

The Work of the Human Trafficking Roundtable

The trafficking of human beings, modern-day slavery, is a multi-dimensional threat that deprives men, women and children both in the United States and around the world of their human rights. This global scourge increases health risks and fuels the growth of organized crime. Since 2006 when the General Assembly spoke out about child sex trafficking, General Assembly Mission Council staff have been working together to coordinate their work. With the 2008 General Assembly action calling for an expanded focus on human trafficking, The Human Trafficking Roundtable was constituted. The Roundtable is made up of staff persons from the ministries of Compassion, Peace and Justice, World Mission, and Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries; Presbyterian Women, the Manager of Immigration Services in the Office of the General Assembly, staff from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Concerns and from the Advocacy Committee on Women's Concerns; the Presbyterian Men Volunteer and a member of the leadership team of PADVN, the Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network (a network of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association). The Roundtable has been working collaboratively to expand the church's ministry with and advocacy against human trafficking, meeting regularly both to coordinate the efforts of individual offices and to plan joint efforts around trafficking, including launching a new webpage, www.pcusa.org/humantrafficking.

Expanding Awareness and Advocacy

While the Roundtable continues to lift up issues related to trafficking that particularly impact children through the Associate for Child Advocacy, the Associate for Mission Responsibility Through Investment and our partner ECPAT-USA, the Roundtable has been working to broaden the scope of awareness and advocacy about trafficking of adults by means of the following:

- Through the Associate for Fair Food Concerns in the Presbyterian Hunger Program and the Manager of Immigration Services in the Office of the General Assembly, providing educational resources and advocacy tools on the web, through presentations and in articles about modern-day slavery in the fields and about immigration issues;
- Through the Manager of Immigration Services in the Office of the General Assembly, facilitating communications from the Stated Clerk to express the concerns of the PC(USA) to the United States Justice Department and the Department of Homeland Security about the issue of human trafficking and to urge effective action;
- Through ministry area booths at the Presbyterian Women's Gathering and the annual Associate of Presbyterian Church Educators' event and in a Human Trafficking Roundtable booth at the World Mission Celebration, providing resource materials;
- Through Presbyterian Women, in plenary presentations at the Presbyterian Women's Gathering, lifting up the issue of trafficking to raise awareness with members of Presbyterian Women across the country. Presbyterian Women has adopted human trafficking as an initiative and its Global Exchange for 2010 to India will offer opportunities for participants to see firsthand the effects of trafficking in that country.
- Through the work of the Presbyterian Men Volunteer, resourcing that organization in its emphasis on human trafficking.

- Through input from a member of the leadership team of PADVN (Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network), a network of PHEWA, exploring the connections between human trafficking and domestic violence on the United States as victims of trafficking come to domestic violence shelters.

Funding for Work that Addresses Human Trafficking

Although most funding entities of the PC (USA) are already aware of the intersection between human trafficking and such root causes as hunger, disempowerment, and disaster situations, the Human Trafficking Roundtable sent letters to the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Women, and Self-Development of People encouraging them to fund such programs through their grant-making mechanisms. Through the work of the Associate for Fair Food Concerns, the Roundtable is promoting partnerships with Freedom Network USA, an organization that provides trainings for people in churches as well as those working in law enforcement, social services and businesses in order to build capacity for responding to human trafficking victims in their midst. One such training has already been held, co-sponsored by Charlotte Presbytery and Church World Service.

Legislation to Combat Trafficking

There is comprehensive federal legislation in place to address human trafficking, first enacted in 2000 as the Trafficking Victims Prevention Act (TVPA) and most recently reauthorized as the William Wilburforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008. As a provision of this act the Department of Justice publishes an annual *Trafficking in Persons Report*, available as a link from the human trafficking website. This report details the monitoring of 170 countries in terms of their compliance with anti-trafficking efforts, highlights efforts of the international community to combat trafficking, and encourages governments to take effective action. Work is underway through web resources and by means of promoting more training events by Freedom Network USA to educate Presbyterians about the need for state legislation to address trafficking.

Educational Resources

The Human Trafficking website, www.pcusa.org/humantrafficking, is the primary source for educational resources on human trafficking and will be updated with links to new resources on an ongoing basis. The website promotes a four-session study, *Sex Trafficking*, available for purchase from *The Thoughtful Christian*, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation's web-based resource center, and provides a link to *The Thoughtful Christian* website where the resource can be purchased for download.

Promoting Initiatives that Address Human Trafficking and Its Root Causes

As a part of its ongoing work, The Human Trafficking Roundtable has collaborated with the World Missions Ministry and its Area Offices in exchanging information about and providing resources that address incidents of human trafficking, forced servitude and sex trafficking in the six regions in which the PC (USA) has mission partnerships. Through the Associate for Fair Food Concerns, the Roundtable worked with Freedom Network USA, Charlotte Presbytery and Church World Service (see

www.pcusa.org/humantrafficking) to provide the event held Charlotte Presbytery to train participants in identifying the victims of trafficking and addressing their needs in appropriate ways. The Roundtable stands ready to facilitate other such trainings in other presbyteries or with other groups. The Human Trafficking website, www.pcusa.org/humantrafficking, will continue to be a source for information about initiatives that address trafficking and will be updated with new information on an ongoing basis.