

A brief report on “Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB)”

“I harbored hatred and ill feelings for Muslims for long enough. However coming to this workshop has made me reflect about my own biases and prejudices”, said Shubham Singh. “The games and exercises like the ‘Soup of Life’ and ‘Stepping Forward’ made learning fun. I learnt about how certain identities have privileges in society and some people are underprivileged and are left way behind”. This sentiment was echoed by a few others at the end of the three-day training of trainers workshop organized by Centre for Study of Society and Secularism (CSSS) in collaboration with Muhim. The training workshop was organized between 3rd to 5th November 2022, in Lucknow based on the Local Changemakers Module on Freedom of Religion or Belief. The workshop was attended by 40 participants- activists and professionals working on the issue of gender, communal harmony and peace. The Change makers Course Module consists of nine sessions- five on building perspective on human rights and freedom of religion and belief and last four sessions focus on tactics to counter violations of freedom of religion and belief. The last session is particularly aimed at helping the participants develop a change plan based on the tactics and skills of problem analysis.



Fig 1. Adv. Irfan Engineer giving an introduction of the workshop

The first session aimed at making the participants aware about the different human needs through the exercises of soup of life where the soup is likened to a dignified and fulfilling life and human needs like food, shelter, education etc. are likened to ingredients of the soup. This along with the gallery of human rights helped participants realize that human rights enlisted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ensure human needs. Session Two focuses on what is freedom of religion – it's a right meant to protect an individual.



Fig. 2. Soup of life and human rights gallery exercise

Session three focuses on identity through the exercise of ‘stepping forward’. The game explains that certain identities come with privileges / advantages and others with disadvantages. Dominant castes, religions, class and gender enjoy certain privileges as opposed to people with disability, from rural settings etc. People associated with certain identities are stereotyped. When religious identity is over-essentialized, people having identities with disadvantage face discrimination and violence.



Fig. 3. One-step forward exercise

Session four and five take the participants through different the different types of violations of freedom of religion and belief, namely, discrimination, restrictions and violence. The participants understood these types of violations better through the role plays describing different scenarios

of violations. The participants apart from appreciating the scope the role play gave them to be innovative, also learnt more about violations. Session four was particularly thought provoking since it compelled the participants to reflect upon the sites of violations. These sites are places which common people access on day-to-day basis such as public transport, roads, workplaces, ration shops, police stations or even our own communities and neighbourhoods.



Fig. 4. Participants doing group discussion

The next two sessions took the participants through the different tactics, namely, emergency tactics, Change tactics, building and healing tactics to counter the violations of freedom of religion and beliefs. The participants through group exercises applied some of these tactics to different scenarios. In the last sessions, the participants made change plans in groups after identifying one violation of freedom of religion and belief and applying tactics and steps on the way to achieving those goals.

Session wise activities

Session One: This session focuses on developing participants' knowledge of their human rights and positive attitudes towards human rights.

Session Content	Activities	Time
Welcome and introduction	A welcome, participant introductions, a course presentation, and a ground rules exercise	30 min
Plenary exercise: The soup of life	Explores human needs using the imagery of ingredients in a pot of soup.	35 min
Walk and talk exercise: Human rights gallery	Helps participants to make connections between human needs and human rights.	25 min
Presentation: Human Needs – Human Rights – Human Responsibilities	An introduction to human rights highlighting key agreements, the duties of states and the role ordinary people can play in making rights a reality.	15 min
Closing discussion	Gives participants the opportunity to reflect on the input and wraps up the session.	15 min
Total		2 Hrs.



Fig. 1. Session one. Human needs cards



Fig.2.Session one: Participants explore human needs using the imagery of ingredients in a pot of soup & relating human needs to The Universal Declaration of Human Rights highlighting key agreements, the duties of states, and the role ordinary people can play in making rights a reality.

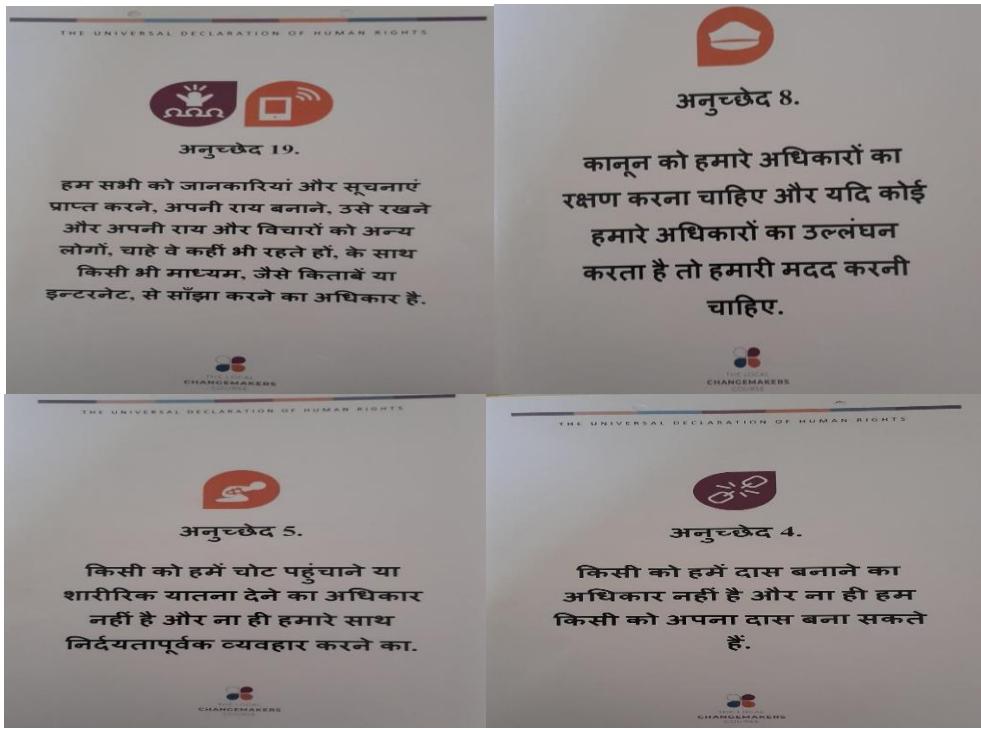


Fig. 3. Session one: Some articles from Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- **Session two** introduces Freedom of Religion or Belief in particular. This session focuses on developing participants' knowledge and appreciation of the value of the human right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief.

Session Two		
Session Content	Activities	Time
Opening exercise: Tell all	Participants throw a ball to each other, saying something they remember from the previous session before throwing the ball onwards.	10 min
Story and discussion exercise: Once upon a time	This exercise is based around the story 'The songs of the flute and the drum'. It has four parts: storytelling – plenary discussion – group discussion – feedback/conclusion	45 min
Presentation: Introducing Freedom of Religion or Belief	This presentation introduces the right to freedom of religion or belief and when it may be limited. It forms a key knowledge input for the course.	15 min
Plenary discussion: Freedom of Religion or Belief	A discussion of the preceding presentation enabling participants to process learning from the presentation.	10 min
Reflection and discussion exercise: FORB in my day	Helps participants to identify how they use their right to FORB in everyday life	35 min
Concluding comments and changemakers story	Stories are included throughout the course to inspire participants	5 min
Total		2 Hours



Fig. 4. Session two

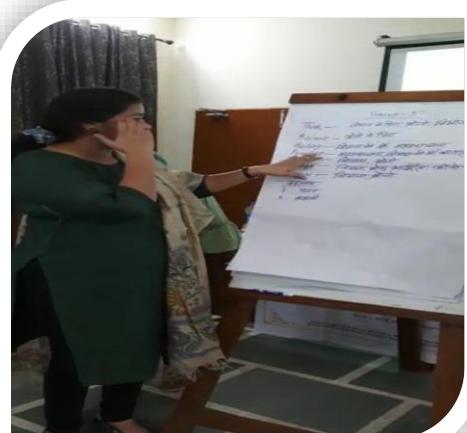
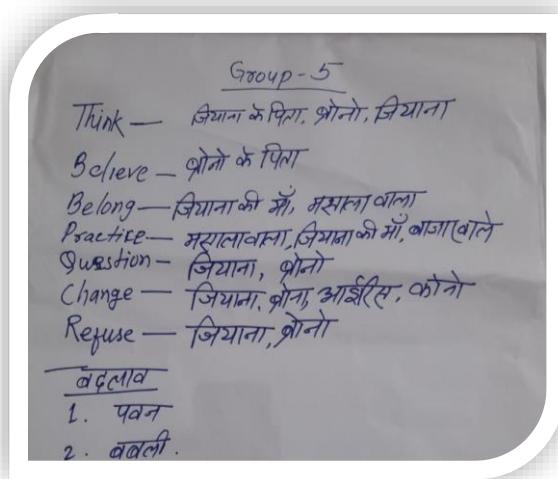


Fig. 5, 6, 7, 8 Session two: Exercise is based around the story 'The songs of the flute and the drum'

- **Session three** focuses on exploring our identities and issues of privilege and disadvantage.

Session Three		
Session Content	Activities	Time
Welcome	Session starts with welcome	2 min
Opening exercise: Pot luck	Helps participants to think about issues of inequality and solidarity.	15 min
Plenary exercise: One step forwards	Helps participants to think about who is affected by discrimination and other rights violations in their context.	45 min
Energizer: Everyone swap chairs	A physical exercise in which people who agree with statements swap chairs.	10 min
Plenary exercise: Our social identities	Helps participants to reflect on the multiple aspects of their identity and how they share many identities with people of other faiths.	40 min
Concluding comments – Our social identities	These comments tie together the messages of the preceding exercises.	8 min
Total		2 Hours



Fig. 9, 10 Session three: Pot luck exercise: Helps participants to think about issues of inequality and solidarity.



Fig. 11. Session three. One-step forward exercise helped participants to think about who is affected by discrimination and other rights violations in their context

- **Session four** explores violations of FORB and enables participants to practice identifying violations. This session introduces participants to different types of FORB violations and how people of all religions and none, in different parts of the world are affected. It also strengthens participants' ability to identify typical FORB violations they might encounter.

Session four		
Session Content	Activities	Time
Welcome and introduction	Reminds people of what FORB is and introduces the session.	5 min
Presentation: Understanding violations of FORB	A talk providing knowledge about different types of violations, with examples from around the world.	20 min
Plenary discussion	An opportunity to reflect on and discuss the presentation.	15 min
Drama exercise: Two-minute FORB mini-dramas	Gives participants the opportunity to practice identifying FORB violations in a fun, interactive way.	75 min
Concluding comments and change makers story	Ties the session together	5 min
Total		2 Hours



Fig. 12, 13, 14. Session four: Groups of participants performed role-plays on the violation of FORB

Session five enables participants to develop their own FORB context analysis, identifying FORB related problems in their communities. This session focuses on building skills in context analysis. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe FORB related problems/violations faced by different people and groups in their community, identify how FORB violations affect women and girls in the community differently from men and boys, and empathize with people of other communities who are affected by FORB violations.

Session five		
Session Content	Activities	Time
Welcome and introduction	Reminds people of what FORB is and introduces the session.	3 min
Opening exercise: The web of good	Participants identify the good things about our community.	12 min
Presentation: How things get worse and how they could get better	Introduces a tool for context analysis called the three phases of persecution	10 min
Mapping exercise: A FORB map of our town, part 1	Participants develop the basis of a FORB context analysis through an interactive exercise.	60 min
Energiser: Walk and stop	A fun, physical exercise in which people do the opposite of what they are told.	5 min
Plenary discussion: A FORB map of our town, part 2	Participants analyses what they developed in the first part of the exercise	25 min
Concluding comments and changemaker story	Ends a session focused on problems on a hopeful note.	5 min
Total		2 Hours



Fig. 15. Session five: Walk and Stop exercise to raise energy levels and lighten the mood in a problem focused session

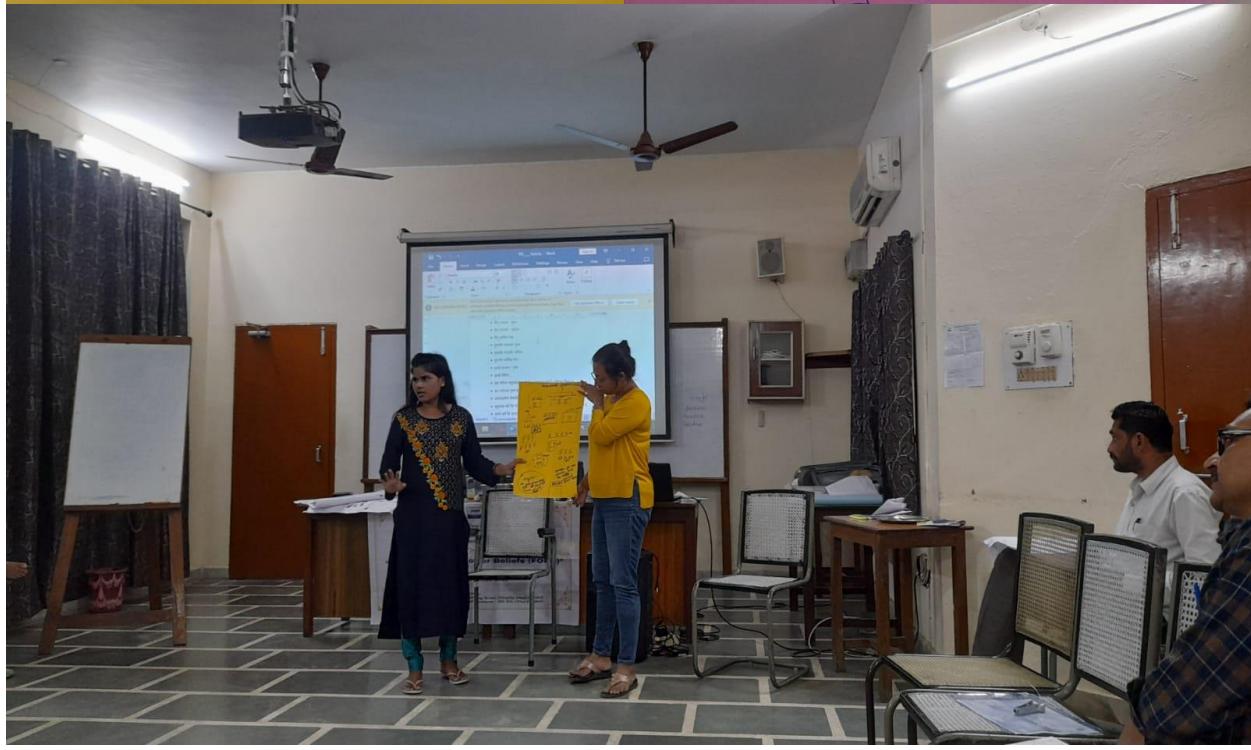
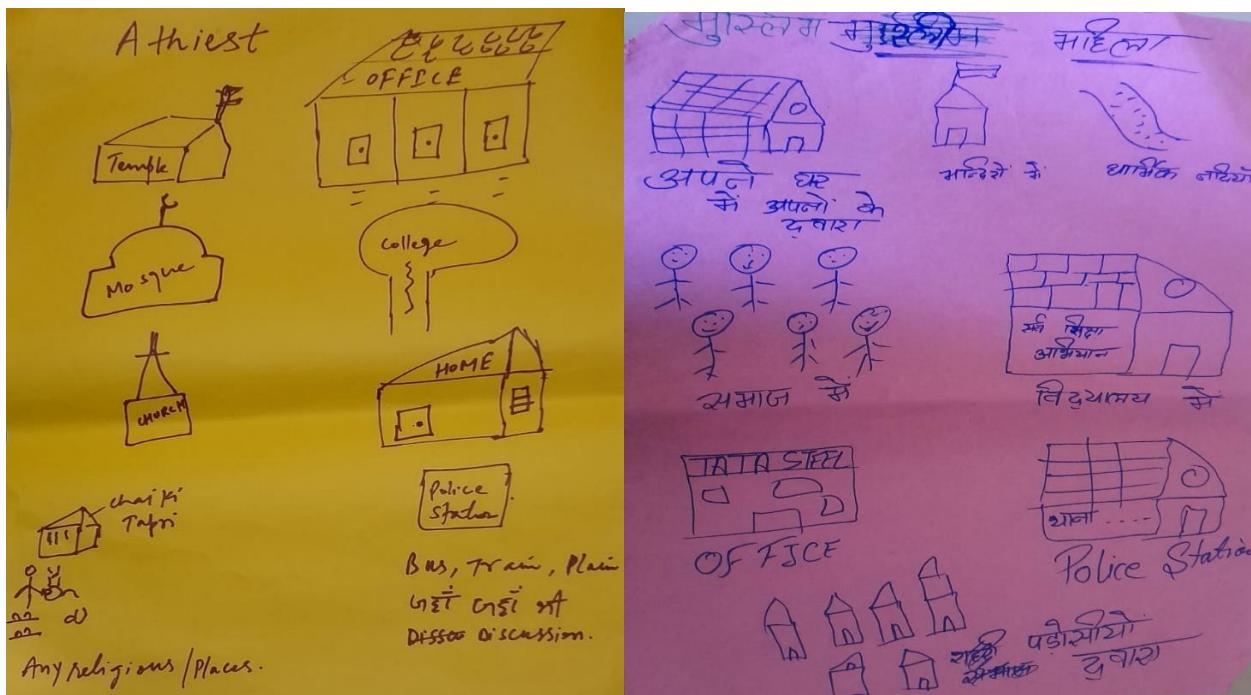


Fig. 16. Session five: A FORB map of our town: Participants analyze what they developed in the first part of the exercise

The previous three sessions have been spent learning about the human right to freedom of religion or belief and violations of the right, reflecting on our attitudes to the right and exploring issues of identity, privilege, and disadvantage. With learning from those sessions as a basis, session 5 takes participants through an interactive process of developing a FORB context analysis for their own area or country.

Sessions 6 and 7 are ‘paired’ – with shared learning objectives and a single learning process.

Sessions 6 and 7 focus on developing knowledge regarding tactics for the promotion of human rights. By the end of these sessions, participants will be able to give a simple explanation of the four different categories of tactics that can be used to promote human rights and give examples of actions for each type, express a desire to promote human rights in their community, have jointly identified at least five actions that they could take as individuals, and five actions that groups/organizations they are involved in could take, to promote FORB in their community.

Session 6		
Session Content	Activities	Time
Opening exercise: Change maker story buzz groups	Kicks off the session with inspiration from others	20 min
Reflection exercise: Bystanders and Healers	Enables reflection on why we sometimes act to stop injustice and sometimes don’t	25 min
Individual exercise: Who am I	A drawing exercise, enabling reflection on the different contexts in which we can make a difference.	15 min
Presentation: Introducing tactics	A key presentation using the imagery of fire to introduce four types of tactics for promoting rights (Emergency, Change, Building and Healing tactics).	10 min
Group exercise with plenary feedback: Talking emergency tactics	Participants discuss ‘emergency’ tactics and brainstorm ways to use them	45 min
Concluding comments	Joins the dots between different parts of the session.	5 min
Total		2 Hours



Fig 17: Session six: Participants presenting on emergency tactic

Session 7		
Session Content	Activities	Time
Welcome and introduction	Reminds people of the four types of tactics presented in the previous session	5 min
Group discussion: Talking tactics, part 1	Participants discuss change, building and healing tactics and brainstorm ways to use them in their context	65 min
Plenary exercise: Who am I?	A drawing exercise, enabling reflection on the different contexts in which we can make a difference.	5 min
Energiser: Head to toe	A physical exercise in which participants copy the facilitator's movements	10 min
Plenary discussion: Talking tactics, part 2	Plenary discussion of the action ideas coming out of the group work.	40 min
Closing exercise: Emoticons	Participants share how they feel about what they have learnt using human sculptures	5 min
Total		2 hours



Fig 18. Session seven - participants discussing change, building and healing tactics and brainstorming ways to use them in their context

Sessions 8–9 are ‘paired’ – with joint learning objectives and a single learning process. In these sessions, participants use the knowledge and the action ideas they developed in previous two sessions to develop an action plan in the form of a visual journey towards change. This session focuses on developing action planning skills. By the end of session 8 and 9 participants will be able to, develop simple action plans for promoting FORB in the community, name concrete actions that they personally can take to promote FORB, express commitment to taking action to promote FORB. Where relevant, participants will implement their action plans after the training.

Session 8		
Session Content	Activities	Time
Opening exercise: Compliment me	Reminds participants of the importance of everyone's complementary contributions to the group and to making change.	5 min
Plenary exercise: What's the problem?	Participants identify a small number of problems to develop action plans for.	52 min
Energiser: Make change	Fast, fun and physical – participants go from crouching and whispering to jumping and shouting the words 'make change'.	5 min
Presentation: Our change journey	Key input describing the process of developing an action plan, using the imagery of a journey	10 min
Group exercise: Our change journey	Participants develop a visual action plan using the process they have learnt	50 min
Concluding comments		3 min
Total		2 hours

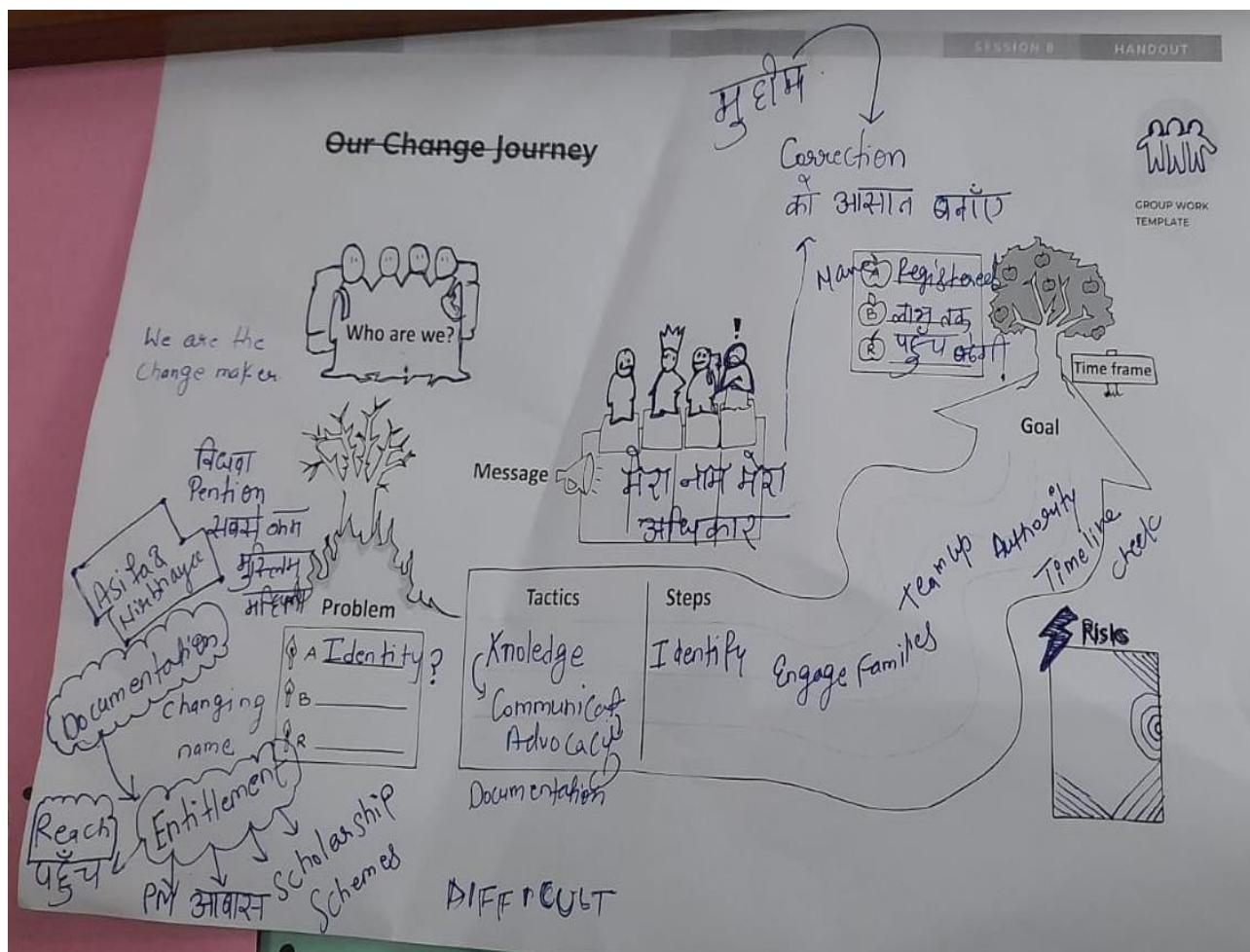


Fig. 19. Session eight: Action plan developed by participants using the process they have learnt

Session 9		
Session Content	Activities	Time
Group exercise: Our change journey (continued)	Participants continue developing the action plans begun in session 8	30 min
Plenary discussion: Our change journey – presentations and feedback	Groups present and discuss their action plans.	15 – 20 min
Energiser: Changemaker sculptures	The groups use their bodies to create a collaborative human sculpture representing their action plan	5 min
Plenary discussion: Where do we go from here?	Participants discuss what action they want to take personally and collectively after the course.	25 min
Evaluation exercise: Head, heart, hands	Participants reflect on what they are taking with them from the course	20 min
Celebration	Celebrate the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and relationships developed during the course.	10 min
Total		2 hours

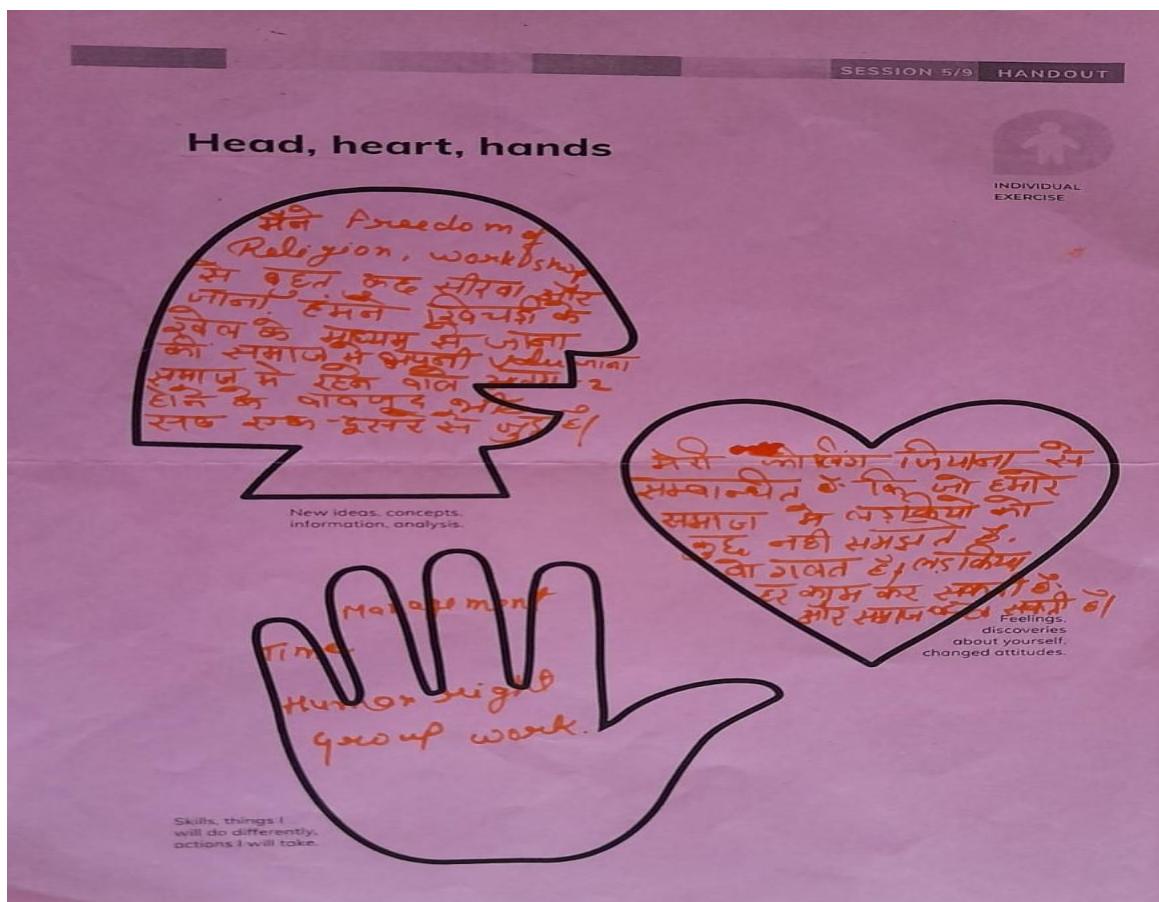


Fig. 20. Session nine: Feedback is given by participants

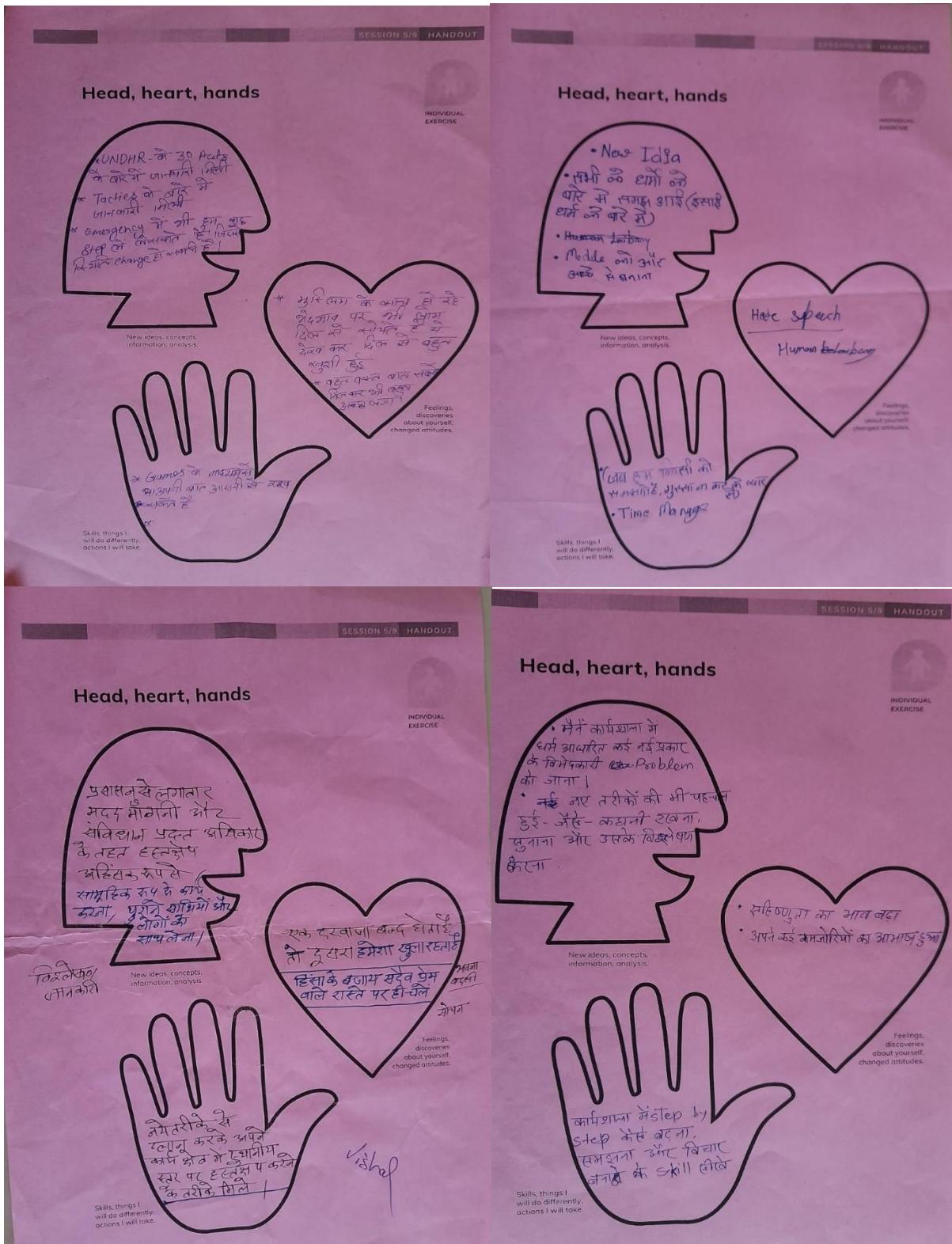


Fig 21. Session 9. Participants gave feedback after completing all nine sessions



Fig. 22. Happy faces of the participants