

RECOMMENDATION FROM WDPIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REGARDING WDP RESPONSE TO ROOT CAUSES OF HIV & AIDS AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

An important part of the work of the WDPIC Executive Committee at our 2009 meeting was the evaluation of the prior Executive Committee's recommendation to address HIV & AIDS over the period of 2006-09. We discussed ways in which WDP committees have responded to the pandemic through educating communities, supporting existing networks that address the issue, helping churches understand women's vulnerability, and understanding that HIV & AIDS affect all members of the body of Christ.

We understand that poverty and lack of education are some root causes of HIV & AIDS. As we considered the WDP 2010 service written by the women of Cameroon, we observed that the root causes of HIV & AIDS also contribute to the growing problem of Human Trafficking worldwide. Along with shared root causes, both problems relate to human sexuality. To further our understanding of Human Trafficking, we examined its pervasiveness, the suffering it causes, and the particular vulnerability of women and girls in the 7 regions.

With this awareness, the WDPIC Executive Committee recommends that we as WDP Committees expand our focus on HIV & AIDS to include Human Trafficking.

In particular, we recommend that WDP Committees

- (1) **Educate** our members and our communities about the root causes of human trafficking, including but not limited to the ways that they are related to HIV & AIDS:
 - a. Learn what women are doing in the struggle against exploitation of women and girls, especially as it relates to sexuality.
 - b. Learn what we can do to address the issue in our communities.
 - c. Conduct workshops or programs on human trafficking and/or HIV & AIDS which are suitable in our context.
- (2) Identify existing networks and programs which are already addressing the problems and find ways to give our support and work together to **empower** women and girls. Some examples include:
 - a. Micro-credit and fair trade enterprises
 - b. Programs that educate women and girls
 - c. Programs that **advocate** for justice at the legislative level
- (3) Help our churches consider the role that stigma plays in contributing to or exacerbating the suffering caused by Human Trafficking and HIV & AIDS and to help them understand ways in which women are particularly vulnerable.
- (4) Allow ourselves to understand that whenever any member of the body of Christ is suffering, the whole body is suffering.

Our decision to extend and expand our recommended focus on HIV & AIDS to include Human Trafficking results from our awareness of the root causes that contribute to both issues. We encourage WDP Committees to continue exploring and supporting HIV & AIDS work as it can best benefit women in our communities and around the world. Likewise, Human Trafficking causes immeasurable suffering in all regions of the world, and we encourage Committees to address it in their context, cognizant of the root causes.

The WDP 2010 service from Cameroon brings the topic of Human Trafficking to our attention. It is our recommendation that the attention given to this topic in Africa in 2010 will shift to Latin America when we prepare for WDP 2011 from Chile, then to Asia for WDP 2012 written by the women of Malaysia, and then to Europe for WDP 2013 written by France.

In 2014 our efforts can be evaluated by the next WDPIC Executive Committee.