



# Sex Trafficking

## Session 3

| *The role of globalization in sex trafficking*

### Goal for the Session

Learn ways globalization has affected sex trafficking and some responses created to protect women and children.

### Preparing for the Session

- Make copies of appendix 1, "Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility." If possible, also download the "Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism" from <http://www.thecode.org/>, and make copies for participants. Check your denomination's Web site to see if there is an agency that partners with ICCR on responsible tourism. Also make copies of appendix 2, "One Initiative to Address Poverty: Oikocredit."
- Again display the list of statistics from session 2.
- Locate the suggested hymn. An alternative might be "In Christ There Is No East or West."
- Bring hymnals and Bibles to class.

### Opening (5 minutes)

#### 1. Sing a Hymn

Sing "O for a World" or another hymn of your choosing.

#### 2. Pray Together

O Lord Christ, who became poor that we might be rich,  
deliver us from a comfortable conscience if we believe  
or intend

that others should be poor that we might be rich;  
for in God's economy,  
no one is expendable.  
Grant us instead the riches of love.

*World Alliance of Reformed Churches<sup>1</sup>*

### Exploring (20 minutes)

#### 3. Summarize Globalization

Using the information in the Participant Handout, briefly outline some of the main points about globalization and the global economy. Then invite a volunteer to read aloud the lyrics to the hymn the group just sang, "O for a World." Contrast the description of the global economy with the vision of a world embodied in the hymn. Ask:

- On balance, would you say that globalization has been a good thing or a bad thing? Why?
- What would you say are some of the benefits of the global economy? What are some of the downsides?

Remind participants that regardless of our opinions about globalization, we in the West have benefited from the goods and services made available by the global economy. Ask:

- As people of faith who are in a position of power relative to the rest of the world, what is our responsibility to the rest of the world?

- Do you have hope that ordinary Christians can have a hand in transforming the global economy into something more like the world envisioned in our hymn? Why or why not?

#### 4. Reflect on a Case Study

Invite participants to respond to the case study of Meena, the young woman in India. Remind them of the characterization of human trafficking as contemporary slavery. Discuss the case study, using the following questions:

- The Participant Handout makes reference to the traffickers taking a page from the murky history of plantation history. In those times, slaves were categorized as less than human, considered to be property rather than as persons. What does Meena's story have to say about how her traffickers view her? Her children?
- The Participant Handout calls for a new abolitionist movement. How do you respond?

#### 5. Discover the Economic Toll of Trafficking

Invite participants to respond to the information on the toll to the health of women and children. Ask:

- What information was particularly striking to you?

Note that the writer deals not only with issues of physical health but also with the devastation wrought on the emotional and psychological health of the victims of sex trafficking. Point out that there are few large-scale studies on the health of trafficking victims, but that it is possible to infer from studies on prostituted women how physically and psychologically traumatizing sex trafficking can be.

#### 6. Read John 10:10b

Invite a volunteer to read John 10:10b (that's the second part of verse 10). Ask:

- How would you describe abundant life?
- What situations or issues are in play when the possibility of abundant life is not available to some?
- Some might say that the spiritual health of a culture is in jeopardy when a segment of its people are allowed to live in a state of dis-ease. How would you respond?

## Responding (15 minutes)

### 7. Promote Responsible Tourism

Ask someone to summarize the information about the travel and tourism industry in the Participant Handout. Invite participants to name information that was new to them or surprising, for example, the fact that the international travel and tourism industry is the largest employer on the planet or that there are twenty-five sex-tourism companies in the United States.

Distribute copies of appendix 1, "Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility," and the "Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism," if you have been able to download it. Say that many denominations are addressing the issue of human trafficking through attention to responsible investment practices, bringing to bear the power of the shareholder on the corporate policies of corporations in the international tourism industry. Divide the group into pairs. In each pair, ask one person to scan the information on ICCR and the other to scan the "Code of Conduct." Then ask each person to summarize salient points for his or her partner. After allowing a few minutes for partners to discuss, bring the group back together. Invite the group to generate a list of possible actions Christians might take to further responsible tourism.

### 8. Broaden Responses on Livelihoods

Recall for participants that most of the world's poor are women and girls, who comprise around 70 percent of the 1.3 billion people who live on a dollar or less a day in extreme poverty. Review the newsprint with the statistics about poverty from session 2.

Call the attention of participants to the section in the Participant Handout titled "The Grameen Bank." Point out that this bank offers credit to very poor people, mostly women. On newsprint, list the six basic principles employed by the Grameen Bank in granting loans:

1. The bank would only lend to the poorest of the poor among rural people with no land.
2. The bank would make loaning to women its priority.
3. The loans would be made without collateral or security.

4. The borrower—not the bank—would decide the business activity for which the loan would be used.
5. The bank would help the borrower succeed.
6. Borrowers pay as little or as much interest as required to keep the bank self-reliant and not dependent on grants or donations.

Ask:

- How do these banking practices compare with what we are accustomed to?
- Does it surprise you to hear that the rate of repayment of these loans over time has been very high, 98 percent? Why or why not?

Hand out copies of appendix 2, “One Initiative to Address Poverty: Oikocredit.” Invite participants to read over this information and to respond to the following:

- Someone has said that microcredit offers a hand up instead of a handout. How do you respond?
- In what ways do you think approaches such as microcredit or other hunger initiatives can get at the underlying causes for sex trafficking?

Ask for reports from those who volunteered to research denominational and ecumenical programs and initiatives that address hunger.

## Closing (5 minutes)

### 9. Use an Imaging Prayer

Remind participants that in many ways Jesus’ mother Mary was a young woman like the women who are victims of trafficking. In the world’s eyes, Mary epitomized the powerless—she was poor, she was a woman, she lived in a rural area, and possibilities for her life were limited. After the birth of her baby, she was forced to flee to a foreign land as a refugee, at risk from those who controlled the power structures of the time. Jesus was born into those same circumstances. In contemporary society, he might be a child at risk of being trafficked.

Invite participants to picture a woman or child from one of the case studies the group has considered or to imagine someone else imprisoned in a brothel.

Allow a time of silent prayer. Then close with the following:

Gracious God, convict our hearts and capture our wills and move us to faithful action. Remind us that in your economy, no one is expendable. **Amen.**

## Teaching Alternatives

- *Role-play a bank loan.* Ask volunteers to take the following roles:

A U.S. bank’s loan officer, who considers small-business loans

A poor woman with no collateral who needs a small sum of money to buy fabric and other materials to make tote bags for sale

Ask volunteers to role-play the woman applying for a loan. Then enact the role-play again, with someone taking the part of a bank official with Third World Bank, a lending institution that does business using microcredit principles.

- *Explore the fair food movement.* Invite volunteers to research your denomination’s work on fair food on your denominational Web site. How have changes in the way agriculture is done in a globalized market contributed to trafficking?
- *Make a global collage.* Divide the group into small groups to create collages or posters that depict the world envisioned in the hymn “O for a World” and the world of globalization. Participants could use magazine or newspaper clippings, line drawings, or word and phrases to depict these two worlds. Or participants could show God’s economy and the global economy.

## For More Information

Lallie B. Loyd, *Eradicating Global Poverty: A Christian Study on the Millennium Development Goals* (National Council of Churches of Christ, 2006). Order from <http://www.nccusa.org> or at 800-889-5733.

Elmira Nazombe, *Globalization and Its Impact in Our Lives* (2007–2008 Mission Study Theme of United Methodist Women). Order from [http://new.gbgm-umc.org/mission\\_studies/globalization/](http://new.gbgm-umc.org/mission_studies/globalization/).

## Endnote

1. As included in *Global Week of Action Worship Guide on Trade and Globalization*, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 15. Available at [http://www.pcusa.org/trade/downloads/worship\\_guide\\_low.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/trade/downloads/worship_guide_low.pdf).

# Appendix 1

## Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility

### Working Together for Peace, Economic Justice, and Stewardship of the Earth

Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) is a thirty-five-year-old international coalition of 275 faith-based institutional investors, including denominations, religious communities, pension funds, healthcare corporations, foundations, asset management companies, colleges, and dioceses. As responsible stewards, they merge social values with investment decisions, believing they must achieve more than just an acceptable financial return. ICCR members utilize religious investments and other resources to change unjust or harmful corporate policies, working for peace, economic justice, and stewardship of the earth.

ICCR members are serious, long-term investors for whom the financial performance of socially screened portfolios is crucial to their investment strategy. They use the power of persuasion backed by economic pressure from consumers and investors to hold corporations accountable. They sponsor shareholder resolutions; meet with management; screen their investments; conduct public hearings; publish special reports; and sponsor letter-writing campaigns.

#### **Core Values:**

Faith based: Faith guides and shapes members' priorities for action.

Justice: Members challenge themselves and corporations to accountability for right relationships with all of creation.

Integrity: ICCR members strive to be credible practitioners of the values they set forth.

Inclusive: They welcome diversity as they covenant to work together.

#### **Priorities:**

Eliminating sweatshops and corporate involvement in human rights abuses

Reversing global warming

Halting the proliferation of genetically modified foods until safety is proven

Making capital available to all on an equal opportunity basis

Working to make retailers of violent video games more accountable

Making pharmaceuticals and health care safe, affordable, and available to all

Seeking more reasonable executive pay

Seeking more accountable corporate governance structures

Stopping the use of depleted uranium weapons

ICCR members work together through issue groups to address the following:

#### **Access to Health Care:**

Addresses increasing access to prescription drugs; global pandemics, including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria; pharmaceutical industry lobbying; and fraud.

#### **Contract Suppliers:**

Addresses the contract supplier system, sweatshops, vendor standards, human rights abuses, wage inequalities (sustainable living wage), and unfair labor practices

#### **Corporate Governance:**

Addresses independent, inclusive, and transparent boards of directors; pay disparity; nominating committees; and compensation committees.

#### **Enabling Access to Capital:**

Addresses equal credit opportunity, minority and low-income borrowers, predatory lending, and community reinvestment

#### **Environmental Justice:**

Addresses the disproportionate concentration of pollution in communities of color and low-income neighborhoods, local environmental impacts, and applicable environmental and health laws and regulations

#### **Global Warming:**

Addresses reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, electric utilities and auto sector GHG emissions, and financial risks associated with global warming

#### **Promoting Human Rights:**

Addresses transnational corporations operating in countries with repressive governments, corporate codes of conduct, child/forced/prison labor, worker health and safety, sustainability, and human rights policies

**Militarism and Violence in Society:**

Addresses violence in video games, ethical criteria for military contracts, weapons components and delivery systems, depleted uranium, and violence in society

**Water and Food:**

Addresses the health risks of genetically modified food, genetically modified seed, labeling of genetically

modified foods, patent use within the industry, the scarcity of water resources, and water control and privatization.

Adapted from material on the Web site <http://www.iccr.org/about/issues.php>.

## Appendix 2

### One Initiative to Address Poverty: Oikocredit

While most investments make money, few make a real difference. An investment in Oikocredit will make both. The financial return on your investment may be modest, but the impact can be life changing:

- A job upon which to build a life
- A small business to support a family
- Enough extra income to send a child to school

Around the world, Oikocredit, an international Christian credit organization, turns investments into loans that bring hope. In our global economy, credit may be prohibitively expensive for self-help groups. Often it comes with “strings” that can lead to outside control of developing economies. Oikocredit offers an alternative: an affordable loan that encourages self-control. The projects financed are often small—a sewing machine to start a new shop, an improved market facility, machinery for processing crops—but they are critically important to the people who seek the loans to support them. “Oikocredit doesn’t change the world,” says its annual report, “but we do help change the worlds of our partners.”

Started as a pioneer in the field of development financing, Oikocredit is today one of the largest financiers of the microfinance sector worldwide. Oikocredit is one of the few ethical investment funds that finances development projects in the South benefiting disadvantaged and marginalized people. Privately owned, Oikocredit is a unique cooperative society that encourages investors to invest their funds in a socially responsible manner.

Oikocredit’s loans are channelled through a network of regional offices spread over Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Central and Eastern Europe and managed by local professionals. Today more than 60 percent of the outstanding capital goes to financial intermediaries, so-called microfinance institutions (MFIs).

Oikocredit also finances cooperatives or small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) involved in agriculture, trade, services, and manufacturing.

Oikocredit gives loans instead of donations. This is based on the view that when it comes to achieving economic productivity and self-reliance, loans are a more effective instrument than grants.

Information adapted from materials on the Web sites <http://www.oikocredit.org> and <http://www.pcusa.org/oikocredit/index.htm>.