

# **Impact Assessment of BRAC's Human Rights and Legal Education Training**

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**1997**

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

The huge training investment of BRAC calls for an answers to the questions -- what is the impact of the training on BRAC programs and on its recipients? This study endeavors to answer these questions. As a part of this effort an impact assessment research methodology for training was developed. The methodology was then applied to the training under Human Rights and Legal Education (HRLE) program. (pp. 1-2)

The HRLE training has been introduced to disseminate practically relevant legal knowledge to BRAC members. In order to reach a large number of Village Organization (VO) members at low cost a training 'cascade' has been established. Training is offered at three levels. First comes the Training of Trainers (TOT) for HRLE. Next is Teachers Training (TT) for HRLE Shebok/Shebikas. Finally there is Legal Education (LE) provided by Shebok/Shebikas to the VO members. The laws that the training covers are Citizen's Right Protection Law, Muslim Family Law, Muslim Inheritance Law, and Land Law. (pp. 3-7)

### The Approach to the Impact Assessment of Training

'Impact' in this study refers to the changes produced as a result of training activities. These changes were examined at different levels: (1) knowledge, (2) skill, (3) attitude, (4) behavior of individuals, and (5) outcomes. (pp. 8-10)

The challenge for this study was to assess the degree to which HRLE training contributed to the achievement of HRLE program objectives. This endeavor demanded the investigation of the training process and the establishment of its links with the observed impacts. Thus, this study encompassed the examination of the training process, the context of learning and the changes brought about by the training. To achieve this training was examined at four levels: (i) the extent of training, (ii) the execution of training, (iii) the content of training, and (iv) the impact of training on members' knowledge, attitude, behavior and action. (pp. 10-13)

The contribution of training in producing changes is associated with the extent to which the training has been offered. The extent of training was evaluated in terms of training coverage and the duration of training. The evaluation of the execution of training took into account the effectiveness of the training process (participatory, accessibility and understandability). The content of training as conceptualized by the trainees was examined in terms of (1) the extent to which different parts of the training were felt easy or difficult to understand and internalize; and (2) the extent to which different parts of the training were considered useful and significant. The evaluation of the impact/result was conducted under two heads. (i) The assessment of learning -- by administering pre- and post-tests related to the training content. (ii) The assessment of implementation -- through detailed interviews and observation of the trained. (pp. 10-13)

The initial task was to assess how effective the HRLE program was in terms of the learning acquired at TOT, TT, and LE levels and how learning was transferred down the training cascade. The ultimate impacts entailed an assessment of the degree to which member and group behavior had changed because of HRLE training and the consequences of these changes. These challenges were met by adopting a quasi-experimentation research method. (Chaps. 1, 2, 3 passim)

Training sessions from TOT, TT, and LE were purposively selected for observation. In addition, 75 VO members who received LE one to three years back were selected as an experimental group. Two control groups were also selected. One of these, numbering 75, included VO members without LE. The other group, numbering 50, did not have exposure to any of the BRAC program. Fourteen cases were then purposively picked up from the experimental group for in-depth case study. (pp. 16-17)

Ten questionnaires were designed for data collection at different training levels and for different groups. The questionnaires were designed for both structured and semi-structured responses. For estimating the gain in the level of knowledge due to training a test was designed in collaboration with the HRLE program. The t-tests and gain ratio were used to assess changes in the level of knowledge associated with training at different levels. (pp. 17-19, 88-91)

The assessment of the gain in the skills needed for conducting training by TOT and TT were done (i) from the perceptions of the trainees, (ii) by observing the actual performance of the TT and LE trainers, and (iii) by acquiring the opinions of the trainees on the performance of their trainers. (p. 19)

The performances brought out by the HRLE were validated through consistency checks of the information provided by LE trainees and through corroboration with other informants. To establish the link between HRLE created knowledge and performance the groups were also tested -- as the presence of relevant knowledge was a prerequisite for the application of HRLE learning in practice. (pp. 18-23)

### **The Impact of HRLE Training (findings)**

The HRLE is a large scale program trained more than 100,000 villagers in 1994 and 1995. By the end of 1995, some 291,000 members had undertaken LE in total and the target for 2000 is 1 million trainees. (p. 2)

An analysis of the LE curriculum revealed that it was appropriate for the achievement of the HRLE program objectives. The overwhelming majority of TT and LE trainees were satisfied with the duration of the training but for the TOT trainees a half were not. They felt under pressure due to the short duration of their training. (pp. 5-7, 24-25, 30-31, 41-42, 88, 93-95)

While the entire HRLE content had relevance to VO members' concerns, the relevance of different parts of the training in terms of both trainees' perceptions and practical

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experiences differed greatly. In particular, Muslim Family Law was identified as being the most important part of the training while Citizens' Rights Protection Law was identified as being of limited relevance. (pp. 46-47, 79-80)

The HRLE knowledge was gained by a number of processes: explanation, discussion, answering question and memorization. These training techniques not only helped in the internalization of knowledge but also had mechanisms to ensure that the knowledge was retained. The observation of training sessions revealed that it generally followed good practice and was participatory, accessible and understandable. (pp. 25-26, 32-33, 42-43, 87, 96-99)

The recruitment of trainees for TOT and TT was done well. For LE, the majority of trainees undertook training voluntarily. However, a small number of trainees reported that they were persuaded to attend LE by intimations that access to future Rural Development Programme loans would depend on attending the training course. It was also a concern that some of the trainees reported that they were unaware of the course fee for LE taken from their Rural Development Programme loans. (pp. 24, 29, 40)

The gain ratio scores indicate that the level of learning in TOT, TT and LE were excellent. The same scores when calculated separately for different laws also indicated that the trainees acquired a satisfactory level of learning for all laws except for Land Law and Muslim Inheritance Law at the TT and LE levels, respectively. It was also observed that TOT and TT trainees developed a satisfactory level of skill in conducting training. (pp. 27-28, 34-37, 48-49)

The BRAC members' level of legal knowledge prior to HRLE training were initially identical to non-BRAC villagers. At the end of LE trainees knowledge of HRLE materials had increased from 39% to 81%. As expected, trainees' knowledge lapsed after training. This was by 24% in the first year, but by a relatively smaller amount subsequently. However, even three years after training the HRLE knowledge of LE trainees was around 10% higher than non-trainees. (pp. 53-56)

The LE graduates also experienced changes in their attitudes and motivation because of LE training. Comparisons with the VO without LE and non-BRAC village indicated that LE graduates were more likely to be assertive about HRLE issues. The proportion of LE trainees involved in HRLE related actions was considerably higher than in the two control groups. Some 61% of the VO members with LE, 12% of the VO members without LE and only 4% of the villagers from non-BRAC village conducted HRLE-related actions within the previous 3-year period. In terms of legal issues it was observed that in the case of both VO members with and without LE, Muslim Family Law was by far the most common topic for action. (pp. 8-10, 58-64, 77-78, 113)

Our sample of Legal Education graduates reported applying HRLE knowledge in 77% of the incidents in their lives where it had relevance. The LE graduates reported that in 73% of the incidents in which they applied HRLE knowledge their actions were successful, i.e., the action produced the result which the LE graduates believed to be legally correct. The

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main obstacles to HRLE implementation are the lack of influence of poor people and village courts conducted by village-leaders who often do not apply the laws of Bangladesh in their rulings. (pp. 58-63, 50, 68-70, 80-81)

### **Conclusion**

The HRLE training cascade is a very effective mechanism for transmitting human rights and legal knowledge to VO members. The LE graduates increased their knowledge of relevant laws substantially. Although levels of knowledge decay over time, even three years after training LE trainees have markedly higher levels of HRLE knowledge than non-trainees. (pp. 2-7, 48-49, 53-56)

In addition to transmitting knowledge the HRLE program also changed trainees' attitudes. After training, trainees have an increased desire to assert their legal rights. For our sample a dramatic increase in HRLE-related actions was observed. The LE trainees reported that after having training they were able to resolve 73% of the incidents in which HRLE knowledge was useful. (pp. 49-50, 57-59)

While some improvements can be made to the HRLE training cascade (TOT, TT, and LE) the main obstacle to BRAC members achieving their human and legal rights lies in HRLE implementation. This was also the conclusion of another evaluation (Abdullah et. al. 1993). In consequence, the recommendations highlight the need for experimentation and action on HRLE implementation by BRAC members.

## **Recommendations**

The HRLE program is achieving its objectives and the plans for its expansion as targeted by Rural Development Programme IV are fully supported by this impact assessment study. But, in addition, in order to make the receipt of training even for both the genders, measures should be taken so that the male folk in the village, along with elite within them, may participate in the LE. (Chaps. 1, 7, 80-81)

The LE trainees and particularly Law Implementation Committee members should receive low cost, low time input refresher training at an interval of 12 to 18 months after initial training. (The evaluation of HRLE program by Abdullah and others in 1993 also had similar recommendation). (pp. 53-56, 76)

The content of TOT, TT, and LE should be reviewed with a view to reducing the time allocated to Citizens' Right Protection Law and thus shortening training or making it less rushed (especially for TOT). The content of Muslim Family Law should be reviewed to see if it would be advantageous to increase it and the Muslim Inheritance Law content should be reviewed to see if it can be made more comprehensible to Legal Education trainees. (pp. 24-25, 41-42, 76, 79-80, 93-95)

The flip-charts used by Shebok/Shebikas for LE training need to be made larger. Many trainees were unable to see the contents from a distance. (p. 44)

The methods and amount of information transmitted to trainees and non-trainees about the source of HRLE content needs to be extended. The BRAC Program Organizers/Assistants and Shebok/Shebikas must emphasize that they are teaching the laws of Bangladesh not 'BRAC laws' nor "Christian laws". A powerful visual aid or poster should be prepared to help reinforce this message. The cover of the flip charts for training could present the national flag. (pp. 50, 68-70)

Whenever possible, LE should be conducted in areas that are sheltered from the rain and sun. The use of Non-Formal Primary Education classrooms should be encouraged. (p. 39-40, 44-45)

An experiment with a no-charge or low-charge child-minding facility for LE trainee infants during training sessions should be mounted. This could be operated by 2 or 3 non-trainee VO members, so as to reduce the considerable learning problems created by infant disturbances. (pp. 44-45)

The training for HRLE program Organizer/Assistant should include short case studies of the dramatic LE 'successes' for to be told to the VO members to illustrate the direct benefits that can be achieved from participating in LE. The Program Organizers/Assistants must be discouraged from coercing VO members in attending LE, especially by linking it to future loans. Rather, they should spend more time in informing VO members the

significance of having legal knowledge to facilitate their willful participation to the training. (p. 40, 50-51)

The practice of cost recovery from LE trainees is good: reducing dependence on subsidies and fosters trainees' motivation. But, greater efforts must be made to ensure that LE trainees understand that the Tk 10 course fee for training will be placed on their loan account. (p. 40, 50-51)

A small high-level task force be established to design an experiment (or experiments) to make LE implementation more effective. This task force should adopt an action research methodology with a view to identifying a mechanism that can subsequently be introduced across the entire HRLE program. Amongst other alternatives it should consider:

- The conversion of Law Implementation Committees into Social Action Committees that report on village level HRLE-related issues and actions at each Village Organization monthly forum.
- Means to ensure that BRAC members are recognized as legitimate participants in village courts.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the recent initiative to train village leaders and representatives in HRLE and whether this should be expanded.
- Encouraging members to join other organizations, particularly women's' right groups, for support in LE implementation (where such organizations do not exist BRAC could consider supporting their initiation).
- The use of the mass media to raise HRLE awareness more widely and to weaken the significance of rural elite interpretations of the law.

(Chap. 7 passim)

The training impact assessment methodology used in this study has proved robust for the assessment of BRAC training cascades and can be adapted to assess other training activities. It should be used in the future with the next evaluation focusing on the Training Division's Human Development and Management Training course.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Objectives**

The huge training investment of BRAC calls for an answers to the questions -- what is the impact of training on the programs and on its recipients? This study endeavors to answer these questions. As a part of this effort an impact assessment research methodology for training was developed. The methodology was then applied to the HRLE program to assess the impact of the HRLE training.

#### **HRLE Training**

The HRLE training is offered through a cascade which effectively transferred knowledge, teaching skills and often attitudes to a large number of the trainees within a short period. The cascade included three levels of the training, i.e., TOT, TT and LE, for the transfer of the learning from upper level to the lower.

Training is the crux of HRLE program. The HRLE training has been introduced to disseminate practically relevant legal knowledge to BRAC members. To reach a large number of VO members at a low cost the training 'cascade' has been established. Training is offered at three levels. First TOT for HRLE, next is TT for HRLE S/S, and finally LE provided by S/S to the VO members. The laws that the training covers are CRPL, MFL, MIL, and LL.

It was observed that the same training content as planned was disseminated in each of the training. The analysis of the LE curriculum led to the conclusion that it was appropriate for the achievement of HRLE program objectives, although LE did not emphasize much on the development of the skill for the execution of the knowledge.

#### **Scope of Impact Assessment Study and Methodology**

Impact in this study refers to the changes produced as a result of training activities. The challenge for this study was to assess the degree to which HRLE training activities contributed to the achievement of HRLE program objectives. This endeavor demanded the investigation of the training process and the establishment of its link with the observed

impacts. Thus, this study encompassed the examination of the training process, the context of learning, and the changes brought about by the training. To achieve this, training was examined at four levels: (i) the extent of training, (ii) the execution of training, (iii) the content of training, and (iv) the impact of training on the knowledge, attitude, behavior and action of the trained.

To track the transfer of learning in a training cascade it was necessary to observe how the learning is transferred from the trainers to the trainees longitudinally from one training level to the next within the cascade. Such an observation would require a considerable length of time which this study failed to afford. This challenge was met by adopting a quasi-experimentation research method.

The t-tests and gain ratio were used to assess changes in the level of knowledge of those associated with training at different levels. The assessments of the gain in training skill by TOT and TT trainees were done (i) from the perceptions of the trainees, (ii) by observing the actual performance of the TT and LE trainers, and (iii) by acquiring the opinions of the trainees on the performance of their trainers.

The performances brought out by the HRLE training were validated through consistency checks of the information provided by LE trainees and through corroboration with other informants. To establish the linkage between HRLE created knowledge and performance the groups were also tested -- as the presence of relevant knowledge was a prerequisite for the application of HRLE learning in practice.

### **Extent of Training**

#### **Training Coverage**

The observation on the number of HRLE training offered at each level between 1990 and 1995 gave an impression that the number of the trained that would be produced from a training level was preplanned in such a way that the trained produced at that level could become supportive in producing the desired number of the trained at the next lower level. This planning helped in maintaining the trainer - trainee ratio for a training at a level effective for learning. Besides planning on the number of trained to be produced the gender aspect was also taken into consideration in the case of TTs. This was done to support the policy that the S/S and their LE trainees should be of the same gender.

The recruitment of trainees for TOT and TT was well done. The majority of LE trainees participated voluntarily. However, a small number of trainees reported that they were persuaded to attend LE by intimations that access to future RDP loans was contingent upon attendance and this is a cause for concern. The practice of cost recovery from LE trainees is good: reducing dependence on subsidies and fostering trainees' motivation. It is worrying however, that most trainees reported that they were unaware of the Tk 10 course fee taken from their RDP loans.

The impact of LE due to diffusion among those who did not participate in the training was not significant. In the cases where VO members with LE extended legal help were also VO members and, in most cases, also attended LE. The participation of the VO members with LE to the village-court was very limited. Besides the VO members without LE and the villagers from non-BRAC village who conducted legal actions received knowledge for such actions from sources other than VO members with LE. It appeared that the LE failed to make much impact on the community through diffusion of the learning from the trained to the not-trained.

### Duration of Training

In the case of TOT, dissemination of legal knowledge received prime emphasis in the allocation of time to different training activities. On the other hand, in the case of TT, of the time exclusively spent on learning, both the development of knowledge and the development of training skill received roughly of equal importance in the allocation of training time to these activities. In contrast, in the case of LE the entire training time was directed to the development of knowledge. The allocation of time to different activities in the training appeared to have been determined by the differential emphasis on the development of knowledge and skill as set by the training objectives, the level of human capital, and the skill in conducting training of the trainees participating in this training. These considerations were expected to enhance the effectiveness of the training. It appeared that the duration of training and the allotment of time for the development of knowledge and skill, as a whole, were rationally planned and were appropriate to produce the best results.

About the satisfaction with duration of the training an overwhelming majority (95%) of TT and LE trainees were satisfied, but for TOT trainees a half were not. They felt being under pressure due to the short duration of their training.

### Execution of Training

#### Training process

HRLE knowledge was gained by a number of processes: explanation, discussion, answering questions and memorization. These training techniques not only helped in the internalization of knowledge but also had the mechanisms to ensure that the knowledge was retained. The observation of training sessions revealed that it generally followed good practice and was participatory, accessible and understandable. In this connection it may be mentioned that it was assumed that the more these attributes were present in a training, the more effective the training would be.

#### Training Environment

It appeared that most of the trainees were satisfied or highly satisfied with the training environment. A good number of them could perceive how the environment contributed

positively to their learning by enhancing the quality of the training. The below standard discipline in the LE class was the most mentioned cause for dissatisfaction by the LE students.

The instructions for organizing an LE session was violated considerably. The absence of such a violation surely would have presented a more organized LE but the study failed to make an assessment to the extent to which the violation actually impeded the effectiveness of the training.

The evaluations of the duration of the training, the training process and the training environment lead to the conclusion that those were fully effective to produce the best learning for all three of the training.

### Content of Training

#### Significance

While the HRLE training contents had relevance to VO members' concerns, the relevance of different parts of the training in terms of both trainees' perceptions and practical experiences differed greatly. Particularly, MFL was identified as being the most important part of the training while CRPL was of limited relevance. The situations and/or problems taken into consideration in the selection of CRPL, MIL and LL were those that the trainees encountered in the past, but in the case of MFL it was the wide scale prevalence of the matrimonial problems in the community that influenced the selection process.

#### Easy/difficult

The majority of the trainees found the training to be easy. As a cause for its being easy the effective training process was mostly highlighted. A few found LL to be difficult because its content was difficult to grasp by them.

### Result/impact

#### Test

The TOT training pre- and post-tested the performance of the trainees by using a semi-essay test questions. Though it was not possible to make a precise assessment of the trainees' gain in the learning by using such test questions it was clear from the test scores that the training added considerably to the knowledge of the trainees. Same test scores from TT and LE trainees indicated that they had a satisfactory level of learning. Their such learning may be attributed to the training they attended.

The gain ratio scores of TT and LE trainees indicated that the level of learning in both the training were more than satisfactory. The same scores calculated separately for the laws from these two training also indicated that the trainees acquired a satisfactory level of

learning for all laws except for MIL. It was observed that TOT and TT trainees developed a satisfactory level of skill in conducting training.

As indicated by the post-test the LE graduates had a satisfactory level of learning but with the passing of twelve months of training there was a considerable lapse of the knowledge gained in the training.

The level of legal knowledge of VO members prior to HRLE training was identical to that of non-BRAC villagers. At the end of LE training, trainees' knowledge of HRLE materials had increased from 39% to 81%. As expected, trainees' knowledge lapsed after the training. This was by 24% in the first year but by a relatively smaller magnitude subsequently. However, even three years after the training the HRLE knowledge of the VO members with LE, the VO members without LE, and the villagers from non-BRAC village were significantly different from each other. Similar trend was also observed in the case of these three groups when the test scores were compared by laws. The higher test score of the VO members with LE compared to other two groups was attributed to the LE that the group received.

Tab 8.1 Number of Issues, Allocation of Time and Test Scores by Laws (in pct.)

Laws	Number of issues	Time allotted to different laws		Post-test scores	
		TT	LE	TT	LE
CRPL	18	23	18	86	77
MFI.	32	23	32	98	89
MIL	27	25	27	95	66
LL	23	28	23	76	82

The allocation of time to the learning activities was not in the same proportion for laws in the case of TT and LE (Table 8.1). In the case of LE, the training time was allotted proportionately to the number of issues each law contained, but this was not followed in the case of TT. The performances in the tests also were not proportional to the time allotted to the activities directly related to the learning in these two training. All these indicate that the allocation of time to different laws failed to produce even learning on laws in any of the training. In the case of even learning the trainees would have secured same or roughly similar scores for all laws in the post-test. Moreover, it indicated that there were factors other than time determined the learning not sufficiently taken into consideration for the development of even learning on all laws.

### Attitude

The LE graduates unanimously expressed their full acceptance of the legal issues which they were trained and also expressed their full intention in applying the training they received in the practical life. Most of them (95%) expressed their desire in applying the issues covered in the training. Such preference confirmed to a great extent their perception of the significance of those issues/laws covered in the training. These tendencies rightfully expressed the development of a positive attitude towards legal issues taught to them. In contrast, similar assertiveness in applying legal knowledge was not observed in the case of VO members without LE and the villagers from non-BRAC village.

### Action

The VO members with LE had a higher level of legal knowledge and the intention to apply such knowledge than the two comparison groups. On the other hand, the groups, thought were from three different locations, shared similar social settings (meaning that the groups were likely to encounter roughly equal numbers and similar types of the situations where legal knowledge could have been applied). For this similarity and dissimilarity it was likely that the VO members with LE would demonstrate higher level of HRLE-related actions than the comparison groups.

The HRLE-related actions were summarized under three heads, viz., positive impact, neutral impact and negative impact.

Positive Impact: Some 61% of the VO members with LE, 12% of the VO members without LE and 4% of the villagers from non-BRAC village conducted legal actions within a span of 3 years period. About legal actions conducted, 84%, 13% and 3% were by the VO members with LE, VO members without LE and villagers from non-BRAC village, respectively.

When the respondents' actions were grouped according to the laws, based on which those were conducted, it was observed that in the case of both VO members with and without LE, MFL was implemented most followed by MIL, LL and CRPL. In the case of villagers from non-BRAC village, altogether only two incidents of HRLE-related actions, which related to CRPL and LL, were conducted.

Number of characteristics were observed in the implementation of the HRLE-related knowledge. Those are:

1. The VO members with LE followed HRLE-related instructions in achieving their objectives and helped others to do the same in their day to day life, thus saving themselves from running into problems. But they also applied HRLE-related knowledge when they found themselves into situations where it could have been applied.
2. The HRLE-related knowledge was employed in the case of self, own family, and others in the community. In a number of incidences the respondents came forward themselves

- to apply their learning while in other incidences the respondents were approached for legal helps where the knowledge were implemented.
3. The HRLE-related actions were conducted both in solo and in collaboration with others. Where it was collaborated the collaborators helped each other with the knowledge in their implementations. Thus the lack of complete HRLE-related knowledge was not a bar to the implementation of the training in many cases.
  4. The VO members with LE in taking actions outside their own family, in most cases before initiating the action, consulted with BRAC staff.
  5. There were incidences where respondents directly involved themselves in the implementation of the legal knowledge, but there were also incidences where respondents provided legal consultations only.

About 77% of the situations that VO members with LE encountered where legal actions could have been taken were actually taken. Seventy-three percent of these actions produced desired result. The proportion of LE trainees involved in HRLE-related actions was considerably higher than that of the two control groups. In general, so long the application of HRLE-related knowledge was confined within the respondents family the application turned out successful. But when the application was beyond their own family and particularly involving individuals from other socioeconomic groups there was a tendency to shun away from the application, or the attempted application turned out unsuccessful.

The VO members with LE (92%) also noted a number of changes brought about after the introduction of LE into their communities. The most important of those changes was the decrease in the number of litigation in the community.

The higher level of HRLE-related actions conducted by the VO members with LE compared to the comparison groups were mainly because the level of inclination and the motivation for the application of the knowledge of the former group was much higher than that of the latter. The legal actions taken by the VO members with LE were largely because of their training. It gave them the learning along with the encouragement and self-confidence for its application as intended by the HRLE program. It may be concluded that the legal knowledge of the trained, their performances and the changes brought about in their community were the manifestations of the positive impact of the HRLE training.

**Neutral impact:** None of the observed VO members with LE thought about organizing a village-court representing the entire village by themselves nor did they expressed the desire for establishing one for themselves (i.e., for VO members only)<sup>1</sup>. Of course, in a number of occasions the VO members solved legal problems through small meetings, which had some similarities with the village-court. But, compared to the existing village-courts those

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<sup>1</sup> One of the objectives of HRLE program is to develop confidence among the VO members for the participation in the village-court through training and involve theme in the decision making process of the village-court.

had a very limited scope regarding the section of the community on which the legal decision was reached. Most of the respondents avoided participating in the village-courts or arbitration councils<sup>2</sup>. They were of the opinion that because of their lower social status they would be unwanted there. A small number who participated in the village-courts, in most cases, found themselves unwanted and failed to influence the decision of the court by applying their knowledge gained through training. It appeared that the VO members with LE had little confidence in their ability to influence the village-court through their participation. Thus, training failed to make much head way in achieving one of the HRLE objectives - involving VO members in resolving small problems through village-courts.

**Negative Impact:** There were also few incidences of negative impact of the training. Some of the respondents expressed their intention of handing over the wrong dowry to the police if their legal consultations were not followed by them. Some again developed an expectation that RDP staff should directly involve themselves in the execution of the learning on their behalf. The development of such expectation was not intended in the training. However, the respondents with such attitudes were considerably small. There were few incidences where the respondents contradicted their learning, e.g., arranged their daughters' marriage with dowry or collected subscription to pay dowry in a marriage. Such actions were taken as they were compelled by the prevalent situation.

There were also incidences where the implementation of HRLE-related knowledge had consequences which were not desired, e.g., husband married for the second time as a retaliation against the refusal to pay dowry by the relatives of the first wife (see Case Study Sample 2). In the case of performances based on the knowledge which contradicted with the believed religious dictates, e.g., *hillah-nikah*, the performer had a higher probability of facing resistance or of having an unexpected consequence (see Case Study Sample 1). The performances having unexpected consequences most probably cannot be considered as a negative impact of the training.

#### Association Among Training Impact Assessment Levels

The extent to which different laws were considered significant and easy appeared to have some association with the number of actions conducted on the basis of those laws (Table 8.2). The MFL was considered to be the most significant and the easiest part of the training which at the same time was used most in conducting legal actions by the VO members with LE. On the other hand, fewer actions were CRPL based. The section was considered to be significant by the fewest of the respondents. The time spent on the training of different laws in LE, which was proportional to the length of content in each laws, appeared to have no association with the extent those were considered significant, easy/difficult, and were used in conducting legal actions. On the other hand, the gain in knowledge in MII. section

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<sup>2</sup> Gives judgment to misdemeanors, conducted by the Union Parishad Chairman and unlike village-court it enjoys legal support.

of LE was not satisfactory and the maximum number of situations where others help were taken to conduct HRLE-related actions were MIL based. The MFL was implemented most

Tab 8.2 Training Time Allotted to Different Laws, Easiest and Significant Parts of Training and Their Utilization (in pct.)

Laws	Allocation of time to laws		Laws found easy in LE	Laws considered significant in LE	HRLE-related actions conducted
	TT	LE			
MFL	23	32	95	80	71
MIL	25	27	10	10	15
LL	28	23	-	30	8
CRPL	23	18	15	5	6

Source: Tables 5.4, 6.3, 6.8 and 6.9

frequently into actions. All these observations may prompt one to conclude that the proportional distribution of LE time to different laws based on their content was not rational. In order to make training more relevant to the reality one may expect that the distribution of training time allotted to and the amount of content covered by each of those laws should be proportional to the number of actions usually taken because of those laws. Besides, in order to make trainees more knowledgeable of MIL more time may be allotted to this section.

#### Problems in Implementing HRLE-related Knowledge

Since LE is offered only to VO members and for having more female VOs compared to male ones any village under RDP has more female with training than their male counterpart. It is undenyng that the initiative in human rights and leadership in legal/social battles are still mostly or almost entirely a male job in rural Bangladesh. In such a social setup undermining male folk in their participation to LE is likely to reduce the possibility of an effective implementation of HRLE-related knowledge in the village.

The study observed that the main obstacles in the implementation of HRLE training was the lack of influence of the poor as against the elite who happened to be the rich in the village. It appeared that the successful implementation of the training in many case, in their ultimate analysis, were a question of political and social power dynamics. It was observed that the VO as a whole or LIC were not effective enough in implementing the HRLE related knowledge by playing a role in the power dynamics in the village.

**The influence of the elite in the successful implementation of the HRLE-related knowledge did not go unnoticed by the Program. For this reason the Program took up the policy of organizing Local Community Leaders' Workshop. The effectiveness of these workshops is yet to be assessed.**