Promoting Pluralism and Peaceful Coexistence

Through A Master Trainer Program

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Abstract: *This paper reports on the results of the HardwiredOrganization's Master Trainers program, focusing on the Master Trainers' experience with training their first cohort of teachers. A mixed method research model was used to collect quantitative data on the teachers' pre-post change in their understanding of freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, and qualitative data on the effect of the training on both the master trainers and the teachers they trained. In this paper we investigate how the Master Trainers moved from being a trainee to training others. Findings indicate that the process and the conceptual change in the cohorts trained was positive especially in light of constraints of an international pandemic causing extreme limits on movement to and within the area. Not only did the Master Trainers gain greater confidence in their own ability to train teachers but found the impact of the training to have a powerful effect on many who had no idea that they have the right to practice their religious beliefs and that there are human rights that allow them to do so, including many forms of religious expression that they thought were not permitted in public and they should do only in secret. At the same time the teachers trained showed significant pre post gains in conceptual change regarding knowledge, attitudes, and behavior about the human right to freedom of conscience, religion or belief.*

Keywords– *human rights, freedom of religion or belief, freedom of conscience, teacher training*

I. Introduction

In 2014, ISIS attacked and forcibly expelled hundreds of thousands of Iraqi communities across northern Iraq to establish an Islamic Caliphate.Children emerging from the conflict in Iraq and Syria as well as children from other parts of the Middle East and North Africa who have been affected by the conflict are particularly vulnerable to extremist thinking and violence. As families return to Mosul and the Nineveh Plains, violence toward people of different beliefs has increased in the schools and communities. Many children are scared and traumatized, acting out what they have seen or heard without understanding what they are doing, and trying to survive in an environment that has become hostile to people of different religions and beliefs. In Iraq the discriminatory and intolerant ideas fueling recurrent conflict in the region has created an urgent need for education that addresses the effects of intolerance and conflict and teaches children how to overcome their fears, misconceptions, and bias toward others and experience greater freedom and dignity. Unfortunately, many teachers find themselves unprepared to deal with the trauma of those who were displaced or saw first-hand the violence. In addition, teachers have been confronted with the violent nature of children who lived under ISIS, or in communities that supported ISIS, and have lost their childhood. Teachers are asking for help to not only deal with the trauma conflict has caused but to prevent another generation being lost to violence.

There is virtually no formal training provided to teachers to respond to challenges or mediate conflict related to religion-related conflict, or other sensitive issues. Teachers have expressed that they are unprepared or ill-qualified to respond to these issues when they do arise, which ultimately cultivates a school environment in which intolerance and discrimination

foment without intervention. External or civil society organization-developed workshops used to address these issues often provide information about rights and general ways to handle conflictbut lack in-depth practical resources or tools the teachers can implement directly in their classrooms to respond to challenges in real time (personal communication with teachers and Hardwired staff, 2019). The Teachers Union in the Mosul/Nineveh Plains area of Iraq recognizedthis urgent need for new curriculum and training to teach children to value the freedom of conscience, become resilient against intolerant and discriminatory ideas, and overcome the effects of trauma. The Teachers Union asked Hardwired to provide training and resources that can help them transform the mindset and behavior of children across Mosul and the Nineveh Plains to create communities that embrace a diversity of religions and beliefs to prevent recurrent cycles of religion-related conflict. Hardwired has been active throughout the Middle East and North Africa in training teachers, providing them with tools and resources that can be directly applied or implemented in their schools. This training focuses on the particular issues within the target area and based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For example, in some countries this may be conflicts or intolerance due to culture, ethnicity, economics, or religion. In Iraq because religion has been identified by partners and participants as a major source of conflict, the curriculum focused the discussion on Article 18 of the UDHR, freedom of religion or belief. However, the curriculum is adaptable to meet the current needs of the country.

The program discussed in this article equips educators to lead students toward greater respect for the rights and freedoms of people of different beliefs, which is necessary to prevent children from experiencing recurrent cycles of conflict. Hardwired undertook to prepare a cohort of 27 Master Trainers to ultimately train the 40,000 teachers in the target area. The Master Trainers then trained cohorts of teachers in the target area. The results of the Master Trainers experience with training their first cohort of teachers was positive, especially in light of constraints of an international pandemic causing extreme limits on movement to and within the area., demonstrating increased knowledge of freedom of conscience, religion or belief and of teaching for conceptual change.

II.   Background of Training Program

Children emerging from religion-related conflict around the world are particularly vulnerable to extremist thinking, intolerance, and discrimination. Many of the children in Iraq who were affected by the recent conflict are scared and traumatized, acting out what they have seen or heard without understanding what they are doing, and trying to survive in an environment that has become hostile to people of different religions and beliefs. The ideas of hate and intolerance fueling recurrent conflict has created an urgent need for education that addresses the effects of religious conflict and teaches children how to overcome their fears, misconceptions, and bias toward others and experience greater freedom and dignity in the future. Unfortunately, many teachers find themselves unprepared to deal with the trauma of those who were displaced or have seen first-hand the violence. Teachers are asking for help to not only deal with the trauma such conflict has caused but to prevent another generation being lost to violence.

To this end, Hardwired Global responded to a request to prepare a cohort of Master Trainers who would then train 40,000 teachers in Mosul and the Nineveh Plains in northern Iraq. Hardwired recognizes that societies experiencing religion-related conflict can overcome recurrent cycles of conflict when they protect and uphold the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief for every person. This is why Hardwired developed its unique education and training program that utilizes a pedagogy based in the theory of Conceptual Change. Prior research on Hardwired's program have indicated that this pedagogy can be applied to a rights-based educational approach and lead individuals to a conceptual change about others and contribute to an environment of peaceful coexistence and pluralism (Rea-Ramirez & Ramirez, 2018). Hardwired is a non-profit organization that provides education and training in countries experiencing conflict or challenges to freedom of conscience to establish sustainable indigenous leaders who work to strengthen legal and social support for the rights and freedoms of people of all faiths in their various spheres of influence long after the program ends. The organization is unique in the field because it has no religious or political affiliation; rather, it works within the national, cultural and religious context to mobilize local leaders who can influence greater freedom for all through the competition of truth claims, dialogue,

and open-mindedness for diverse beliefs in the public marketplace. Hardwired has worked in the Middle East and North Africa for over six years training leaders, including teachers, to address issues of human rights including the freedom of religion or belief. Hardwired's work has been proven to contribute to greater respect for women and minority faiths, an increase in empathy, resilience to the ideas of hate and intolerance, and greater awareness of and openness toward the expression of different and dissenting beliefs (Rea-Ramirez & Ramirez, 2018, Rea-Ramirez, Ramirez, Smith, 2018).

III.   Theoretical Model

Hardwired's training program is based in the theory of Conceptual Change, which refers to the development of new ways of thinking and understanding of concepts, beliefs, and attitudes by restructuring the underlying concepts used to develop those beliefs. Conceptual change is not intended to change a person's religion or beliefs, but rather to allow individuals to better understand their own beliefs and attitudes, as well as their misconceptions and fears of others who believe differently(Rea-Ramirez, Ramirez, and Smith, 2018). As participants openly discuss divergent ideas and beliefs, a form of cognitive dissonance occurs that propels individuals to challenge their own belief models. One of the key steps in conceptual change is experiencing some form of cognitive dissonance(Rea-Ramirez & Clement, 1998; Rea-Ramirez & Oviedo, 2017; Rea-Ramirez & Ramirez, 2018). This dissonance is explained as an internal state of tension that arises when an existing conceptual system fails to account for integration of or acceptance of new information (Rea-Ramirez, 1998). Dissonance is an important component in any learning experience as this is the catalyst that propels individuals to construct new understanding (Festinger, 1957; Rea-Ramirez, 1998; Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999; Harmon-Jones & Harmon-Jones, 2007)).

However, simply leaving an individual in a state of dissonance is non-productive. It is important to provide ways to scaffold the individual in constructing new or modified understanding. Introducing activities such as role play, simulations, and scenarios allow the participants to creatively construct new understanding and modify existing ideas and beliefs. One important approach is the use of analogies (Smith, 2010; Schneider, Vamvakoussi, & Van Dooren, 2012.) The simulation used in this project helps participants make comparisons between the analogy and the real world. At the same time, use of an analogous situation provides a safe zone for confronting sensitive or difficult concepts.By applying this pedagogy in teaching of the freedom of conscience, the program been shown to instigate a paradigm shift in the way individuals see and interact with one another (Rea-Ramirez, Ramirez, Smith, 2018). When this theoretical model was applied to Hardwired's work on freedom of conscience,religionor belief, it allowed a deeper look at the process of conceptually moving from actions based on inherent beliefs to new models of conceptual understanding based in the inherent dignity of each person (Rea-Ramirez & Ramirez, 2017, Rea-Ramirez, Ramirez, Smith, 2018).

IV.   Master Teacher Training

The invitation to ultimately train all of the teachers in the target area of Mosul and the Nineveh Plains seemed a daunting task. Hardwired recognized that it would require rethinking the structure of the program, while not the content or pedagogy, in order to be sustainable and scalable. In addition, while Hardwired has worked throughout their time in Iraq with a local partner, Hammurabi Human Rights Organization (HHRO), in order to allow the program to be owned locally and sustained long after Hardwired was gone, it was important to engage the local partner more directly in the program. HHRO is an Iraqi non-governmental organization committed to the protection of human rights for all Iraqi citizens. Therefore, instead of Hardwired attempting to carry out the training of all the teachers in the area, they decided on a train the trainer model.

The training of a core group of expert trainers locally who would provide ongoing support of teachers in their community ensured that the program could be locally owned and sustained. Moreover, the data collected from the additional students reached will assist with planning to scale the program more broadly across the region. The program builds upon current research that shows that a statistically significant positive impact of education for freedom of conscience and pluralism can have upon youth and ultimately their broader communities by (a) building a pluralistic environment where

people of diverse religions and beliefs are free to explore the spiritual dimension of life together; (b) encouraging dialogue and active engagement with people of different religions or belief to address underlying fears, misconceptions, and biases held by youth; and (c) building empathy toward others and resiliency to the intolerant and discriminatory ideas that contribute to violence and extremism (Hardwired, 2019).

Master Trainers participated in a year-long program consisting of three face-to-face workshops and bi-monthly Zoom sessions to develop a deep understanding of freedom of conscience, and the pedagogy of conceptual change. The Teacher-Training Program began with 28 highly qualified teachers representing different genders, ethnicities and religion or belief. Participants experienced a simulation and series of activities on freedom of conscience and then learned how to use the pedagogy of conceptual change to prepare to train others. Throughout the program, Master Trainers considered their own preconceived beliefs about others and addressed any fears, misconceptions or bias they may have had toward the freedom conscience for all people. When the trainers had completed this year-long program, they engaged in teaching a cohort of teachers using the methodology and content they had learned.

Working in groups, Master Trainers conducted workshops for sixteen cohorts of teachers over a period of approximately eight hours divided over two days during July and August 2020. Each cohort varied in size ran from four to eight participants (group size was restricted due to Covid 19 regulations in Iraq) with a total of 108 teachers participating in the trainings. During this time, they completed the Fruitopia simulation. The intent was to introduce teachers to the concepts of freedom of conscienceand pluralism and the pedagogy of conceptual change. Further training will take place over the following year as teachers implement the Fruitopia simulation and lessons with their own classes, with Master Trainers continuing ongoing support as both observers and support. The Fruitopia simulation is divided into several lessons – anintroduction, pre-assessment, part one of the simulation (introduction of fruit groups and story of persecution or oppression), part two (challenges to living together with other fruit groups who may have oppressed them), and part three (development of a set of rules for Fruitopia), introduction and application of the lesson to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and finally, connecting teachers' experiences with the simulation, and review.

V.   Methodology

A mixed method approach was used for the evaluation of this portion of the project in order to better understand the effects of the Master Trainers' preparation for their first training of teachers and if conceptual change occurred in the teachers in response to the training.. Two outcomes of the Master Training Program were measured in the evaluation. The first dealt with increased capacity of the Teacher's Union of Mosul and the Nineveh Plains to train 40,000 teachers throughout the region to deliver lessons in the freedom of conscience that build resilience against intolerant ideas and support a pluralistic environment of peaceful coexistence by increasing their capacity by 20 Master Trainers. This first outcome exceeded the expected number of Master Trainers and successfully trained 27 Master Trainers and is described in a companion article, Becoming A Human Rights Master Trainer: The Journey currently submitted for publication.

The second outcomewas a measure of respect for the freedom of conscience and resilienceagainst intolerant ideas and violence among teachers trained by the Master Trainers. This paper addresses this second outcome and provides an evaluation of the Master Trainers as they trained their first cohort of teachers. This included movement in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of teachers trained on multiple levels:

◊   Knowledge about freedom of conscience
◊   Change in degree and depth of empathy toward others (religious and ethnic minorities and women)
◊   Understandconceptual change pedagogy and can recognize changes in others' attitudes and behaviors

5.1 Participants and Setting

Participants consisted of 27 Master Trainers who had completed the year-long training and 108teacher trainees. Trainers represented a diversity of religions and gender. They also represented five major cities in the target area, Mosul (11 trainers), Dohok(3 trainers), Erbil (4 trainers), Hamdaniya (6 trainers), and Bashiqa (3 trainers). Religious affiliation included Muslim (15), Christian (7), Kakai (1), and Yezidi (4). The Master Trainers were principals of schools, college professors, and teachers. The teachers trained came from schools in which the Master Trainers taught. The 108 teachers that were trained, in small cohorts of 4 to 8, were mainly from the schools where the Master Trainers taught.

Initially each Master Trainer was to train a cohort of 20 teachers. However, due to the arrival of COVID-19, severe restrictions were placed on movement and gathering of people in Iraq. Civilians were periodically restricted to their homes with a curfew and at other times were restricted from traveling from city to city. HHRO offices that contained space for the cohorts were located in three locations in the target area. However, due to these severe restrictions, none of the HHRO sites were able to be used, being in cities where people could not travel. Therefore, a modification was made in training of the cohorts. Master Trainers were identified by their location and were grouped in Mosul, Hamdaniya, Erbil, Duhok, and Bashiqa.From this, workshops were scheduled to comply with movement and meeting size restrictions due to COVID-19. Master Trainers facilitated the trainings during a set time frame to allow Hardwired staff to be available and support trainings with each group. Most workshops included one Master Trainer and fourparticipants for this initial training. While in most instances each Master Trainer had their own cohort of teachers to train,   two Master Trainers were able to work together to facilitate the activities in the trainings implemented with a total of sixteen different cohorts.

5.2 Data Instruments
The primary data sources used to evaluate the teacher training portion of the project included a reflective journal completed by the Master Trainers during the training of the teacher cohorts, the pre-post survey completed by the teachers, and focus groups with Master Trainers after the completion of the cohort training.Focus Groups and reflective journals maintained during the teacher training experience provided insight into the Master Trainers' experience with teaching the lesson, outcomes, and evidence of conceptual change in response to the training. Additional evidence from pre-post surveys of students who the teachers would teach was an intended outcome. However, because of school closures this portion of the research has been delayed until school is back in session.

5.2.1 Survey
The pre-post survey given to the teachers consisted of 5scenariosand 6 statements about freedom of conscience, religion, or belief, to which participants were asked to respond. These responseswere intended to help better understandwhat participants believed or felt about freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief. This survey was given at the beginning of the workshop and again at the end. For each scenario presented, participants were asked to express their beliefs or action they would take at that time. Participants were encouraged to discuss any experiences they had in similar situations or that made them feel a particular way.

While in the pre post survey statements there was a comparison from pre to post for the same statements, in the open-ended scenarios, the scenarios were not the same but parallel. Rather than have participants respond to the exact same question we felt it was more effective and telling to use a parallel statement that would challenge participants thinking and reasoning rather than just answering the same as previously. Our intent was to dig more deeply into their thinking after engaging in the simulation. The first pair of open-ended questions addressed expression of religion or beliefs. In this set of scenarios the pre survey scenario uses an outward expression of clothing and symbols as a trigger to probe their attitudes and behaviors about this freedom. The second scenario pairs dealt with a student who is questioning what they believe and what it means to have the freedom to live according to their conscience. In these scenarios it focuses on the student and how the teacher would, or would not, intercede, why, and how.

5.2.2 Reflective Journal

The reflective journal for Master Trainers was designed to help them analyze the experiences they encountered during their first teacher training workshop. As participants engaged in activities during the workshop, they were asked to reflect on their own actions, the responses of those being trained, and what, if anything, they would do differently in future trainings. The journal was divided into sections for each part of the workshop including the Introduction, pre-assessment, Fruitopia simulation parts 1, 2, and 3, pedagogy, and post-assessment and review.

5.2.3 Focus Groups

The final data point consisted of focus groups that were held with the Master Trainers after they had conducted their teacher training workshop. This was held via Zoom and included between 4 and 7 participant Master Trainers at a time. Groups were asked to discuss challenges and evidence they observed of conceptual change.

5.3 Data Analysis

Analysis of the data quantitatively measured pre post change on multiple choice questions on the survey. It also coded for themes and patterns in the qualitative data, and then compared both of these to the continuum of conceptual levels of understanding, attitudes, and behaviors (Table 1) and to determine whether teachers demonstrated movement in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior about freedom of conscience, religion, or belief. That is, knowledge about freedom of conscience, change in degree and depth of empathy toward others (religious and ethnic minorities and women), and understanding of conceptual change pedagogy. The continuum was derived from thousands of pre-post surveys collected throughout the Middle East and North Africa with teachers who participated in Hardwired's training. Additionally, Hardwired's collected information on beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors related to freedom of conscience in over thirty countries globally. There are four levels in this continuum moving from 'naïve' at the lowest level, level 1, to 'intuitive or developing ideas' at level 2, to developed or thoughtful at level 3, and finally, 'insightful or sophisticated' at level 4 (Table 1). In the multiple-choice scenarios, each distractor represented a response that fell into one of these four levels. Therefore, participant responses were aligned with the level that best represented their response.

Table 1. Levels of understanding and response about freedom of conscience.

Level 1 is the most naïve and egocentric of levels in which a person may exhibit some or all of the following:

1. Have a personal desire for freedom for his/herself but not for others
2. Willing to restrict ability of others to change or express their religion or belief
3. Support state control of religion or belief, and determine what people may believe or practice
4. View religion and belief as a private matter that should not be shared in public
5. Exhibit hostility or fear of other religions or beliefs and public expression of them

Level 2 shows some intuitive or developing ideas such as:

1. Identifies others by their religion rather than by their humanity
2. Wants freedom for people who believe like them living in other countries but is uncomfortable with extending rights to others in his/her own country or community
3. Does not understand how to apply freedom consistently in the laws but recognizes the challenge
4. Beginning to recognize how freedom for everyone benefits society
5. Begins to recognize fears and misconceptions they have about people of different beliefs

As individuals move up to level 3 which is considered developed or thoughtful, they exhibit more understanding and empathy such as:

1. Recognizes that every person has equal rights but not ready to support them publicly
2. Understands the benefits that individual freedom can bring to everyone in society
3. Begins to recognize laws that would be harmful or impede the freedom of others
4. Recognizes that individuals hold rights and they are not given by the government

When they reach level 4, which is insightful and sophisticated, they can exhibit some or all of the following:

1. Recognizes freedom for every person to believe what they want, even atheists and dissenters from their faith
2. Recognizes the need for some limitations on freedom, but only limits that don't take away the right itself
3. Supports freedom to express belief publicly, including by sharing one's beliefs with others
4. Can articulate the benefits of freedom for all and begins to exhibit support for defending people of different beliefs publicly in their country/community

VI.   Findings and Discussion

Results of the analysis of data can be divided into two major focuses, one on findings concerning the experience of the Master Trainers as they engaged in their first training experience, and the second on how well the teachers who participated in the training met the three measures of the research evaluation: 1) Knowledge about freedom of conscience; 2) Change in degree and depth of empathy toward others (religious and ethnic minorities and women), and 3) Understanding of conceptual change pedagogy and recognition of changes in others' attitudes and behaviors.

6.1 Master Trainer Findings

Several issues arose that could be divided into logistical issues and conceptual issues. Logistical issues mainly included those related to space, place, number and participant makeup. Conceptual issues dealt with fears, concerns, and prior experiences that affected the cohort engagement and interaction. In addition, several major themes arose out of the data.

6.1.1 Logistical Issues

Many of the Master Trainers expressed that they found it hard to encourage dissonance and active discussion when all the participants were from same school and/or friends. This was particularly voiced by principals. They noted that this made it more challenging to create dissonance. While most were able to encourage deep discussion the Master Trainers expressed that with more diversity there could be even more active and lively discussion. All Master Trainers stated that because of Covid19 they were limited by restrictions on gathering and travel. This meant they were not able to choose as diverse a group as they would have liked, and this lack of diversity limited the discussion among members of different religious groups. It also limited the number of participants they could have in a cohort. Most stated that they could have had a more robust discussion with more diverse participants.

Some stated that they would like to have more training and more activities to do with their cohorts. One trainer indicated that participants wanted even more details, more challenges to solve, and that they should include more of the activities included in the Master Trainer workshops. Another stated that if you increase the cohort size you need to have a training partner to help with facilitation and observation. Others indicated that they would like extra workshops to increase their knowledge and transfer it to the society as a whole. One suggested that, "We might need other calls or meetings to discuss the latest updates or discuss the activity." Many indicated that they would use even more examples and demonstrations along with more visuals. Only one trainer stated, "I will try to manage the time better, encourage the purposeful debate more, and talk about Fruitopia and Mr. Jonas more clearly." Overall, all trainers felt they made a significant impact on teachers for their first training.

6.1.2 Conceptual Issues

Some Master Trainers found it hard to get teachers initially to take on the character of a fruit and some teachers questioned why the simulation was using fruit at all, instead of just labeling them as religious groups. The Master Trainers explained that the use of a fruit community analogy was found to decrease fears and stress and allowed teachers to express beliefs within the safe environment of a fictious fruit community. Later, one group did not want to leave the character of fruit and make connection to humans.

At beginning, two groups had an issue with the element in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that stated people were free to change their religion. Both of these cohorts were comprised of individuals all from one religious group. This led to a lengthy discussion that, in the end, one person who was most vocal agree that it was alright to change religion for others even if they did not believe it was alright for themselves. It should be noted that this discussion was intended to occur at the end of the training when participants had time to work through their beliefs and attitudes. Participants jumping to the end of the simulation booklet along with lack of diversity in these two groups are believed to have been instrumental in this reaction.

One group who were all Yezidi expressed feelings of being so traumatized by the war that they had difficulty periodically throughout the training dealing with different concepts. Their prior persecution was still too real. They agreed that if there was really such a place as the Island of Fruitopia they would not stay in Iraq but go to the island. This concept recurred throughout the simulation for this group. While this particular group continued with many fears, they were able to vocalize understanding of the concepts of freedom of religion and even support others' rights to believe differently. They were as successful as other groups in developing rules for the Island of Fruitopia and stating what they needed to feel like they could live freely and peacefully with others. It does, however, indicate that the process of conceptual change is not one that happens quickly and continued work over time with cohorts of teachers is important to allow them to continue to evolve in understanding, attitudes, and behaviors as indicated in the levels of change. It also stresses the Master Trainers contention that more diverse groups would be most beneficial in training. Had the group made up of all Yezidi been mixed with others from different religious groups they may have been able to discuss their fears and misconceptions more openly and come to some greater understanding of how to live and communicate their needs with others.

6.2 Major Themes

Major themes derived from the data provided insight into the trainers thinking as they engaged with the teachers (Table 2). The first concerned how the Master Trainers engaged participants in the simulation and kept them engaged. Another theme was that of adapting to the role of trainer rather than the one being taught. Trainers also demonstrated their ability to train others in the concepts of freedom of religion or belief.

Table 2. Major themes emerging from data on Master Trainers

1	Engagement and keeping participants engaged
2	Role as facilitator
3	Ability to train others in the concepts of freedom of religion or belief

Engagement and keeping participants engaged**.** Throughout their training, Master Trainers had learned how to engage participants in the Fruitopia simulation and to keep them engaged. Master Trainers therefore were asked questions to determine whether they were successful at engaging their cohorts since experience has shown that without active participation, little learning takes place. Most used friendly, welcoming attitudes and presented a brief summary of the Hardwired organization and its work in the area. They engaged participants with enthusiasm and team spirit, emphasizing that the activity would be a fun training. Two trainers who worked together stated, "We were very enthusiastic, and the atmosphere was similar to a battle which has to be won and we succeeded to ignite the group's enthusiasm." In each cohort,

Master Trainers stated that the participants responded eagerly and enthusiastically. The Master Trainers stated that this enthusiasm of the participants encourage them and made them (the Master Trainer) feel more confident. One stated, "I described Fruitopia and its differences in taste, but it has a necessary benefit to our lives and we cannot dispense any of these types. This raised my enthusiasm and the participants' to talk about this world of Fruitopia."

Master Trainers were given the freedom to choose the best way to introduce the training without lecturing on the topic. One began by immediately introducing the ideas of pluralism, diversity, forgiveness, and human beings respect. Yet another Master Trainer informed their cohort that the purpose of the simulation was to help teachers make a conceptual change and not a religious one. Another trainer stated, "I presented an introduction to compare the human and the fruits and explained to them that this simulation is similar to the flight training simulation because every move on the plane yoke is important and effective just like the decisions you make in the Fruitopia simulation." One trainer, in order to help the participants take on the character of fruit stated, "Today we will play a fun game that's similar to my grandmother's stories so we can go back with our imagination to our childhood so we can see your innovative ideas and creative imagination." In each instance the Master Trainers expressed a need to make their teachers feel comfortable, the engage fully in the simulation, and to recognize the connection between the simulation and real life.

Keeping participants engages was as important as getting them to engage. Some indicated that the masks (each fruit community had a distinct mask of their fruit that they decorated in the beginning of the simulation) helped them a little bit as did referring to each participant by their fruit name. One Master Trainer stated, "The idea *(of Fruitopia)* was very entertaining for them which made them get involved in the activity without any effort." Another trainer stated, "We created some issues between the groups intentionally to keep the joy and enthusiasm." Still another said, "By linking the fruits' conditions to ours… I rarely tell them what to do. I continuously encourage them and assure the necessity to discuss these matters between each other."

6.2.1 Role as Facilitator
Another concept stressed during the training was how the Master Trainers' role was different than what they may have experience before in teaching. This move to their role as a facilitator was new for most trainers. It was interesting, therefore, how they described this experience. Responses varied from, "I had a great feeling during this stage because I was the facilitator of this activity and the one training the teachers;" To, "It's a beautiful thing to work as a facilitator." Most stated they enjoyed the experience and were happy because of the high interaction of the trainees. This was exemplified in one trainers' statement, "I got more enthusiastic to finish what I started when I saw them doing their roles properly." Another felt that they had taken a step forward and their confidence was enhanced. He stated, "(this) would help me do more work on a wider range in the upcoming days." By this he was indicating that he believed that he was prepared and had more confidence to step out to do more training. Finally, one trainer expressed the great responsibility they felt, "My feeling wasn't weird as a facilitator because I've been doing this for years but when I'm in charge of such activities I feel that I have a big responsibility to spread the concepts that I want to communicate to them like equality, justice, and being fair to each other despite their affiliations."

6.2.2 Ability to Train Others.
Evidence of thisability to teach the conceptsactually came from the reactions of the teachers to the trainers. However, reflections of the Master Trainers on their own ability was also interesting. In an accompanying article, Becoming a Human Rights Master Trainer: The Journey (submitted for publication), evidence of Master Trainers knowledge about freedom of religion or belief and their conceptual change is presented in detail. In this article we have focused on their ability to train others for conceptual change in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior about freedom of religion or belief. For many Master Trainers, demonstration was exemplified in their ability to allow participants freedom to dialogue and discuss, answering questions related to religion, and creating the spirit of excitement and suspense between the participants. During the simulation participants are faced with the challenge of developing new rules for the island to allow all fruit communities to

live together peacefully while they can all practice their beliefs without fear. After their rule setting, participants were introduced to Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All Master Trainers stated that they were able to help participants understand the Article and relate it to their rules.   It was at this stage that Master Trainers were especially able to note whether the training had been effective. One Master Trainer stated, "While I was talking to them, I noticed that they were talking about terms that they weren't aware of previously and how they can coexist with everyone despite their differences." I completely believe that I helped the participants to understand the freedom of religion and belief.

Other examples of the Master Trainers' ability to successfully train teachers in the concepts of freedom of religion or belief came from comments by teachers. In one cohort participants stated they had "no idea that they have the right to practice the religious rituals and there's a law that allows them to do many things that they looked at as secrets and they can't show them publicly."   Another participant stated, "Including these activities in the educational curricula is important. I wished they existed in the Iraqi curricula long time ago because they would've saved a lot of effort and limited the intolerance."Others asked if they could bring a group of their colleagues together when the pandemic is over to explain the subject to them. One all Muslim group were surprised at the beginning because they stated this was the first time they had heard the concepts taught and had never done an activity such as Fruitopia before. Finally, several groups formed WhatsApp group to continue discussion and support one another once school starts.

6.3 Teacher Participant Findings
Teachers showed significant conceptual change after their first training experience with the Master Trainers.. Results additionally indicated major movement to levels 3 and 4 on the conceptual change continuum. Two major themes that arose from the data were conceptual change and empathy. Both will be discussed based on multiple data sources including the pre post survey, Master Trainers notes and teacher responses.

6.3.1 Conceptual change
Evidence indicated that conceptual change did take place in all cohorts, although some more profoundly than others. In order for teachers to be effective in changing the live of the children they teach, first teachers must experience conceptual change in their own knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors concerning pluralism and freedom of religion or belief, and conscience. This often appeared to be affected by the make-up and experience of the group. At the beginning of the training most teachers stated they knew nothing about human rights and pluralism, and many thought that these things were not essentials in life. However, after the training, they realized that one of the essential things to achieve society's prosperity is to respect the freedom of religion and ethnicity.

For most groups Master Trainers noted that by the end of the workshop teachers were able to negotiate with each other about many concepts learned, recognized when they needed to stop and look for a solution, and moved from the concept of pluralism as tolerance to recognizing that it encompassed much more including respect for all regardless of belief. By the end one teacher stated, "the freedom of thought and religion are some of the reasons for the stability of societies and their peaceful existence." The teachers understood that having the freedom of religion or belief as the foundation of a modern society is crucial. One of the participants wrote a verse from the Qur'an, "You have your religion and I have mine," which infers that every human has the right to freedom of religion or belief without mentioning a specific religion. Other observations were that participants expressed that every individual in the society should pursue the restoration of the cohesion between society's individuals, despite their color, gender, religion, and beliefs, and that everyone should support the freedom of religion and belief to reach safety.Their perceptions of the other had changed because they realized that each one of them had his own problems and fears, and they only wanted to live in peace.

In one cohort. participants initially rejected the element in Article 18 that asserts people are free to change their religion. After a lengthy discussion and completion of the Fruitopia simulation, the cohort all agreed that it was permissible to change one's religion, even if they did not all agree that it was permissible for themselves as individuals. Such a dramatic

shift in response illustrates that Hardwired's training methodology helps people recognize and even defend the rights of those with whom they disagree. To this end, their understanding of freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief transcends mere tolerance and reflects a more robust embrace of diverse of opinions and ideas. A Muslim religious leader from a different sect than others in the cohort began the workshop described as a fanatic who did not accept the others. By the end of the workshop, however, he accepted the idea of pluralism and noted that he had changed over the course of the Fruitopia simulation.

This anecdotal comments by participants indicating positive conceptual change was supported by the pre post surveys. The pre post survey was divided into a multiple-choice section and open-ended scenarios. Major themes arose from the open-ended scenarios that included: 1) Personal meaning of religious freedom, 2) who should have freedom of religion or belief, 3) values or ideas most important to teach children about freedom of religion or belief, 4) biggest challenge in teaching others about freedom of religion or belief, 5)freedom of internal and external expression of religion, 5)freedom to teach others about religion.

6.3.1.1 Conceptual Change onMultiple Choice Scenarios. There was positive change pre to post on each of three multiple-choice scenarios with the most significant change on questions two and three. Table 3 shows how participants scored at each conceptual change level from Table 1. It was hoped that the majority would reach higher levels (3 and 4) of empathy and insightfulness by the end of the workshop, a significant and reasonable improvement after just eight hours of training. Many actually scored at levels 3 and 4 in the pre survey, indicating that they came to the training already developing or thoughtful about freedom of religion or belief concepts. This was not surprising since the participants were mostly selected from close colleagues or those who were already interested in freedom of religion or belief. Because of the restrictions caused by the pandemic many cohorts were selected based on closeness to the trainers rather than a random selection of teachers. In any event, significant movement was made especially from level 1 and 2 to 3 and 4, as well as movement from, level 3 to 4.

The figures in Table 2 indicate a small but significant move on question 1 especially away from scores 1 and 2, moving from 82% scoring a 3 or 4 level on the pre survey to 90% at the 3 and 4 level on the post survey. There is no significant increase in those scoring 4 but a significant move to level 3. In both question 2 and 3 there is a much greater move to level 4 post workshop with movement away from all other levels. While this only represents a portion of the data to show conceptual change in participants, it is consistent with other data from the open-ended scenarios, open-ended statements, and observations by the trainers that is discussed later.

Table 2. Percent of Participants Scoring at Each Conceptual Change Level

	Pre Percent Scoring Post		
score	<u>Q1</u>		<u>Q1</u>
1	0.06		0.01
2	0.09		0.07
3	0.34		0.45
4	0.48		0.45

	Pre Percent Scoring Post		
score	<u>Q1</u>		<u>Q1</u>
1	<u>0.03</u>		<u>0.01</u>
2	<u>0.18</u>		<u>0.09</u>
3	<u>0.37</u>		<u>0.33</u>
4	<u>0.42</u>		<u>0.51</u>

	Pre Percent Scoring Post		
score	<u>Q3</u>		<u>Q3</u>
1	0.01		0.04
2	0.18		0.07
3	0.12		0.12
4	0.12		0.76

Question 1 (*Your friends say that a student from a different religious group has destroyed a textbook that contained scriptures and holy texts to teach about your religion*.) responses showed moderate positive movement with the students moving to level 3 from level 1 and 2, indicating an increase in empathy and recognition of diversity (see Table 3). This was particularly evident in the number of participants who moved from choosing punishment of the offender (level 1 and 2) to trying to understand what happened and avoiding accusing because the person was different. This resulted in 90% of the participants scoring at a 3 or 4 level, more empathetic or more insightful, by the post survey. However, it should be noted that 83% of participants scored at the 3 or 4 level on the pre survey. Therefore, movement was focused on the smaller percentage at the 1 and 2 level. When levels of conceptual change were closely analyzed, participants who responded at the 1 level exhibited hostility of other religions or beliefs and supported restricting others rights to expression of belief. Movement to level 3 indicated greater recognition of the rights to freedom of conscience although not all were willing to support this right publicly.

Question 2 (*The local religious leaders don't think the girls need to go to school and try to get your principal to remove them from your class*.) Participants showed a significant move in rights for minorities, women, and those who believed differently than they did. Participants particularly moved from just wanting to keep the school open at other times for girls, to recognizing and verbalizing that they needed to find ways to help girls receive an equal education. Interestingly, there was one individual who moved on the post survey to state they would agree with anything the religious leader said while the others who had chosen this option at the beginning had moved to selecting the choice that showed empathy for the equal rights of the girls. Movement to a 3 or 4 level indicated that participants recognized the rights of all people and were ready to

support them publicly. They also recognized that laws, whether by the government or religious organizations, that restricted these freedoms were harmful. On the post survey 84% of participants scored at the 3 or 4 level as compared to 79% at this level on the pre survey, indicating a movement of those at levels 1 and 2 to more developed/thoughtful and insightful (see Table 3).

Question 3 (*Several refugee families move into your neighborhood and they are part of a different religion than you. Some of your friends are saying that their religious beliefs are dangerous.*) Participants showed a significant move that also indicated greater empathy for minorities. Some cohorts did not show as much change because participants began on the pre survey with 3 or 4, a more insightful level, and remained at this level in the post. One cohort, however, showed a significant movement having mostly 1s and 2s on the pre survey and mostly 4s on the post. 88% of participants scored at the 3 or 4 level on the post survey, a significant move from only 24% who scored at these levels on the pre survey. Those scoring at the 1 and 2 levels on the pre survey demonstrated many of the elements of especially level 1 including having a personal desire for freedom for themselves but not for others, supporting restrictions on others ability to express their religion or belief, state or local control of religion or belief by restricting where people can live, and exhibiting hostility or fear of other religions or beliefs. In addition, some scoring at level 2 identified others by their religion rather than their humanity. Movement to level four by these cohorts was significant as it indicated that now they began to recognize freedom for all people to believe want they want and to express this belief publicly. They additionally expressed in their choice a willingness to defend people of different beliefs within their community.

6.3.1.2 Major Themes in Conceptual Change.
As previously stated, the five themes that arose from the data on conceptual change in teacher participants included 1) Personal meaning of freedom of religion or belief, 2) who should have freedom of religion, 3) values or ideas most important to teach children about freedom of religion, 4) biggest challenge in teaching others about freedom of religion, 5)freedom of internal and external expression of religion, 5)freedom to teach others about religion.

6.3.1.2.1 Personal Meaning Of Freedom Of Religion Or Belief
On the pre survey, most participants stated that they wanted to be free to practice or wanted to be respected in their belief choice. By the post survey they were more expressive of what that freedom was. On the post survey 100% used terms like freedom of expression of their belief both internal and external, to have dignity, and to be respected by other religions. They also stated that freedom of religion or belief meant freedom to choose their religion or belief without fear of threat, marginalization, or interference. One participant stated, "I should have the freedom to practice my religious rituals without the interference and harassment of others or hurting me with words or anything else." They did not want to suffer coercion to embrace another religion they did not choose. Finally, many stated that having freedom of religion meant also freedom of thought. This was particularly exemplified in some statements by one participant such as, "It means a lot to me because in my country you have no freedom at all." Another stated, "The right to freedom of religion is to live the way you like and to desire without restrictions provided that you follow the law and wouldn't encroach upon others' freedom and belief." These comments illustrate a level 3 or 4 understanding and attitude by the end of the training. Through these comments it became evident by the post survey that all participants could express what it meant to have freedom of religion, recognizing that every person has equal rights to freedom of conscience and to believe as they chose. Many included reference to the benefits of freedom of religion on society.

6.3.1.2.2
Who Should Have This Freedom.Most teachers stated that everyone should have freedom of religion or belief regardless of race, creed, or gender. However, some in the post survey added restrictions to this freedom to only those who follow the rules, or only those over 18, or only those who do not encroach on others' rights, or only those who respect society. One participant stated, "Every individual of the society provided that they don't encroach on other people's rights." Finally, on the post survey also, one participant stated that this should apply to minorities. He did not explain whether this was only for

minorities or that he assumed that majorities already had freedom of religion and that it should now include minorities. Generally, however, all participants stated in some way that people should be free to believe and express their faith openly. Therefore, while this did not represent a significant move to a higher level of conceptual change on the conceptual change continuum, participants did recognize that every person has equal rights to freedom of conscience, recognized freedom for every person to believe what they want, and to express religion or belief publicly, including by sharing one's beliefs with others.

6.3.1.2.3*Values Or Ideas Most Important To Teach Children About Freedom Of Religion or Belief*
Teachers expressed many ideas about what children should be taught including respect, dignity, equality, freedom of choice, freedom of expression, and how to treat others with different beliefs. Some emphasized teaching children not to oppress others, how to listen to others, forgiveness, coexistence, cooperation, justice, and love. They also discussed values and ethics. Interestingly a few stated that children needed to be taught to recognize misconceptions, ideas, and traditions they grew up with. One stated, "not to pressure children when it comes to beliefs or religions and explain to them the importance, avoid forcing any child to embrace any religion or belief until he matures and becomes capable to tell the difference." Another stated, "They need to be taught that religion and beliefs are personal things between the human and his creator and what's important is the way people treat others in the society away from their differences in belief or sect." A few participants included concepts such as perspective thinking and how to serve society. Besides what to include in teaching children, a number of participants discussed how to teach, including using methods such as media, Fruitopia simulation, cartoons, entertainment, and fun. This supported a move to higher levels of understanding consistent with the quantitative data as well as evidence of a deeper understanding of conceptual change pedagogy. Many participants expressed concepts about teaching children about freedom of religion or belief at level 4 by the end of the training, supporting freedom to express religion or belief publicly, including by sharing one's beliefs with others.

6.3.1.2.4 Biggest Challenge In Teaching Others About Freedom Of Religion.
Most participants were more detailed and exact in their post survey answers. Their original answer to this statement reflected lack of knowledge about the subject. For example, one participant responded, "The biggest challenge is belief, values, and habits, there are many people consider converting to another religion is a taboo." This indicated that some believed the teaching on freedom of religion or belief was intended to encourage people to change their religion, an issue we also noted during the teacher training. On the post survey, there was a range of answers including prior belief, values, and habits; old conceptions that refuse to change; false conceptions about others; fanaticism; inherited conceptions; war and displacement; and intellectual stagnation and ignorance. Others focused on issues such as that those they try to train will refuse to listen or discuss during activities, not accept others opinions, and stubbornness. One person expressed a different view when stating, "The biggest challenge is with ourselves. We have to work so hard to devote ourselves to teaching others the essential values when it comes to the freedom of religion." This is consistent with quantitative results indicating movement on the post survey to levels of 3 and 4, more insightful understanding of the key concepts being taught. This included recognizing the elements of freedom of religion, the benefits to the community, and how limitations due to bias, fanaticism, inherited misconceptions, and ignorance can make it difficult to help others embrace freedom of religion.

6.3.1.2.5*Freedom Of Internal And External Expression Of Religion*
Participants expressed divergent reactions prior to the training on whether individuals should be free to internally and externally express their religion or beliefs. Half were supportive of the restriction, while the other half was a strong resistance to the restriction. Those who agreed made statements such as, "If it is a rule of the school or from ministry then he has a right to restrict," or "It is better so there won't be discrimination among students." Some thought wearing uniforms would solve the problem. One was more detailed in response, stating, "Clothing that indicates religious racism shouldn't be worn like hijab, cross, or any other religious symbol, so the opposite side doesn't act based on that." One simply said you must respect the person in charge or that religion is a personal matter so they would not make a decision. This was supported by others who stated, "He has no right to prevent what's allowed in others' religion but I if these were the school rules then

everyone should follow them and if they didn't want these rules then they have to go to another school." Another participant discussed this issue based on his experience in the country, "Such a thing wouldn't happen in a Muslim country, it means that the principal wouldn't be able to prevent hijab but he can prevent make-up or wearing a cross." These responses suggest a lack of understanding about how freedom of religion applies to external expression of belief, such as dress, etc. Many of these participants expressed beliefs that religion or personal beliefs and convictions were an obstacle to human freedom. Other comments indicated participants thought of religion as something to be held privately and not shared in public, both indicative of Level 1. Those who expressed agreement with suppression of this right on the pre training are consistent with levels 1 and 2 of the conceptual change continuum.

On the other hand, those who believed individuals should have internal and external expression of their beliefs strong reactions such as, "He has no right to prevent others from expressing their religion" and even, more emphatic, "I would quit my job in response" and "I would leave and search for new job." Even though half of the participants strongly reacted to being told of the restriction on dress, they were not able to discuss whether this should be applied to all including minorities, who should decide on restrictions, or why they chose this response.

Responses after the training dealing with greater understanding of the internal and external expression of religion or belief indicated there was a shift in participants beliefs and attitudes. Where half of the participants were strongly in agreement with the restriction, after the training 90% agreed that it was not right to restrict this freedom. However, one participant stated that that it would be "ok if applies to all; but must be unbiased." Others who initially agreed with restricting this freedom moved to being more open but still expressed that rules still had to be followed. One person still advocating wearing uniforms to prevent bias. After the training participants often added a more complex element to their discussion. Where pre training they mostly dealt with external expression of belief, after the training participants were able to delve deeper into the ability express both internally and externally. It goes beyond external expression to shutting down expression completely.

Participants expressed the belief that a student had the right to discuss her religion and that other students had the right to listen to her. One participant said, "I agree that she should be allowed to speak because it's a beautiful thing and because he will learn about the rest of the religions, she will gain knowledge about other religions. Another stated, "The student shouldn't be suspended as long as there is freedom of belief or religion which is guaranteed by the international law so he has every right to practice his belief or religion provided that he doesn't affect others." Most agreed that as long as there are curricula about the freedom of religion then it's permissible and "through understanding the article 18 from the universal declaration of human rights, everyone has the right to express their religion in front of everyone and everywhere." However, several did state that this type of restriction is normal in their country because it is allowed by the government suggesting that their response is based, not on what they learned about freedom of religion or belief, but on personal experience. The majority of participants responses were consistent with levels 3 and 4, indicating more understanding of the concepts of freedom of religion especially in relation to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Participants could articulate the benefits of freedom of conscience, religion, or belief for all and to exhibited support for defending people of different beliefs publicly in their community. Responses additionally indicated that participants supported freedom to express religion or belief including sharing it with others.This is consistent with movement on the conceptual change continuum to level 3 and 4.

6.3.1.2.6Freedom To Choose What To Believe

When questioned prior to the training about whether individuals should have the freedom to choose what to believe, participants had a range of responses. These went from stating that everyone had the right to choose his own religion, to stating that they would simply stay out of it, and that school was not the place for such discussions. Some expressed that they would engage with the student but appeared to be inclined to listen but then encourage the student not to change religions. One stated, "Just because he thought about converting his religion, that means he's not convinced with his religion that he grew up with, so I need to know why does he want to convert his religion because he might have an incorrect idea and

converting to a new religion might cause him harm so we need to endear his religion to him and explain its perks." Another stated, "I would listen to his point of view and try to stop him from converting his religion until I explain or get a complete idea across to him about his religion and the religion that he wants to convert to." Still another stated, "He has the right to choose the safest religion and the one that worships God the most, but he should learn about the whole religion discarding it's tempting sides that he may see them as positives, where in reality they violate the religion and God's decree." Each of these seemed to say that you should listen but try to stop the student or that the student has the right to choose but try to get the student to stay with their original religion. These responses would fall into Levels 1 and 2. Some expressed that this was simply not a discussion that should occur in school. "The school isn't the proper place for these questions, I think that the students can find another place for themselves like the internet because the world nowadays is a miniature town." Even among the few who thought the student had the right to choose, most qualified this with trying to explain to the student why this was not wise. One exemplified how his own religious beliefs affected this when he stated, "This might concern me if he was from my religion of course." This is consistent with level 1 that states religion is something to be held privately and not shared in public. Some even exhibited hostility of other religions or beliefs.

After the training, there was more movement to allowing others to choose what they believe but there were still many who changed from outright agreeing with the restriction of choice to say they would just stay out of the discussion. This was true even with many who agreed in the freedom to choose but still wanted to avoid the discussion. One teacher said, "I provide support but leave alone to choose." One other teacher insisted that school isn't place to ask these questions. However, more participants appeared to respond with more thought about the situation rather than just reacting. This was evident in those who made statements such as, "I need to know more about why to help him" and "I would support his way of thinking and advise him. I would strongly support his thoughts and leave him alone, no compulsion to choose a religion." This movement, however, indicated movement to levels 3 and 4 where participants recognize that everyone has a right to choose what they believe.

6.3.1.2.7 Freedom To Teach Others About Religion

When participants were questioned about the freedom to teach others about your religion it elicited the most passionate response from participants. However, reactions were more along a continuum that went from vehement refusal, to stopping, to attempting to debate with the principal who attempted to restrict the freedom. Most participants stated that they would object to this and would fight the principal's edict. One stated, "I would ask the principal about the reason why is he preventing the students from having this curriculum, I would also try to find suitable solutions that won't conflict with the students' concepts and beliefs, and to respect the principal's opinion." On the more forceful side, statements such as, "I cannot be forced to stop teaching curriculum that has been issued by the ministry of education;" " I would talk to the influential figures in society and the clergies to put him under pressure until he stops;" and "I wouldn't stop and I'll try to discuss the matter and do the impossible to change his stand with evidence," " I would resort to the elders, sheikhs (tribal leaders), and intellectuals because the difference in religion or belief isn't related to the educational curricula and we should benefit from this difference and cooperate." Several even agreed that if stopped, they would report to a higher authority, file a complaint, or even said stage a demonstration. A slightly calmer response indicated that they would, "talk to him and explain that the freedom of religion wouldn't hurt anyone, but we have to encourage the teaching of these curricula. Only one person stated they would abide by the rules. While there was little move from prior to training to after training this appears to be due to the fact that the majority of participants (90%) were clearly responding at the 3 or 4 level pre training. However, some of their responses may have been a reaction to the principal trying to restrict what they could teach even though the curriculum was approved by the government rather than in response to a deep belief in this freedom. This is supported by some of the responses post training that indicated the teachers would spend more time trying to help the principal understand why this is an important freedom to teach. One expressed this by stating, "I would talk to the principal more than once to change his opinion about this activity and explain to him that the knowledge of other religions is beneficial for the student to stimulate his mind. I would ask the principal about the reason why is he preventing the students from having this curriculum, I would also try to find suitable solutions that won't conflict with the students' concepts and beliefs, and to

respect the principal's opinion." This suggests that concepts at level 4 that indicated that participants understand the benefits that freedom of conscience can bring to everyone in society. They also recognize the rights of all to learn about freedom of religion and that this cannot be taken away.

6.3.2 Empathy

One of the most profound findings was the development of empathy in teachers toward those with different beliefs than their own. This was particularly important since, as the teachers developed new ways of seeing and understanding people of different religions or beliefs, they develop empathy toward them and how they should be treated. This ultimately has the potential to change their behavior in their schools and communities after the training. The concept of empathy was new to many and, as stated by the Master Trainers, not an issue discussed generally in Iraq. The greatest change was noted in cohorts where there was a mix of gender and religion or beliefs. At the beginning of the teacher training several instances were noted by trainers of individuals in their teacher cohorts where these individuals had little tolerance for those with different ideas and adhered strictly to rules without regard to the freedoms of others. One participant, a religious leader, initially expressed openly in his group intolerance of all those who believed differently than he did. However, by the end of the training he had made a decided change in belief and attitude to embrace pluralism and expressed concern for those who believed differently than he did.

Teachers began to form empathy toward other participants as they shared experiences and were confronted with, not just others beliefs, but the deep feelings of isolation and oppression felt by some groups. Many who had been personally affected by violence and displacement made the comparison between coming to island in the Fruitopia simulation and Iraq during displacement. Others who had not experienced this displacement, through being oppressed during the simulation and having their rights taken away, started to wonder: What's the feeling of a person that oppresses and prevents people from having these rights? And, what does it feel like to be the oppressed? One trainer stated , "I observed astonishment in their facial expressions when they realized that this subject has a direct connection to the freedom of religion because usually they face a lot of challenges during the day and they have the right to freedom of worship and to practice their religious rituals freely in the area where they live." Another example that support the development of empathy among participants was demonstrated in the teachers in one all Muslim group who asked the trainer to give them ways to work with Christians who came back from refugee camps to get better reintegrate and rebuild their communities as displaced families return home.

Additional observations on empathy included the ability to use terms that they weren't aware of previously as they discussed and tried to solve challenges. Participants also expressed how they can coexist with everyone despite their differences. One participant moved from initially stating that "majority rules because Islam is the government religion," to "all people have a right to control what and how they belief and express that belief." In end this individual stated, " Islam expects us to respect others."

VII.   Conclusion

The training experience illustrates the long-term impact Hardwired's program can have on education for the promotion of pluralism for teachers in Iraq. The efficacy of the program lies in its approach to those educators who would otherwise never "opt in" to a training on human rights or associated topics. Unlike the Master-Trainers, who applied to our program and had prior training experience in human rights or similar topics, many of the teachers trained by Master-Trainers had no prior exposure to such trainings. This reflects the experience and training-level of most teachers across Iraq. This is particularly evident in observations made by teachers in more rural or "village" settings, in which teachers demonstrated significant misconceptions about freedom of conscience and associated rights. It is these teachers who need and benefit most from training opportunities provided by Hardwired's Master-Trainers. To this end, Master-Trainers are able to reach educators in a way Hardwired itself, as well as other organizations, cannot. Indigenous Master-Trainers are not only essential to the long-term sustainability of the program; rather, they are an essential channel to reach and support the majority base of teachers in

the country, who will ultimately influence broader discourse and attitudes towards pluralism and respect for diversity within communities.

Both Master Trainers and teachers showed growth during the workshop process. Trainers gained confidence and enthusiasm in response to the positive attitudes and responses displayed by most teachers. They were able to use the skills and knowledge they learned in their own training to put teachers at ease, keep them engaged and actively learning throughout the simulation, and present new challenges as needed to stimulate learning. Even those teachers who started out skeptical or negative about the conceptschanged over time. When analyzed for the three major elements focused on by the research to show positive movement — 1) knowledge about freedom of conscience, 2) change in degree and depth of empathy, and 3) active engagement in conceptual change pedagogy — teachers showed significant change in each area. Pre post survey change indicated that a significant conceptual change had occurred with the teachers including knowledge, empathy, and active engagement.

Many participants praised Hardwiredfor this type of training because it addressed very specific and personal challenges and concerns they experienced in their own lives. One participant stated, "I ask Hardwired to continue this program because of its importance to our reality, I also ask you to do even more to explain to us the freedom of religion and spreading the related conceptions." Several groups even formed a WhatsApp group to continue discussion and support one another once school starts. One cohort suggested talking about these concepts of empathy, justice, and freedoms in first five minutes of school each day and gradually students will understand.

One all-Muslim group were surprised at the beginning because they stated this was the first time they had heard the concepts taught and had never done an activity such as Fruitopia before. Others said they did not know they have the right to practice religious rituals or that there is a law that allows them to do many of the things they felt they should only do in private, rather than share publicly. Many participants clearly connected their life experiences with what they encountered in the simulation. While many focused on how they could now foster a pluralistic community, the trauma of the displacement and violence was still too fresh for some. Although they stated they believed in freedom for all people, one of them still said, "I've been searching for this island for so long and I need to seek refuge on an island like that."

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