society organisations in BaH, while ERT, HCHR and CIPP have made good progress towards the achievement of each of the project objectives. The two training workshops provided participants with an understanding of international law and best practice on the rights to equality and non-discrimination, and of the legal framework in BaH, enabling them to undertake comparative analysis of the law in BiH – a critical foundation for successful advocacy. The Equality Forum has enabled the coordination of activities to promote implementation of anti-discrimination law through documentation, litigation and advocacy. Each meeting was attended by between 25 and 30 organisations, including

representatives of the core membership and additional organisations based in the host city for the meeting. A good deal of progress has been made towards the objective of strengthening the implementation of the new anti-discrimination law in BaH through training, advocacy and strategic litigation, through activities focussed on developing the foundations for advocacy and litigation.

Croatia: Empowering Civil Society through Training and Establishing a Croatian Equality Forum

This project is implemented with two partners, the Croatian Law Centre (CLC) and the Association for Protection of Human Rights and Citizens' Freedoms (HOMO). The project's objectives are to: (i) increase the capacity of stakeholders (including civil society organisations and activists) to improve the implementation and application of anti-discrimination law and policy; (ii) create an institutional framework for civil society debate on equality and diversity issues through establishing the Croatian Equality Forum (CEF); and (iii) increase the communication and coordination of work agendas between civil society organisations working on different equality issues and key Croatian decision-makers in the field of anti-discrimination.

ERT, CLC and HOMO have jointly drafted a Toolkit on Anti-discrimination Law which is intended for use by Croatian lawyers wishing to bring cases under the Croatian Equality Act and by civil society actors wishing to advocate for improvements to laws and policies. The finalised toolkit will contain chapters on international standards on anti-discrimination law; Croatian anti-discrimination laws; other legislation providing protection from discrimination in Croatia; litigation techniques and processes; influencing decision-makers through policy work

on discrimination; and advocacy for progressive change in anti-discrimination standards in Croatia. ERT has contributed sections on international and European standards on equality and non-discrimination.

In November 2012, ERT, CLC and HOMO agreed an action plan for the establishment of the Croatian Equality Forum, which brings together a key group of Croatian CSOs to advocate for improved national policies in support of equality, in particular to lobby the authorities to undertake a comprehensive Regulatory Impact Assessment of existing legislation. Two initial meetings of the Croatian Equality Forum were held. The meetings focussed in particular on the need to lobby the authorities to undertake a comprehensive Regulatory Impact Assessment of existing legislation for its compatibility with relevant laws on discrimination. The outcome of these meetings was a commitment to work within the Regulatory Impact Assessment process to ensure that the right to equality is mainstreamed and taken as a central consideration in all current and future assessments of legislation and policy under this process.

The primary impact of this project to date is that over 25 CSO representatives, lawyers and human rights activists from various regions of Croatia have been trained in applying current international equality law and best practice in their work, greatly increasing their capacity to contribute to the implementation of Croatia's existing anti-discrimination legislation. The establishment of the Croatian Equality Forum, and the strong working relationship already established between the Forum and relevant national authorities, is a significant positive development in that it provides a platform for joint work and coordination of CSO efforts towards better implementation of equality legislation in the country.

Guyana 1: Empowering Civil Society to Challenge Homophobic Laws and Discrimination against LGBTI Persons

This project is implemented in partnership with the Society against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD), an LGBTI-rights organisation based in Georgetown. The project's objective is to build the capacity of civil society to challenge discrimination against LGBTI persons, by both increasing the technical skills and capacity of LGBTI organisations and by fostering improved cooperation between LGBTI organisations and other human rights NGOs. The project involves a number of activities, including training for civil society organisations, the establishment of a Guyana Equality Forum and the development of a comprehensive report on discrimination and inequality in Guyana.

Having completed all other project activities, ERT's focus since June 2012 has been on completing the report on discrimination and inequality in Guyana. Following a well-attended conference in June 2012 to validate a draft of the report, and a series of consultations with stakeholders from government and civil society, ERT and SASOD sought further feedback on the draft report through a formal consultation process between July and September 2012. Since September, ERT has been working on the revision and finalisation of the report.

This project's principal impacts have been on ERT's local partner SASOD, and its immediate network of groups working on behalf of communities exposed to serious discrimination, such as LGBTI persons, sex workers, persons living with HIV and AIDS and survivors of domestic violence. This group has benefited from improved networking and increased knowledge of key concepts in equality law which has enabled effective advocacy. SASOD

successfully established a Forum bringing together disadvantaged groups from a broad spectrum, increasing their capacity to challenge discrimination. This group also benefited from training, which provided 35 civil society actors with knowledge of the key concepts in equality law. This increased capacity was further developed through engagement in field research, documenting cases of discrimination on different grounds. In part as a result of the support provided by this project, SASOD has been undertaking increasingly effective advocacy, entering negotiations with senior government figures on the vexed question of decriminalisation of same-sex intimacy between men.

Guyana 2: Empowering Civil Society to Address Societal Prejudice and Undertake Advocacy on Discrimination against LGBT Persons

This second project on Guyana commenced in October 2011, overlapping with ERT's first project in Guyana, and is implemented again in partnership with SASOD. The two projects are closely interconnected: the second, focusing on media, political and international advocacy, builds on the first, which focused on the development of basic capacities and tools for advocacy.

Following successful completion of the project's first activity, the Advocacy Conference, and the completion of the first of four training workshops in June 2012, ERT and SASOD focussed on the development of an Advocacy Strategy to guide the implementation of an advocacy campaign for the period October 2012 – April 2013. The Advocacy Strategy was finalised in October 2012.

Implementing the Advocacy Strategy, in November 2012 SASOD worked with child rights NGOs to develop a child protection pol-

icy, a move which was publically welcomed by the National Child Care and Protection Agency. Aside from the value of this policy itself, SASOD had identified child protection as an important area in which to advocate, in part to counter public perceptions in Guyana which conflate homosexuality with paedophilia. On 8 December, SASOD convened a "Walk for Equality" with other NGOs under the auspices of the Guyana Equality Forum established under the first ERT-SASOD project. The event attracted significant attention in the media and reinforced the public presentation of a unified front on equality issues by bringing together leading women's and indigenous rights groups with the LGBTI community which SASOD represents.

In respect of raising public awareness, SASOD has developed concepts and content for a series of public advertisements highlighting issues of discrimination – in particular against LGBTI people, but also other groups. The finalisation of these advertisements is pending receipt of the findings from a national opinion poll conducted by the Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation which set out to examine public attitudes towards gay, lesbian and transgender people in Guyana. SASOD believes that waiting for the results of this exercise will allow them to ensure that the advertisements tackle the most important areas of misconception and modify their messages to achieve maximum impact.

Following some delays in implementation, this project has made substantial progress towards its ultimate objective. A week of intensive advocacy activities in June 2012 successfully built on SASOD's work to develop a coalition of organisations interested in advocating improved protection from discrimination. These organisations have then developed a shared advocacy agenda – and then a full advocacy strategy – based on the

recommendations of the report, with repeal of discriminatory laws affecting the LGBTI population, and inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity as grounds of discrimination, as central concerns. The media has been successfully engaged in support of these advocacy priorities, as evidenced by the favourable coverage received for the “Walk for Equality” While a significant challenge remains in securing the active support of the authorities for reforms, particularly on the protection of persons of different sexual orientation and gender identity, the project has allowed the LGBT community to build strong foundations, in particular through the media, to achieve this.

Guyana 3: Combating Discrimination through Advocacy and Strategic Litigation in Guyana

This third project on Guyana formally started in January 2013, overlapping with ERT’s second Guyana project, which comes to an end in mid-April 2013. It is being implemented in partnership with SASOD and the Justice Institute of Guyana. The project aims to address two major problems identified through ERT’s research in Guyana: (1) a failure of implementation and enforcement of laws which provide protections from discrimination; and (2) the stark difference between the legal rights of LGBTI persons and all other persons. The project’s activities include further advocacy for reform of the Prevention of Discrimination Act, strategic litigation, and a judicial colloquium.

Indonesia: Empowering Civil Society to Use Non-discrimination Law to Combat Religious Discrimination and Promote Religious Freedom

This project aims to build the capacity of Indonesian civil society to use the right to non-

discrimination to combat religious discrimination and promote religious freedom. The project is implemented in partnership with two of Indonesia’s leading NGOs, the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI) and the Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy (ELSAM) and involves a range of activities including training, documentation, production of a country report on discrimination and inequality in Indonesia with a focus on religion-based discrimination, and the development of advocacy strategies.

In the first half of 2012, a draft of the report on religious discrimination in Indonesia was developed by ELSAM, incorporating field research undertaken by YLBHI through its network of local legal aid institutes. ERT and ELSAM cooperated to further develop the draft between July and October, and since October, ERT has worked on this second draft with a view to completing the report for publication.

During September and October 2012, YLBHI developed an Advocacy Strategy paper setting out proposals to take forward advocacy to address discrimination on grounds of religion and belief. The paper examines, among other things, the idea of establishing a Forum on Religious Discrimination bringing together interested NGOs and religious minority groups to develop a coordinated advocacy strategy. At the same time as developing this paper, YLBHI planned and organised the project’s final activity, an Advocacy Conference, which took place on 30-31 October 2012. The conference was attended by 20 of the 25 largest NGOs working in the field or religious freedom in Indonesia and YLBHI’s 14 local legal aid institutes (one on each of Indonesia’s 14 largest islands). During the Conference, YLBHI and ELSAM presented the initial findings of their research for the aforementioned report, and presented the

paper on advocacy to address discrimination on grounds of religion and belief.

The main impact of this project has been to add a level of competence on the application of the right to non-discrimination among a group of civil society actors which is already highly capacitated and engaged in advocacy on other human rights issues. The project has also provided a platform for ERT to engage in advocacy on the protection of religious minorities, urging such concerns to be addressed through effective protection from discrimination, as well as protection of the rights to freedom of religion and other rights. As a result of these interventions, made both in Indonesia and through the UN system, there is an increasing level of awareness of the need to provide protection from discrimination and discriminatory violence on grounds of religion or belief.

Jordan: Addressing Discrimination and Violence against Women in Jordan

The objective of this project, which started in January 2011, is to contribute to the protection of women from all forms of discrimination in Jordan at the societal and legal level. ERT is implementing this project in Jordan as a partner to Mizan, an Amman-based organisation which is one of the most prominent and active human rights and legal defence NGOs in the Middle East.

In August 2012, ERT completed two pieces of work to contribute to a report on discrimination and inequality produced by Mizan. The first paper, “Guidelines for the Development of Comprehensive Anti-discrimination Law” sought to provide a best practice guide, based on the Declaration of Principles on Equality, to the content of anti-discrimination legislation. The paper contained sections on each of the following areas: (i) the treatment of

grounds; (ii) the different forms of prohibited conduct; (iii) material scope; (iv) exceptions; (v) enforcement; access to justice; (vi) remedies and sanctions; (vii) positive action; and (ix) positive duties. In each of these areas, the paper set out and explained the relevant principle(s) from the Declaration of Principles on Equality and the relevant international obligations and standards. Following the analysis of standards in each section, the document set out draft provisions which might act as a starting point for the drafting of national legislation.

The second paper, “Global Overview of Equality Laws” was also based heavily on the Declaration. The paper provided an introduction to the right to equality in international law, and the status of the obligation to enact anti-discrimination legislation. Based on the Declaration, the paper then set out the requirements of comprehensive equality legislation, in order to provide a benchmark to measure states’ compliance. The paper further defined and elaborated a scale of five different degrees of state compliance with the obligation to enact comprehensive equality law, and provided selected examples of states which fall within each degree group.

Kenya 4: Improving Access to Justice for Victims of Gender Discrimination

This project, which is funded by Comic Relief and implemented in partnership with the Federation of Women Lawyers – Kenya (FIDA-Kenya) aims to increase access to justice for women and girls in Kenya. The project’s central activity involves the establishment of community-based legal advice services (referred to as Legal Assistance Scheme Partnerships, or LASPs), situated within existing Community Based Organisations (CBOs). This is pursued through a combination of training, ongoing support and advice and fi-

financial support to the CBOs and the lawyers with whom they work on the project.

Between July and December 2012, ERT and FIDA-Kenya completed the research phase of activities. The aim of this phase of activities was to collect data in order to allow the partners to: (a) develop project outcomes, based on the views of women in five target regions; (b) assess the capacity of CBOs in each area to participate in the LASPs; (c) develop training materials for use in the latter stages of the project implementation.

On 20-23 August 2012, ERT and FIDA-Kenya conducted test activities for the methodology and assessment tools. The team visited four CBOs in two deprived areas on the outskirts of Nairobi (Kariobangi and Kibera). During each visit, the team met with CBO staff and carried out an assessment of their technical, material and financial capacity to undertake the work of establishing and managing a LASP. In each community, the team also conducted a focus group with women identified by CBOs, in order to assess their views on

the challenges facing women in their community, and establish the link to practices of discrimination. Following the test visits, ERT and FIDA-Kenya reviewed the assessment tools and methodology, and made extensive improvements based on the lessons learned.

From September to November 2012, ERT and FIDA-Kenya conducted a survey using a two-step representative sample of 973 people in 50 locations. Simultaneously, teams met with CBOs in over 100 locations, and conducted focus groups with women in the communities which these CBOs serve. On the basis of this extensive data collection, ERT and FIDA-Kenya developed a Baseline Study in December 2012. The Study provided an assessment of the range of issues affecting women in the communities covered by the Study and their relative importance to women. ERT analysed the findings and concluded that the project should focus on providing legal assistance to address the three most important problems identified: (1) All forms of gender-based violence; (2) Economic injustice, including in particular widow disin-



Members of FIDA-Kenya visiting CBO in Kibera neighbourhood of Nairobi, October 2012.

Photo credit: ERT

heritance and eviction; and (3) Deprivation of education, in particular resulting from early marriage. At the same time, FIDA-Kenya reviewed the outcomes of the CBO assessment, and shortlisted 55 CBOs according to a pre-agreed scoring system. These CBOs will be invited to participate in the LASP scheme, and will receive training from ERT and FIDA-Kenya. They will be provided with a manual and reporting forms, and will establish and advertise the services in their locality.

Kenya 5: Promoting Equality Inclusive of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

This project builds on work carried out under the first three projects implemented by ERT in Kenya, which centred on capacitating civil society to advocate for improved legal protection from discrimination, developing proposals for comprehensive equality law, and advocating for the enactment of such a law. As a result of these projects, ERT developed and published *In the Spirit of Harambee: Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Kenya*, the first comprehensive assessment of the rights to non-discrimination and equality in the country.

This project is composed of four activities: (i) continued civil society campaigning for the introduction of comprehensive substantive equality legislation and policies inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity; (ii) distribution of the ERT report on equality in Kenya to a minimum of 250 Kenyan stakeholders; (iii) convening of a central campaign events featuring a presentation and discussion of the recommendations of the report; (iv) establishment of a pilot legal service for LGBTI persons who complain of discrimination.

Since the beginning of 2013, ERT has focused on planning and organising the cen-

tral campaign events, which is scheduled to take place in the last week of March 2013. Two events have been planned. The first, a one day conference, will bring together key stakeholders from government agencies and departments, constitutional commissions and civil society to discuss and debate the principal recommendations in the report *In the Spirit of Harambee*. Discussions will focus in particular on the need for comprehensive anti-discrimination law, and the key principles which such legislation must follow to conform to Kenya's obligations under international law. The ultimate objective of the Conference is to seek a consensus on the need for legal reform on equality to be a major priority for the new parliament. A second, public panel discussion event will provide an opportunity for members of the public and media to discuss the deliberations of the conference, and provide input on the need for the legislation, as well as its content.

Efforts to establish a pilot legal service for LGBTI persons have been hampered by severe organisational difficulties faced by ERT's partner organization, the Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya. However, in early 2013, ERT reached an agreement with the National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission to establish a service providing legal advice and assistance for LGBTI persons.

Malaysia: Empowering Civil Society to Combat Discrimination through Collective Advocacy and Litigation

Launched in March 2010, this project involved the provision of training to civil society actors, lawyers and the judiciary on equality law, development of a report on discrimination and inequality in Malaysia, and the establishment of a Malaysian Equality Forum. ERT worked with its local partner, the Kuala Lumpur based NGO Tenaganita.

The final activity to be delivered under this project, the publication of a country report on Malaysia, was completed in November 2012. The report, *Washing the Tigers: Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Malaysia*, is the second in the ERT country report series and provides a comprehensive assessment of discrimination on a range of grounds, together with an analysis of laws and policies on discrimination. The report includes assessment of patterns of discrimination on grounds of race and ethnicity, indigenous status, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, health status, age, disability, citizenship, and political opinion. It also analyses the legal and policy framework related to equality in Malaysia and makes recommendations in 10 different areas of law and policy. Among its major conclusions is that ethnic Malays and natives in Sabah and Sarawak (the *Bumiputera*) continue to benefit from decades-old affirmative action policies that have outlived their legitimacy; that discrimination based on religion is very significant; and that LGBTI persons suffer criminalisation and persecution.

Following publication, the report attracted significant interest in the Malaysian media, with stories appearing online, in print and in broadcast media. One of the report's main recommendations – the repeal of constitutional affirmative action provisions favouring ethnic Malays – was highly controversial, leading to calls for the prosecution of the Director of ERT's Malay partner organisation and further fuelling interest in the media.

The impact of this project includes the successful establishment of a functioning national Equality Forum which provides an institutional framework for civil society dialogue on equality and discrimination issues in Malaysia; the increased understanding of

35 workshop participants of both international and domestic equality and non-discrimination law, and an increased capacity to develop advocacy strategies through which their improved knowledge can be used to seek improvements in domestic protections of the rights to equality and non-discrimination for all vulnerable groups within Malaysian society; and, through the publication of *Washing the Tigers*, engaging key stakeholders and legal experts in Malaysia with regards to improving the protection and implementation of the rights to equality and non-discrimination.

Nigeria: Discrimination and Torture

Under this project, which started in August 2010, ERT supports the work of a Nigerian NGO, the Legal Assistance and Defence Project (LEDAP) with whom it works on another project (*Torture and Disability in Nigeria and India*) to provide direct assistance to victims of discriminatory torture. The funding for the project is provided by the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT). ERT's primary responsibilities involve overseeing the case assessment process, advising on the discriminatory elements of the torture and ill-treatment which has occurred and managing the narrative and financial reporting of the project to the donor.

Between July and December 2012, fifteen cases were identified as viable strategic cases under the Torture and Disability project, following some initial investigations and case analyses by Nigerian lawyers.

Through providing support to individual torture victims and enabling them to pursue legal claims for torture against the Nigerian authorities, this project has secured redress for the individual victims, and contributed to

efforts to reduce impunity for discriminatory torture in Nigeria.

Solomon Islands 2: Empowering Civil Society to Promote Gender Equality and Reduce the Incidence of Gender Discrimination in the Solomon Islands

In this project, which began in April 2012, ERT works in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community Solomon Islands Country Office (SPC-SI) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT). ERT is responsible for training and report writing activities under this project.

In the final quarter of 2012, ERT began research and preparation for the production of a country report on discrimination and inequality in the Solomon Islands. ERT undertook desk based research and analysis to develop the sections of the report dealing with patterns of discrimination and inequality and the legal and policy framework. In February 2012, ERT provided detailed guidance to SPC-SI on where and how to conduct additional field research and documentation of patterns and incidences of discrimination. Work to develop and draft the report is ongoing.

The key impact and outcome of this project achieved so far is in increasing the capacity of 18 training participants in understanding and applying anti-discrimination law, and undertaking advocacy. CBOs and activists are better prepared to develop advocacy submissions regarding constitutional reform as it relates to equality, and to undertake advocacy at the UN level. Moreover, these 18 persons have been trained to act as focal points within their communities, monitoring and documenting cases of gender-based and other discrimination and advocating for improvements to law and policies.

Sudan 1: Empowering Civil Society in Sudan to Combat Discrimination

This project is implemented in partnership with the Sudanese Organisation for Research and Development (SORD). The project aims to build the capacity of Sudanese civil society organisations to advocate for improved protection from discrimination and for the promotion of equality, through training, support with documentation, publication of a country report and support with the development of an advocacy strategy.

The implementation of this project was suspended between June and September 2012, as a result of escalating protests against the regime of President Al-Bashir – and the crackdown on civil society which followed the protests – which made it impossible for SORD to work on the project activities. In the period after Ramadan (which ended on 18 August 2012), many of those arrested during the protests were released, the political situation calmed and security improved. As a result, SORD was able to return to work shortly after the end of the suspension period, and implementation of the project resumed at full strength at the beginning of October 2012.

In November, SORD completed a first set of materials towards the report on discrimination and inequality in Sudan. The materials contain extensive testimony collected through field research in different parts of the country – a significant challenge given the restrictions on civil society activity – and identify discrimination on a wide range of grounds. Since receiving the materials, ERT has focused on developing it for publication.

Following extensive preparations and consultation with the target groups, SORD held consultation meetings on issues of discrimination in Sudan in mid-December. Meetings

were convened with three different stakeholder groups: (1) politicians and government officials; (2) religious leaders; and (3) the media. The outcomes of these meetings were used to develop an outline advocacy strategy paper to guide SORD's work on equality and non-discrimination following completion of the project. This paper was then the focus of further discussions with civil society partners at an Advocacy Strategy conference convened on 30 December 2012.

In March 2013, ERT travelled to Sudan to explore issues raised by the field research, validate some of its findings, as well as identify next steps that would make possible the publication of a country report on all forms of discrimination and inequalities in Sudan.

Despite the severe challenges which ERT and SORD have faced in implementing this project, it has had an important impact on civil society capacity to combat discrimination. A train-the-trainer workshop delivered in October 2011 and two follow-up workshops delivered in January and February 2012 developed the technical capacity and knowledge of participants in the area of anti-discrimination law, and helped to expand the nascent network of organisations interested in pursuing legal reform on discrimination. Organisations involved in field research benefited in terms of increased capacity to document discrimination, as evidenced by the range of patterns of discrimination identified through the research. The research itself, once published as part of the report on discrimination and inequality in Sudan, is expected to make a significant contribution in terms of raised awareness of discrimination in Sudan. Finally, in an important sense, the project has enabled SORD to continue its work, both in the area of discrimination and other human rights abuses, in the context of an

extremely challenging and at times hostile political environment.

Sudan 2: Equality and Freedom of Opinion, Expression and Association

This project is implemented in an informal partnership with the Journalists for Human Rights (JHR) network which works through a group of independent journalists and human rights defenders operating both inside Sudan and abroad. The project aims to support this highly vulnerable group of human rights defenders, and at the same time develop their understanding of the importance of the rights to equality and non-discrimination in responsible journalism.

This project, like the first one which ERT is implementing in Sudan, was severely affected by the protests against the Sudanese government and the subsequent backlash by the government in June, July and August 2012. The JHR network and the project staff were closely involved in the protest movement, and were thus particularly exposed to the repressive tactics employed by state agencies and the security services.

Given the involvement of the JHR members in the protest movement and their consequent exposure to the human rights abuses visited upon protestors, the provision of support to the JHR network gained pressing importance during the period. The project team developed and led an advocacy campaign aimed at the release of detained journalists and sought to engage and inform international human rights organisations interested in supporting dissident journalists. As a result of extensive networking and engagement, the project coordinator was able to establish a small committee to coordinate the identification of journalists who had been detained and ill-treated, campaign for their release

and provide them with practical support after their release. The committee raised funds from international funders, colleagues and other allies in order to address the immediate financial, psychological and medical needs of former detainees.

In addition, the project staff, through their human rights monitoring work, sought to raise awareness of the human rights situation in Sudan in the national and international media, through the publication of statements and media briefings containing details of human rights violations.

In December 2012, ERT and the JHR held a strategy development roundtable with 25 leading members of the JHR in attendance. Over the course of four days this group discussed outline proposals for a long-term organisational strategy and advocacy strategy for the JHR which had been developed by the JHR project coordinator together with ERT's project manager. As a result, the JHR has largely agreed the main components of its organisational strategy for the coming two years.

In January 2013 ERT and the JHR launched a new JHR website, *JHR-online.org*. The website is intended to provide a platform for the JHR to promote its advocacy and campaigning, and to provide a hub for the dissemination of information on the human rights situation in Sudan. The site contains statements and reports produced by the JHR and its members, together with news and reports produced by international NGOs.

Despite the significant obstacles faced by ERT and the JHR, this project has continued to evidence impact in two critical areas. First, by providing financial, practical and technical support to the JHR, the project has enhanced

the ability of journalists to report on human rights violations and provided a mechanism to support and protect those who put themselves at risk in so doing. The impacts of these changes include a modest increase in freedom of the press, greater awareness of the violations of freedom of expression and other human rights perpetrated by the Sudanese authorities, and, in a small number of cases, the release and protection of individuals detained or otherwise mistreated for challenging the regime's human rights record. Second, through providing training to Sudanese journalists, the project has successfully increased the understanding of the importance of the rights to equality and non-discrimination among the members of this civil society movement. As a result of the training provided by ERT, Sudanese journalists are able to identify and document cases of discrimination and understand the role which the media can play in both combating discrimination and ensuring that speech inciting discrimination and violence is not perpetuated. At this critical juncture in Sudan's history, and in the context of inflammatory racist and nationalist speech in both Sudan and South Sudan, this is a major achievement.

Sudan 3: Equality and Freedom of Expression in Sudan and South Sudan

This project began in November 2012, in informal partnership with the Journalists for Human Rights (JHR). The project aims to build on the success of ERT's collaboration with the JHR, expanding the work to involve journalists and human rights defenders from South Sudan as well. In addition to providing ongoing support to journalists working in the repressive media environment in both countries, and providing training on human rights and equality, the project aims to increase collaboration between those working

in Sudan and South Sudan. In so doing, the project aims to make a contribution to tackling one of the most important human rights and security concerns between the two countries: the perpetuation of hate speech by the political leadership and media in Sudan and South Sudan.

Since commencing the project, ERT and the JHR have focused their activities on building contacts with human rights defenders and journalists in South Sudan, and finalising the JHR organisational and advocacy strategy developed under the Sudan 2 project. These activities are conducted in anticipation of the first project event, a roundtable bringing together leading independent journalists and human rights defenders from both Sudan and South Sudan, to discuss cooperation to combat human rights abuses through the media, with a particular focus on tackling hate speech.

Turkey: Empowering Civil Society to Challenge Discrimination against LGBTI Persons in the Aegean and Marmara Regions of Turkey

This project began in January 2012 and is implemented in partnership with a Turkish LGBT rights organisation based in Izmir, the Black Pink Triangle (SPU). It seeks to address the lack of capacity among civil society organisations (CSOs) in two of Turkey's regions to challenge discrimination against LGBT persons and to advocate for improved legal protection from discrimination, including on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, through (1) improving documentation of all types of discrimination, including against LGBT persons, from a unified perspective on equality in the form of a published report; (2) increasing knowledge of anti-discrimination law and concepts

among CSOs; (3) increasing experience of documenting cases of discrimination among CSOs in the target regions; and (4) increasing cooperation between CSOs in the target regions through the creation of a Regional Equality Forum.

In May 2012, a Baseline Study was produced by ERT's partners in Turkey, following guidance provided by ERT. The Study provides initial research as a basis for all further project activities.

With support from ERT, SPU organised an initial roundtable event for CSOs in the region, which took place in Izmir on 1 August 2012. At the event, SPU presented the project's aims and objectives, provided an opportunity for dialogue between stakeholders working on different discrimination issues and problems, promoted the merits of establishing a regional Forum to coordinate work to combat discrimination, and discussed how work to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity can be incorporated into the work of other organisations. Feedback from participants suggested enthusiasm for work in this area and that most organisations were open to the possibilities of joint working.

In October 2012, ERT travelled to Izmir and Bursa to deliver two three-day training workshops on anti-discrimination law and policy. Topics covered included: (1) an introduction to international and Turkish law on equality and non-discrimination, including Turkey's international commitments; (2) practical sessions focussed on issue-spotting, and the identification of different examples of discrimination; and (3) presentations on cases of discrimination experienced by participants. As the focus of this project is on the mainstreaming of LGBT



Members of the women's organisation Ka-der Bursa at ERT training in Bursa, Turkey, October 2012.

Photo credit: ERT



Richard Wingfield, ERT (left) conducting an exercise at training in Izmir, Turkey, October 2012.

Photo credit: ERT

rights through the application of the unified perspective on equality, LGBT persons were particularly encouraged to share their experiences, and care was taken to draw parallels with discrimination suffered by other vulnerable groups, including women and ethnic minorities. Feedback was very positive, and a number of groups expressed an interest in being further involved with the project both as researchers and members of the Regional Equality Forum.

The initial meeting of the Regional Equality Forum (REF) was held in November 2012 in Izmir. The meeting brought together over 30 CSO representatives and activists from across the region to discuss areas of common concern, with a focus on mainstreaming LGBTI concerns into the discourse of regional civil society. In particular, attitudes displayed in the media towards minority groups were discussed, with this being identified as a possible area for future advocacy work. A further two meetings of the REF took place in February 2013, with the third meeting being brought forward to coincide with SPU's annual "March against Hate Crime". All meetings were well attended by CSO representatives from across the project regions, who have actively engaged in discussion on strategies for joint working and advocacy.

The primary impact of this project to date is that over 30 CSO representatives and human rights activists from the two target regions of Turkey have been trained in applying current international equality law and best practice in their work, greatly increasing their capacity to advocate for the rights of all marginalised groups in society. Through establishing strong links with organisations working on a variety of grounds, this project has made a significant contribution to the efforts

of Turkish activists to mainstream LGBTI groups within the national human rights and equality discourses.

Ukraine: Empowering Civil Society to Challenge Discrimination against LGBTI Persons in Ukraine

This project, which commenced in November 2012, is implemented in partnership with an LGBTI organisation, Nash Mir, based in Kiev. The project involves the delivery of training to civil society organisations, support to an existing Coalition on Combating Discrimination, and the development of a report on discrimination and inequality in Ukraine.

ERT travelled to Ukraine on 17-18 January 2012 to meet with Nash Mir for an in-depth discussion on all aspects of the project. In addition, ERT conducted a focus group discussion with representatives of civil society organisation, in order to assess their knowledge and understanding of equality law and their capacity to work on discrimination issues.

United Kingdom: Greater Protection for Stateless Persons in the UK

Under this project, ERT continued to be an active member of the UK Detention Forum. ERT attended quarterly Detention Forum meetings throughout the reporting period and contributed to the Detention Forum advocacy strategy to combat indefinite detention in the UK. In this regard, ERT continues to play a key role in raising the profile of the statelessness issue in the UK. ERT is a member of the Working Group on Indefinite Detention of the Detention Forum, and contributed towards the strategy and theory of change to end indefinite detention that was developed by the Working Group and presented to the Detention Forum in October 2012.