

# **Two Education for Global Responsibility Profiles:**

## **The YWCA of Salem and the YWCA of Cambridge**

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**And to the YWCA volunteers, staff and colleagues who participated in this evaluation process.**

## **The Development Education Program**

**The Development Education program at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was established to "help facilitate widespread public discussion, analysis and review of the issues raised by the Report of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger of March 1980, especially the issues raised by the Commission's call for increased public awareness of the political, economic, technical and social factors relating to hunger and poverty." {Sec. 316(a) under Title III Development Assistance Programs.}**

**Since the beginning of the Development Education program in 1981, USAID has awarded grants to a broad cross-section of over 85 organizations including private and voluntary organization engaged in development assistance; universities; radio; television and print media; cooperatives; service clubs; trade associations; and national membership organizations. Grants are used to help educate the public on US development activities overseas as they relate to poverty and hunger.**

**Common to all Development Education projects is the potential to interest and involve the US public in analysis and discussion of development issues.**

**In the fall of 1992, the USAID, Development Education Program launched two new initiatives, the Development Education Partnerships, and the Alliance for Development Education. In conjunction with the ongoing project grants, the Partnership and the Alliance will focus on reaching larger audiences with substantive messages about foreign assistance and development...."**

**David B. Watson, Coordinator  
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## **A model for a global policy agenda for the YWCA of the USA**

### **Organization mission**

**The Young Women's Christian Association of the United States of America is a women's movement nourished by its roots in the Christian faith and sustained by the richness of many beliefs and values. Strengthened by diversity, the Association draws together members who strive to create opportunities for women's growth leadership and power in order to attain a common vision:**

**Peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people.**

**The Association will thrust its collective power toward the elimination of racism wherever it exists and by any means necessary.**

### **Education for Global Responsibility**

**... a fusion of the principles of the organizational mission – work towards the empowerment of women and the elimination of racism – with education about the ways international development and poverty influence the lives of women and their families.**

**Education for Global Responsibility (EGR) is a project to educate about global systems and global economic development, with the purpose of increasing the philosophy and practice of global responsibility in YWCAs. EGR activities are designed to educate YWCA volunteers, staff, members and communities about:**

- **Conditions and root causes of global poverty.**
- **Ways in which international development and poverty affect the lives of women and their families.**
- **Ways YWCA volunteers and staff can work to create change in the social systems that promote or perpetuate sexism, racism and global poverty.**
- **The role of US foreign aid and its impact on communities in the United States.**

# **Education for Global Responsibility**

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## **Education for Global Responsibility**

In order to effectively address the social and economic problems that afflict our nation's communities, we must examine and understand them in the larger context of interlocking global systems. From this perspective, Education for Global Responsibility (EGR), examines the causes of global poverty, especially the forces that hinder social progress and economic viability among women around the world.

The underlying premise of EGR's approach, "think globally, act locally", is designed to educate YWCA volunteers, staff and members of the communities they serve about the impact of social, political and economic global systems that perpetuate poverty and the ways in which these systems effect women around the world.

### **EGR Activities**

**Immersion Experiences and Training**

**Project Development**

**Project Implementation**

### **Basic Process Outcomes**

**Personal Transformation/Awareness**

**Organizational Impact**

**Community or Systemic Change**

## **Introduction**

**Perry Consulting Group (PCG) was retained by the YWCA of the USA to evaluate Education for Global Responsibility (EGR), a three and a half-year demonstration project, 1992-1996, designed to educate YWCA volunteers and staff about:**

- **The impact of US foreign policy and international development assistance on women around the world;**
- **Global economic, political and social systems that foster poverty, especially among women;**
- **Ways that economic, political and other social systems link women around the world;**
- **Ways women in the United States and around the world are engaging and can engage in community activism to institute change; and,**
- **The unique role of YWCA women in influencing global change.**

**EGR program goals are presented through a focused and practical approach that integrates the experiential involvement of participants during an education, immersion and training process. It includes guided development of community-based programs that facilitate understanding of the current global systems that impoverish women.**

**The conceptual framework of EGR was originally intended as a strategy to effect change in the environmental culture of the YWCA by encouraging community- and campus-based YWCAs to develop programs that provide direct contact with their communities. To accomplish this, EGR's program methodology utilizes the organization's mission as a framework for a host of activities. The most important element for fostering organizational change is achieved through the exposure of individual participants from local YWCAs to global issues as manifested in communities, through immersion experiences and training in EGR's definitional framework.**

**The primary outcome and the premise upon which EGR was developed is the creation of a program model that operationalizes the YWCA mission. EGR presupposes that this fusion of the program model with the mission will influence changes in the organizational structure and culture of community- and campus-based YWCAs as they adopt a more global program scope.**

**Originally, eight YWCAs were selected as demonstration sites to develop EGR models. In preparation for developing their local projects, representatives from each YWCA participated in an immersion experience in Jamaica, West Indies, in 1994. The purpose of the immersion process is to orient participants to the concepts of interlocking global systems by introducing them to issues faced by women in a Southern Hemisphere country and comparing them to those in their own communities. Jamaica offers a cultural-historical-political-economic context that allows participants to examine economic interconnections that impact local systems in both Jamaica and the US.**

**In Jamaica, as in other "developing" nations, economic viability is underscored by shifting effects of economics in the "First World"<sup>1</sup> or "Northern Hemisphere".**

**Under the leadership of YWCA national office staff, immersion participants had the opportunity to observe and document pervasive patterns of economic dependence, socialization processes, consumer patterns and production values in Jamaica.**

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<sup>1</sup>In this report, the terms "Third World", denoting "lesser economically developed" countries and "First World", denoting "economically advanced" will not be used. Instead, in keeping with YWCA of the U.S.A. practice, "Southern Hemisphere" will denote "economically developing" countries located primarily in the Southern Hemisphere of the globe. "Northern Hemisphere" will indicate countries that are more industrialized and economically wealthy and located primarily in the Northern Hemisphere of the globe. Although it is geographically located in "the South", Australia is included among "Northern Hemisphere" countries ("The North").

## **The Evaluation Design**

**This evaluation seeks to examine the impact of the Education for Global Responsibility (EGR) project on the operationalization of the YWCA's mission. The premise of EGR is that:**

- **When participants attain an understanding of the dynamics of interlocking global systems, they will, in turn, develop a greater awareness of the social, political and economic systems at work in their own communities. As a result, staff at community- and campus-based YWCAs in the United States will provide more effective program activities to their members.**

**Through this process, the YWCA will fulfill its mission: the empowerment of women and the elimination of racism.**

**These issues are also discussed as a foundation for replicating EGR at YWCAs across the United States for strengthening the YWCA's national agenda through a unified, core program structure.**

**This evaluation was designed to address fundamental issues of the EGR concept:**

- **Why should YWCAs address global issues?**
- **Are YWCAs prepared to address EGR issues in local communities?**

**Two demonstration sites, the YWCA of Salem in Oregon and the YWCA of Cambridge in Massachusetts were selected to chronicle for this evaluation the development, implementation and impact of EGR at the YWCAs. During the spring of 1995, Perry Consulting Group (PCG) interviewed staff at these YWCAs who assisted with EGR project coordination, participated in an immersion experience, and participated in various phases of EGR program development and implementation in their YWCA.**

- **In Salem, interviews were also conducted with project collaborators from external organizations and with community residents who participated in the project.**
- **The executive directors from both YWCAs were interviewed.**

**EGR project activities at both sites were implemented months before evaluation activities were scheduled. As such, no project activities were observed.**

## **Scope of the Report**

**This evaluation report explores two central themes:**

- **EGR's conceptual framework and**
- **EGR's usefulness to the YWCA's mission and organizational strategic plan (discussed in Section 2, "EGR's Conceptual Framework").**

**A rationale for the personal and organizational changes aimed for by EGR program objectives is defined. In Section 3, "A Profile of Two Sites," a description of the programs, including development, implementation, impact and challenges at each site is discussed. Drawing substantially on information gathered from interviews, the processes for EGR project development and implementation in Salem and Cambridge are described. An analysis of the steps crucial to the formulation of EGR projects at community- and campus-based YWCAs, the keys to achieving project goals within the community context, and how EGR concepts were put into actual practice are highlighted.**

**Borrowing from ethnographic methodology, the evaluation discusses the significance of understanding community social dynamics for designing the EGR models at the two sites. These illustrations have broader implications for other community- and campus-based YWCAs as they define strategies for developing EGR projects.**

**Finally, in Section 4, "Replicating EGR Models at Community- and Campus-based YWCAs," the potential for utilizing EGR as a vehicle for change and EGR as the cornerstone for a new global affairs division at the YWCA national office is discussed.**

## **EGR's conceptual framework**

**"Anything that happens in one country effects other countries.**

**Donna Torres Butler  
EGR project coordinator, YWCA of Salem**

**Global economic trends during the post World War II decades have had far-reach effect on the social and political process in Southern Hemisphere countries. The demands of Northern Hemisphere interests profoundly changed foreign markets and labor trends. With the increased shifts in market economies from local interest to industrialized wage labor, traditional economic social practices, such as wide-scale farming, were radically changed and brought new social pressures on local populations.**

**EGR project activities illustrate the impact of interlocking global systems on people around the world and the resulting ways socialization patterns changed in local communities. An illustration of key EGR ideas:**

- **There is the historical precedent for global poverty that is intermeshed with Northern Hemisphere-style consumer demands.**

**For instance, indigenous economic practices in Southern Hemisphere countries have been eroded by economic inducements to abandon independent farming for work as wage laborers in growing consumer industries.**

- **An increase in poverty among women around the world can be traced to patterns of urbanization and increasing dependence on low wages.**

**EGR seeks to clarify such cause-and-effect relationships among interlocking global systems to local social problems by shifting perspective from the symptoms of poverty to its root causes. By demonstrating this correlation, EGR provides an empirical basis for understanding government and economic systems that promulgate poverty (especially among women) and ways government and economic systems can be re-directed to eliminate poverty.**

**EGR's methodology counters the idea that conditions of poverty found among the women in developing and industrial nations are the result of random events. It introduces a strategy to articulate the YWCA's mission, potentially change the organizational culture and the ways its members and staff advocate on behalf of women.**

**Its ultimate effectiveness at local YWCAs will be subject to the capacity of staff to correctly identify and address local issues and understand the social, political and economic systems impacting them.**

**A unique feature of EGR is the immersion. This is a process that can contribute heavily to**

project success at the local level. The fundamental, operative premise for the immersion experience is borrowed from conventional practices in ethnography:

When YWCA participants visited Jamaica during a 1994 immersion hosted by the YWCA of Jamaica, they had the opportunity to observe a microcosm of divergent socio-economic experiences of among the population, ranging from abject to extravagant wealth. Since the socio-economic realities among women in Jamaica closely mirror realities in the US, participants were able to apply EGR's conceptual framework to the conditions in their local communities.

### **Major EGR Program Goals**

The operational framework for EGR is based upon the achievement of major program goals for enhancing individual and organizational response to global issues affecting women and ultimately, to foster organizational change. Arguably, the attainment of these benefits from the development and implementation of EGR depends upon the step-by-step achievement of other factors underpinning each of the major goals.

The first goal, Personal transformation and awareness, is intended as a life-altering experience achieved, for example, through participation an event like the Jamaica immersion. This "change" is based on the premise that understanding the influences and causes of poverty will have a more profound impact on personal perceptions when introduced in an unfamiliar, controlled, removed context.

In many ways, the immersion experience in Jamaica comprised the most ambitious and critical elements of the program. From all indications, the overall success of project development and implementation at each YWCA site was determined by the capacity of participants to grasp the overarching philosophical intent of EGR and by their ability to correlate this philosophy to the impact of international systems on local issues.

Accomplishing the first goal facilitates the achievement of the second goal: Developing a model to address local level problems.

The difficulty of this approach is that the desired outcomes related to global learning strategies hinged upon participants' personal capacities to enhance, alter, or at least, acknowledge their beliefs and perspectives concerning the cause-and-effect relationships between poverty issues in their communities and global systems. This proved to be the most difficult step in the project's development.

## **Exhibit 2.1**

### **Hierarchy of Major Education for Global Responsibility Project Goals**

EGR project design is distinguished by the following goals:

1. **Personal transformation and awareness.** Through immersions and other exposure and education activities and training, participants become aware of global system dynamics and other factors that contribute to community-based social issues and problems related to poverty and the status of women around the world.
2. **Assess organizational approach to local issues.** Analyze the local YWCA's programs and activities that currently address institutional racism and gender equity.
3. **Develop model.** Address specific local issues, concerns or problems related to the organizational culture or community.

**Community Activism.** Staff and volunteer involvement in local issues that promote change in poverty, civil and women's rights.

5. **Organizational change.** Implement and institutionalize fundamental changes in program focus, service delivery, management procedures, organizational structure.

At the point when Goal Three, Development of the Model, was underway the implications for the short-term effectiveness of the first two goals were measurable. The difficulty in developing the models and erroneous interpretations of EGR's conceptual framework were reflected in the models which were submitted by the participants. Based on the interviews conducted during the evaluation, the "global concept" in application to local problems had, in some cases, been misinterpreted. (See Section 3)

Goals four and five are equally important to the long-term effectiveness of program intent to facilitate the institutionalization of the YWCA's organizational mandates to promote racial and gender equity into local activities. In particular, Goal Four, Community Activism, potentially serves two organizational purposes: (1) the YWCA may implement programs, events or strategies that promote the organization's mission through community action; and (2) the YWCA may formulate external linkages with other organizations, groups or individuals.

**Goal Five, Organizational Transformation, signals the potential for the YWCA to promote a strategy for community- and campus-based YWCAs to transform their organization's management, operations and direct services. The implementation of this strategy could facilitate growth in the organization's membership base and enhance the its image by defining explicit goals through plausible and tested methodologies.**

**In section 3 of this report, the step-by-step project development and implementation strategies for developing EGR models in Salem and Cambridge are elaborated. These demonstration projects may serve as models for the replication of EGR by other community- and campus-based YWCAs.**

## **Profiles of 2 EGR program sites**

**"We [the YWCA of Salem] serve so many ethnic groups and immigrants.  
The whole philosophy of our mission coincides with the EGR program."**

**Donna Torres Butler  
EGR project coordinator, YWCA of Salem**

**"It's important for member Associations [YWCA's] to take a look at poverty  
because we deal with it...it's central to the YWCA's mission."**

**Trish Fleming  
EGR project coordinator, YWCA of Cambridge**

**Under the guidelines set forth by the YWCA of the USA, eight community-based YWCAs participated in program model development. In reviewing all of the models submitted by the demonstration sites, the complexity of EGR's conceptual framework became apparent. Each of the YWCAs presented an impressive array of social issues endemic to their communities. However, participants' efforts to design and effectively interpret EGR principles proved to be the most challenging aspect of the program design process. Because of this, there was a wide degree of success in developing models.**

**Interestingly, the project coordinators from Salem and Cambridge both encountered some difficulty in "translating" the philosophical overview of EGR to local issues. This problem underscores the potential difficulties for replication of the EGR model in the future by other community- and campus-based YWCAs. The relative importance of the immersion process countered by the difficulties translating that experience to the local YWCA context suggests that the "global perspective of local issues" needs to be further clarified.**

**The designs developed by the YWCAs of Salem and Cambridge were both identified by the YWCA of the USA EGR staff as strong models and were selected as two that will be illustrated in the YWCA of the USA EGR "project summary resource guide" for other YWCAs.**

**The project coordinators at each site utilized an approach that synthesized global thinking and a knowledge of social trends as a basis to design local EGR programs. Both models addressed prominent social issues that may exist in other YWCA communities throughout the country: immigration in Salem and welfare reform in Cambridge.**

**The coordinators at each site developed linkages with external organizations and individuals. At each site, this strategy had an exponential impact that enhanced the YWCA's public image and exposure, shared the work load with other organizations and laid the groundwork for extended or future collaborations with the respective groups in each area.**

**In the following sections, the EGR projects in Salem and Cambridge are highlighted. Included are overviews of the strategies utilized in the development, implementation and institutionalization of the models.**

## **SALEM, OREGON**

A Mexican female in her 20s made three unsuccessful attempts to illegally cross the border to join her husband and children in the United States. Each time she was discovered and returned to Tijuana. On the fourth attempt, she crawled along the border at night until she found a place where no guards were on duty.

After meeting with her contact, she spent the night in a motel with other male and female Mexicans who were fleeing to the United States. In the morning, the six immigrants and the contact made the perilous journey to Los Angeles by car. Two men were secreted in the trunk of the car, one person was tucked into a false floor board, two people were hidden in the back seat and one person rode with the driver.

Immigrant Respondent

### **Description of the Model**

The development of the YWCA of Salem EGR model was based on a racial justice model designed to improve strategies for YWCA's outreach to the Mexican and other Latino immigrants, who comprise the largest minority immigrants in the state of Oregon. In utilizing a small-scale local immersion for YWCA staff and board members, two main objectives were proposed: (1) to increase staff's knowledge of the relationship between racism and poverty as experienced by Mexican immigrants; and (2) to increase staff's ability to implement a systematic approach when meeting the needs of Mexican immigrants in the community.

Immersion activities included: viewing the film, *El Norte*; the preparation and eating on ethnic cuisine; a tour of industries employing immigrants; the presentation of personal accounts by immigrants; and group discussion.

### **Service area characteristics**

**Demographics.** Salem, Oregon is predominantly populated by whites. Mexican immigrants and people of Mexican descent comprise the largest concentration of Latinos in Oregon. Over the past 10 years, the demographics of the area have shifted dramatically to include a large influx of Southeast Asian immigrants, including Vietnamese, Hmong (an ethnic group from the hills of Vietnam near Cambodia) and Cambodians. Recent immigrant groups have included Russians from the former Soviet Union. Other minority groups include small populations of African-Americans and Native Americans and smaller enclaves of Korean and Filipinos.

**Racial-Ethnic Dynamics.** According to one respondent, the state has a high incidence of undocumented immigrants. With the influx of large groups of immigrants to Salem, dramatic social, political and economic shifts have emerged in the area. The vast majority of these immigrants have settled into low wage jobs, primarily in the subsistence-based economy. Many of the Latino immigrants occupy other jobs in industrial plants, garment and tourism industries. White residents and other minority groups do not usually pursue employment in these industries.

According to respondents, residents in Oregon's "mainstream American culture" reputedly viewed the immigrants often with open disdain. These attitudes were based on misconceptions and biases concerning the impact of immigrants on the strained local economy. These sentiments were reflected in the local political agenda by attempts to introduce into the state legislature a bill comparable to Proposition 187 in California.

Respondents agreed that the current racial climate in Oregon reflects historical prejudices about minority groups exacerbated by the current national backlash against affirmative action and civil rights. In general, racism in Salem was described as subtle and surreptitious. Last year, the city threatened to cut off funding to the YWCA because they provide services to immigrants. The recent Fair Housing program grant which the YWCA received from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development has been met with complaints and racist comments by white residents.

The vast majority of white residents are neither aware of or well-informed about the social and economic issues immigrants face. Even second generation minority group members and educated Latinos reportedly have limited in opportunities for employment in professional occupations in the area.

### **Exhibit 3.1**

#### **EGR site profile:**

**YWCA of Salem (Oregon)**  
**Program Model Name: Racial Justice Model**

**Goal of the project:** To improve strategies for the YWCA's outreach to Mexican immigrants through education and utilization of an immersion model.

**Target audience:** YWCA staff and board members.

**Highlights of project activities:**

- Group preparation of Mexican food
- Viewing of "El Norte," a film about the economic struggle of Mexicans and their attempt to immigrate to the United States
- Personal testimonials of immigrants
- Tour of local industries that hire immigrants

**Internal Support:** YWCA Racial Justice Committee

**External Support:** Immigration specialist  
Immigrants from the community

**Problems faced by immigrants.** Prior to World War II, early Latino migrant and immigrant workers were quickly assimilated into local society by carving out an existence on the fringes of mainstream society. With the large influx of immigrants in the last two decades, the burgeoning Hispanic and southeast Asian populations altered the course of economic, political and social dynamics in the area. In particular, Hispanic immigrants have faced problems in finding steady employment, adequate housing and education.

Some of these problems are:

- Immigrants with illegal status often qualify for legalization, but outreach to these individuals by public agencies and private organizations is diluted.

- **Language remains a barrier.**
- **In 1993, the vacancy housing rate in Salem was 1.5%, and a study conducted by independent realtors reported an even lower percentage rate of .6%. Immigrant populations routinely reside in concentrated areas, often doubling and sometimes, "tripling up" in apartment units. Since affordable housing is at a premium, many landlords enforce policies that restrict bedroom occupancy to two people per bedroom.**
- **Leasing practices by landlords effect fair housing laws. Immigrants remain at a disadvantage and are often exploited in terms of rental costs and tenants' rights. There are few bi-lingual and bi-cultural housing counselors to assist immigrants.**
- **An immigrant specialist who collaborated with the YWCA cited the irony that immigrants who come to America are often seeking two critical things: a better life for themselves and their family members and an education for their children. Ironically, however, though 90% want their children educated, many of their children drop out of school within five years.**
- **The inordinate pressures on immigrant children in Oregon are well known. One potential outgrowth of the EGR program may be the implementation of an extension program for youth in a local school. Too many teachers lack sensitivity to the special needs of immigrant children. Migrant parents often feel lost in the educational environment and do not know how to advocate for their children or mediate difficult circumstances. Federal policies and local politics preclude equitable educational opportunities for immigrant children.**

### **Program Management**

**In 1990, the YWCA initiated programs to provide services to Latino and Hmong immigrants. During this period, services were expanded to include a resource assistance program for case management to homeless immigrants.**

**The YWCA had previously worked with a group of Hmong immigrants to create marketable items such as eyeglass cases and wallets from the colorful embroidered crafts indigenous to their culture. YWCA staff assisted and taught the immigrants how to use the sewing machine and other westernized implements.**

**The Salem EGR program was developed by the project coordinator, who participated in the 1994 immersion activities in Jamaica, West Indies. Since the YWCA had organizational ties to the Hispanic community and had provided bi-lingual services for over 10 years, there was a level of familiarity with the culture and the needs of the immigrant populations. Staff members were encouraged to learn basic greetings in Spanish in order to more effectively**

serve the needs of Hispanic clientele. Additionally, the project coordinator's Latino background and knowledge of the culture and local residents provided a strong foundation for the development of a viable educational program.

EGR program activities were an extension of activities that were already undertaken in the YWCA through the leadership of the Racial Justice committee. In accordance with the organization's strategic plan a racial justice perspective is included in all phases of program development. EGR presented the opportunity for the YWCA to integrate the organization's goals, programs and special events to the broader mission. The EGR model was a microcosm of the Jamaica immersion experience.

The project was developed over a seven-month period with approximately 20 hours staff time devoted to the preparation of each immersion program. **The most time consuming activities were spent in recruiting staff and board member to attend the events and in locating industry managers from local companies that hired immigrants and would allow the immersion participants to tour the facilities.**

Exhibit 3.2 illustrates primary planning activities for the Salem EGR project. The Salem project coordinator was responsible for overall project management and the development of activities. She was able to develop the program by within limited time constraints -- devoting approximately twenty minutes to an hour per week. The most intensive amount of time that needed to be devoted to the project came just prior to each immersion.

At the time of this evaluation interview two immersions had been completed and a third one scheduled.

### **Exhibit 3.2**

#### **Step-by-step planning of the Salem EGR model**

- 1. Recruit participation from YWCA staff and board members.**
- 2. Develop the local immersion model.**
- 3. Develop an internal and external support network.**
- 4. Research and compile resource materials and other information.**
- 5. Plan and coordinate training activities.**
- 6. Recruit participation from managers of local industries and local business people who hire immigrants.**

## **Program Impact**

According to respondents, both of the scheduled events were well-attended. Respondents who attended the immersion sessions overwhelmingly indicated that they gained a new perspective on the issues of Hispanic immigrants in the US, their countries of origin, and the factors that compelled them to leave.

Individual stories told by several immigrants proved to be a powerful and emotional component of the immersion process. These personal stories brought the undeniable difficulties, issues and concerns of immigrants most directly to the attention of the participants. One immigrant male told participants that he would have been forced into military service to fight in guerrilla conflicts if he had not left his country. "El Norte," portrayed on film the experiences of a brother and sister on their flight to the United States, from Mexico. Together, these two components exemplified some of the causes, difficulties and triumphs of resettlement.

YWCA staff reaction was varied, and different events appeared to have different impact on different individuals: The preparation of food was a bonding experience for some. One staff member was delighted by the similarity between the Mexican tortilla and the "lefse," a potato-based pancake from her Scandinavian background.

This woman was moved by the film and the personal stories of immigrants. She had grown up in Oregon, lived in the Salem area all her life and stated that growing up she had had very limited exposure to people of color. She also had first-hand exposure to the culture and issues of Latino people through the marriage of her son to a Mexican woman. She commented with some remorse "My family put people in ethnic boxes." She said that the entire family made "adjustments" to the addition of a Mexican to the family.

For other participants the preparation of food was a diversion or "hiding place" -- as long as attention was focused on food preparation it was focused away from the other issues that were to be discussed.

For many staff members, there were very limited opportunities to glimpse more intimate portrayals of Mexican people. Although they may be unique among residents in Oregon who have more than casual contact with immigrant groups, the participants learned a lot through the educational aspects of the EGR process.

Participants said that they were able to examine their beliefs and perceptions about immigrant groups. In particular, for those staff who visited the mushroom plant during the first immersion experience, it was a memorable event. Following is a composite from several interviews:

The mushroom plant is part of Salem's economy. Although, I had gone by the plant innumerable times over the year, I had never been inside nor did I know what it was like to work there.

The plant is located on the edge of town...it stinks.

Mushrooms are grown in the dark -- in a dark, drippy environment in 8 x 12 sections. Immigrant workers pick the mushrooms in the dark wearing [low-voltage] head lamps.

The trays of mushrooms are fertilized with a compost of manure and chemicals.

Among the workers, the lowest on the totem pole, the person last hired, works in the back where it is most difficult to harvest. It's about status.

Mostly, the males pick the mushrooms and the females box the products.

The conditions there are difficult. But immigrants are happy to get the jobs. Although we [Americans] don't think \$4 an hour is a lot of money, the immigrants do.

Generally, staff regarded the Education for Global Responsibility project as an important event at the YWCA. Staff were offered a range of immersion experiences to learn about the impact of global systems on Latin America and, in turn, the effects of global systems on the people who immigrate to the US from that geographic area in search of better life, and the roles and potential for international development in the places these people have left behind.

It is too early to determine the long-term impact of EGR in the YWCA of Salem of the Salem community. However, the members of the Racial Justice committee who were interviewed for this evaluation expressed an interest in expanding EGR and perhaps utilizing the immersion process in the public school system.

### **Problems and challenges**

EGR evolved from the interest of the Racial Justice committee and the YWCA's direct experience in addressing the needs of the Latino community in Salem. The first attempt to design an EGR project was met with difficulty. The original plan had to be scrapped because it did not reflect an educational component. Linking the "global" EGR framework to local issues was a special challenge for project staff and volunteers. However, once the process was better understood, the project coordinator said that designing the project model was easy.

Recruiting staff to attend the sessions was another challenge. By far, the first attempt required the most effort. Staff were not familiar with the EGR project, its concepts or the idea of an experiential immersion process. Although national office staff discouraged the use of food as the primary catalyst for a cross-cultural experience (because of the tendency to use it as a distraction from the issues unless a skilled facilitator is used), a local staff administrator described food as a 'safe zone' for encouraging the participation of YWCA staff and other groups.

**In Salem, food preparation was carefully combined with other learning strategies in the immersion model.**

**Racial politics and racial dynamics are taboo topics in many cultural groups, yet it is one of the most prevalent issues in the nation. As one staff member commented, "People don't want to be perceived as racist, so they don't say and don't ask things." The project coordinator found food a good stimulus for these discussions.**

## **CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS**

### **Description of the EGR model**

The EGR model developed by the YWCA of Cambridge was designed in collaboration with the Women's Statewide Legislative Network, an independent organization that promotes economic justice for women and girls. The primary goal of the project was to build a YWCA network of community women who were advocates addressing issues related to racism.

Specific program objectives were based on the premise that by attending community forums, participants could: (1) increase their knowledge of racism and poverty in Cambridge; and (2) increase their interest in building a network of professional women to address issues of racism and poverty.

This particular model finds its beginnings in the YWCA of Cambridge conference series, "Breaking the Silence," a program that began in March 1992 and challenges women from different racial and ethnic groups to discuss race relations in the Boston area. The most popular workshop from the series was "Unspoken Issues Between White Women and Women of Color."

### **Service area characteristics**

**Demographics.** The Cambridge metropolitan area is comprised of a predominantly white population and diverse minority groups such as Black and Latino. In the last five years, there has been an increase in immigrant and youth populations. The Cambridge area is, in fact, an international center with student and faculty residents from over 70 countries in the area colleges and universities.

**Racial-Ethnic Dynamics.** Boston and the neighboring Cambridge area have been known historically as very conservative communities. The Boston area is highly segregated, both geographically and socially and encourages similar conservatism in the neighboring Cambridge community. Due to the broader racial and ethnic representation in Cambridge, white residents have perhaps experienced greater exposure to other cultures, languages and people than their Boston counterparts. Community dialogue extends beyond issues related solely to Black and White social/cultural dynamics.

### **Program Management**

Prospective participants in the Education for Global Responsibility project were recruited from a pool of 300 to 400 women who had attended the "Breaking the Silence" workshops.

Eventually, a total of 15 women diverse in age volunteered to participate in the program, which was viewed, to some extent, as an extension of "Breaking the Silence."

### **Exhibit 3.3**

#### **EGR site profile**

##### **YWCA of Cambridge (Massachusetts)**

##### **Program Model Name: Women, Race and Poverty**

**Goal of the project:** To increase participants' approach to addressing issues related to racism and poverty.

**Objectives:**

- To increase participant's knowledge of racism and poverty in the Cambridge and Boston areas.
- To increase participant's interest in building a network of women advocates.

**Target audience:** YWCA network of community and professional women

**Highlights of project activities:**

- Workshop activities that focus on racism and poverty
- Group discussion about race and poverty in the area

**Internal Support:** YWCA staff

**External Support:** Women's Statewide Legislative Network

Two staff members developed EGR, the Manager for Community Programs and the Youth Coordinator. Both women attended the 1994 YWCA of the USA immersion in Jamaica, West Indies.

In Cambridge, EGR was initially perceived as a vehicle to strengthen the organization's racial justice work, build bridges among racial-ethnic groups and establish a closer working relationship with the YWCA national office. YWCA Cambridge staff regarded EGR as a means to educate members of the organization including board members about the global and local issues of poverty and racism.

**The Manager for Community Relations actively sought the participation of an organizational collaborator at the outset of program development in order to facilitate overall process, enhance the YWCA's image in the community and sustain a broader appeal.**

**The Women's Statewide Legislative Network (WSLN) was selected because of their advocacy of the economic justice interests of women and girls. In addition, WSLN had recently published a monograph, "Glass Ceilings," that is analysis of poverty and race relations among women in Massachusetts.**

**In an effort to build on the strides gained during the first workshop series, YWCA and WSLN staff conducted research to obtain information about poverty and race, in instructional formats to use for the EGR program. They were unable to find suitable curricular information that met the demands of the model. Therefore, the exercises and workshop format were jointly developed by the YWCA and WSLN staff.**

**The workshops were conducted over two consecutive Saturdays in November 1994. A facilitator led the groups through a series of exercises and discussions. Racism, poverty and participants' personal perceptions about these issues were discussed in separate all-white and all-women-of-color groupings. The rationale for this division was to encourage women to explore and verbalize their experiences and feelings about race and race relations in a non-threatening environment.**

**During the second part of the meetings, the groups intermingled to share information and continue the discussions.**

### **Program Impact**

**Cambridge EGR staff encouraged the women to prepare for the session by developing action steps to address specific issues, role playing, selecting issues to enhance and enliven the discussions. One major challenge of the workshop was inspiring women to speak openly about their perceptions of race and poverty. When asked to "draw the face of poverty," the women of color and white women depicted personae that were racially and ethnically unidentifiable. Participants resisted identifying any racial or ethnic stereotypes.**

## **Exhibit 3.4**

### **Step-by-step planning of the Cambridge model**

1. Recruit and establish a working collaborative with another organization
2. Research current periodicals, literature and contact organizations for statistical information, other program models
3. Develop series of exercises for workshops
4. Develop marketing strategies
5. Conduct workshop sessions
6. Post-workshop follow-up with participants

Black participants expressed anger about the general treatment of Blacks in America and spoke disparagingly about the media, political climate and other factors contributing to the perpetuation of racism and racial myths.

During the plenary session, women spoke more openly about the issues plaguing US society related to race and poverty. In response to the Republican sweep in the 1994 elections, many of the women have felt more compelled become more directly involved in the political agenda and advocating on behalf of the future of women and against poverty issues.

According to the Manager for Community Relations, many of the women left the session with a better understanding of the causes and dynamics of poverty. They expressed a realization that in some regards, all women are vulnerable and "only a check, divorce or illness away from poverty" when the circumstances in their lives are adversely effected.

The most tangible benefit of the program was that public policy related to poverty in the area was discussed and women gained a deeper understanding of the issues. Participants felt empowered and that they could contribute in some measure to taking action on some issues.

The program was developed, implemented and executed over a six-month period by devoting approximately one to two hours a week to the project.

### **Problems and Challenges**

The first draft of the Cambridge model had a global focus. Although, the coordinator admitted that, at first, they missed the "poverty" aspect of the program. In effect, after receiving technical assistance from the national office staff, the model was revised to present a forum where discussions of poverty, racism and sexism could intersect.

One of the most difficult aspects of the program was motivating the participants to speak openly about race and poverty and risk personal disclosure of their perceptions, whether stereotypical or not. People may be reluctant to be labeled "politically incorrect" if their views are misunderstood.

Once discussion about race were conducted in a structured environment, the Manager for Community Relations commented that it seemed to be a very broadening experience for the participants. Since the Cambridge YWCA has been committed to addressing poverty issues and other obstacles to women's advancement, EGR was perceived at a perfect fit with their articulation of the YWCA mission.

## **Replicating EGR models at community- and campus-based YWCAs**

The Jamaica, West Indies, immersion process was integral to participants' development of EGR program models. Personal transformation and awareness that emerged from field observations and experiential involvement enhanced project coordinators' comprehension of EGR concepts. This blending of experience and understanding appears to influence the ways participants subsequently approach their everyday activities. This, in turn, lays the foundation for creating bridges from personal awareness to the ways they view and formulate strategies for addressing local economic and social issues and community action.

With this notion, we return to one of the central issues of the evaluation: Why should YWCAs address global issues? In translating the organization's mission into an action agenda, EGR's globally-centered ideology is setting for charting an organizational approach to addressing the combined impact of racism and gender inequities on poverty issues. The discussion about interlocking global systems is further defined through the immersion and practicum/training processes.

This leads to consideration of the second evaluation question: Are YWCAs prepared to address the global issues in their communities? The relationship between global and community issues is evident in the structure of the EGR models presented in this report. The project coordinators at both sites endorsed the competence of EGR to broaden the understanding within the YWCA of issues related to women's empowerment, racism and poverty.

The challenge for each YWCA lies in connecting community issues to global issues, utilizing these to focus the work of the organization and to define workable agenda for action. Based on respondents experiences and perceptions, this was accomplished with relative ease once the conceptual framework of the Education for Global Responsibility project was understood.

Although both the Salem and Cambridge coordinators maintained that there was some initial confusion about how to translate "global systems" into a local context, they also agreed that women in other YWCAs could grasp the EGR principles through local presentations and "hands on" experiences. Both coordinators labeled EGR as "too cerebral" and "abstract" and wholeheartedly endorsed a rewriting of the philosophy into a definition that can be translated into techniques and activities.

In a practical sense, YWCAs who adapt EGR models cannot afford immersion experiences that take participants "around the world." It's too expensive. Salem YW staff diminished this problem by identifying a microcosm in its own community and developing its own immersion around that. (The YWCA of the USA pioneered and refined this local immersion approach with its 1990 US-Mexico border immersions, an immersion in Appalachia in 1991 and with the YWCA of Tucson, Arizona, immersion in 1993. Though the cost of immersions was one factor that inspired the development of these, the greater issue was the principle that global issues can be found in every community.)

**EGR provides vivid, interdisciplinary strategies for operationalizing the organization's mission. The broader implication for organizational change raises the question about whether YWCAs have the capacity to implement the required changes that facilitate the integration of an EGR program. As demonstrated in this report, the actual time devoted to preparation and management of the projects was not enormous. Any YWCA interested in implementing EGR program could do so by allocating minimal staff time and small amounts of cash or in-kind resources. This is at the core of what the YWCA of the USA has aimed to prove.**

**Through EGR, the notion of individual transformation and organizational change coincide. This dynamic sets the stage for an action-oriented agenda that relates local social, political and economic conditions around the world policies and practice among nations that often adversely effect women and their families in very specific ways. The YWCA is working through its Education for Global Responsibility program to assume a critical role in identifying global linkages among women in the coming years.**

**With understanding comes awareness, with awareness the impetus and clarity to promote change through social action. This is the context of EGR. The framework for personal transformation, organizational change and community activism. The capacity to articulate elaborate upon this framework will vary widely from one YWCA to another when the models are adapted, implemented and improved and new models are created at different sites. Certainly, the YWCA has the opportunity to promote long-term, forward looking strategies for addressing issues of women's empowerment, racism and poverty through principles of EGR.**

## **Concluding remarks**

**In developing an assessment scheme for analysis of the Education for Global Responsibility program, the Perry Consulting Group (PCG) is aware of that a number of issues related to program implementation have not addressed in this evaluation. The most obvious point concerns exploring the efficacy of the EGR models submitted by the other project demonstration sites. An analysis of the other models would potentially reveal other opportunities for growth and success as well as difficulties and constraints that the project's conceptual framework might impose on other YWCAs. Programmatic attributes that could facilitate the implementation process might also be discovered.**

**The YWCA of the USA is encouraged to diagnose the project models using with blueprints for analyzing organizational impact and long-term outcomes. Emergent trends are likely to surface a designs for utilizing EGR as a cornerstone of a new national global affairs program. The compelling power of EGR to articulate the connections between global women's empowerment of women and the elimination of racism and poverty has the potential to mobilize a global policy agenda for the organization.**

**Perry Consulting Group has also completed a YWCA national office assessment of the interest and potential among board members and key staff in establishing a global affairs division. It should be noted that at the final editing of this evaluation (in late-June 1996), a new position has been announced by the YWCA of the USA: National Director of Global Affairs position to head a new global programs department to be launched on September 1, 1996.**