

A CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING
STRATEGIES TO HELP
THE CHURCH RESPOND TO
MODERN DAY SLAVERY

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A CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

What is Human Trafficking?

According to the United States government's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report human trafficking is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation (U.S. Department of State, 2012).

Exploitation includes, but is not limited to prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery

and servitude including the removal of body organs (United Nations Trafficking Protocol, 2000).

Globally, human trafficking is discussed within two main categories: Sexual Exploitation and Labor Trafficking. Both include the coercion, threat or use of force of a person into a life of servitude for the profit of a third party. In other terms, it is the forcible buying and selling of vulnerable populations, be it for sexual purposes or labor, for profit.

The United States Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) defines "severe trafficking" as follows:

a. sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or

b. the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

A victim need not be physically transported from one location to another in order for the crime to fall within these definitions (U.S. Department of State, 2012).

The Scope of Human Trafficking

The 2012 TIP report states that an estimated 27 million men, women, and children around the world are victims of what is now often described with the umbrella term "human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2012). In 2005, Patrick Belser of the

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Response to Human Trafficking::

International Labour Organization, estimated a global annual profit of \$31.6 billion from human trafficking (International Labour Organization, 2005)

While exact numbers vary, government and NGO's estimate that human trafficking in the United States produces an annual revenue in the range of 5 billion to 10 billion dollars (Polaris Project, 2012).

What is included in Human Trafficking?

Human Trafficking may take many different forms. Some of the more prominent activities that exemplify trafficking are, but are not limited to:

Commercial Sexual Exploitation:

- Prostitution
- Fake Massage Parlors
- Strip Clubs
- Internet based sex sites
- Domestic Sex Trafficking of Minors/ Children

Sex Trafficking

- Under Age Marriages
- Hostess Clubs
- Escort Services
- Residential Brothels

Labor Trafficking:

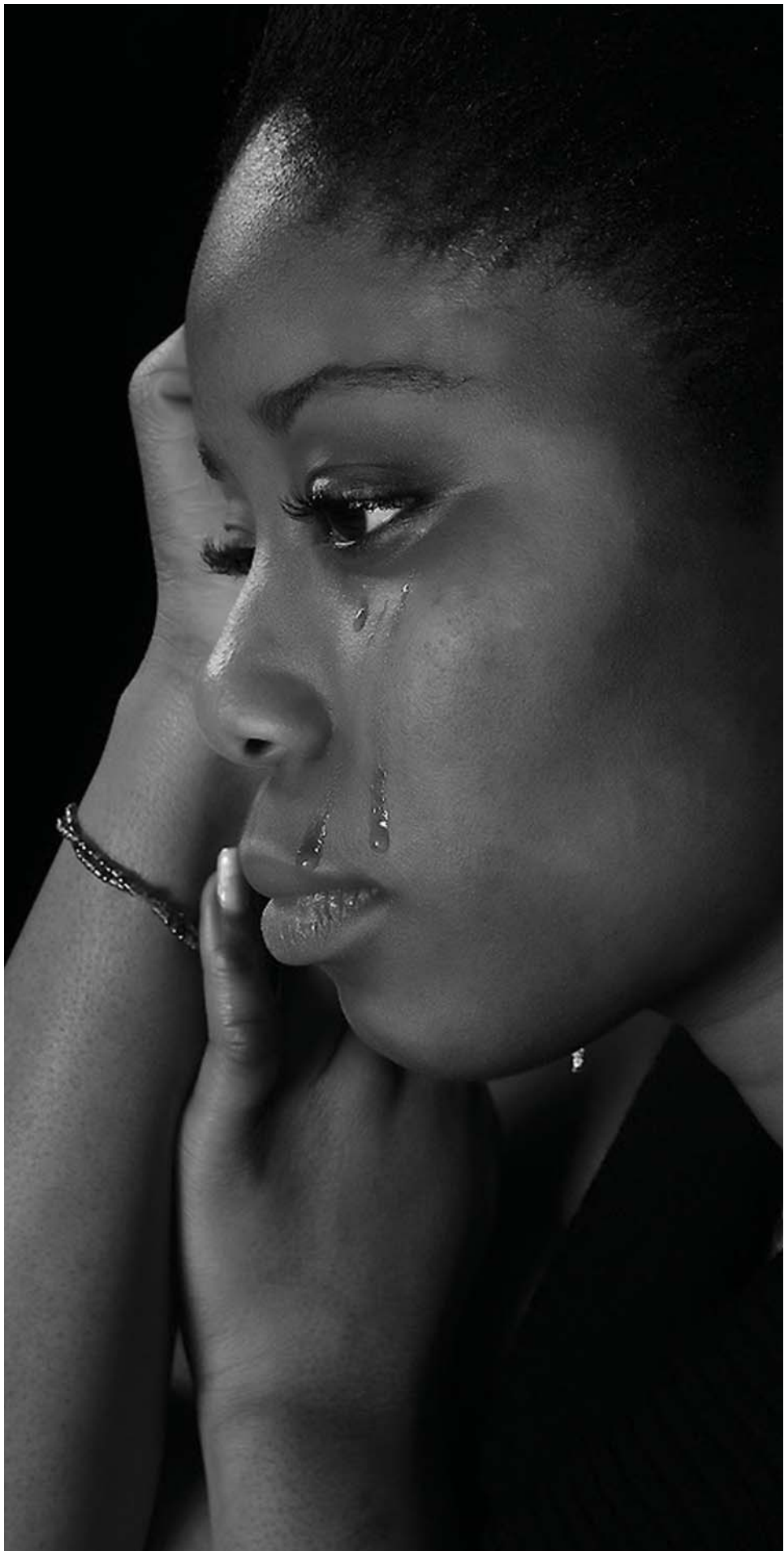
- Forced Labor
- Bonded Labor
- Debt Bondage
- Forced Servitude
- Forced Child Labor
- Child Soldiers

Who is At Risk for Human Trafficking?

Simply put, everyone is at risk. There are no set parameters that succinctly define who is at risk for human trafficking. Research shows that the world's most vulnerable populations (i.e. women, children, immigrants, impoverished communities and developing countries) have a higher rate of persons being trafficked, while more developed countries play a greater role in the import/ buying of trafficking victims (Polaris, Project 2013).

That simply means that anyone is at risk for being a victim of human trafficking irrespective of race, gender, socioeconomic status, urban/suburban or rural living environments, educational level or age (Polaris Project, 2013).

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What Can Churches Do?

Awareness

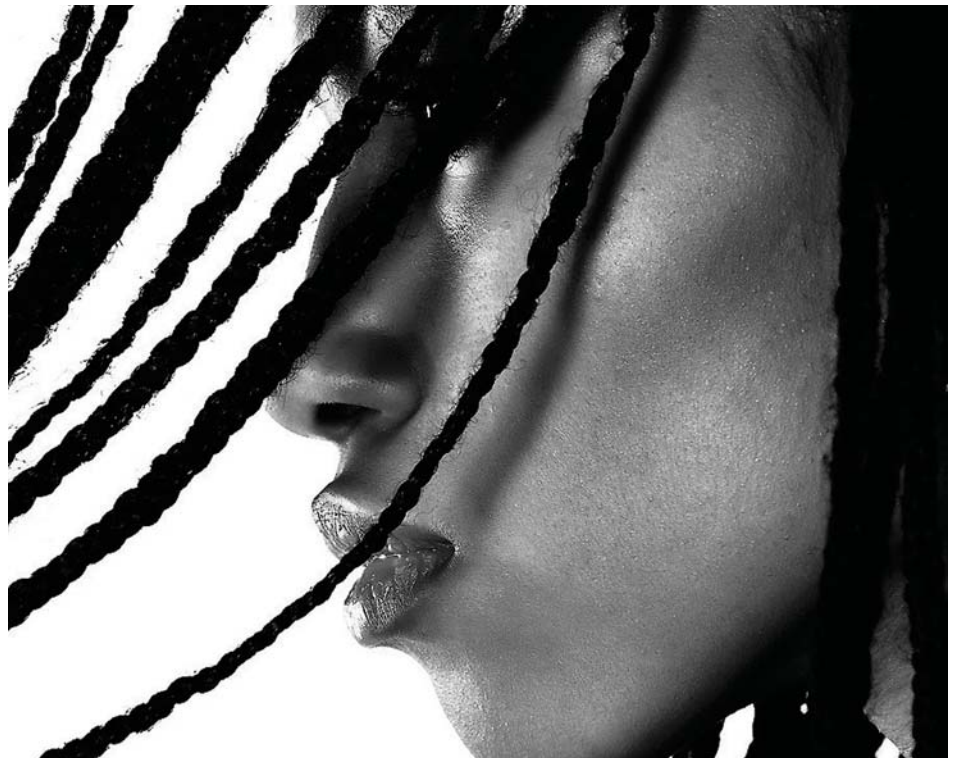
Churches are in a unique position to spread the awareness and message that human trafficking occurs and should be stopped. Churches have the ability to act as community builders and collaborators among the anti-human trafficking communities. Churches can bring together like-minded individuals to present and discuss topics regarding local domestic and international human trafficking issues that impact the church's missions field. Many grassroots community impact task forces have begun out of the church.

- Contact local government officials, police, and school officials to better understand the impact of human trafficking in your community.
- Inform family and friends of the information — you learned about human trafficking
- Host movie/informational sessions on human trafficking at church

Advocacy

There are several ways that the church can advocate the ending of human trafficking. The following is a list of ways some churches have decided to advocate the ending of human trafficking.

- Financially support local or international anti-human trafficking organizations
- Provide in-kind support to local anti-human trafficking organizations (i.e. meeting space, access to internet services, copiers, paper)
- Congregation members contact local and national governments to create stronger criminal penalties for traffickers
- Support local and international victim service organizations
- Have membership on the local human trafficking task forces



Actions

Churches have the ability to be as active as they desire in the fight to end modern day slavery. Here are some ways that churches have been active in the anti-human trafficking movement:

- Collect supplies (toiletries and personal items) for victim service organizations
- Mentor survivors of trafficking
- Create street-team/trafficking ministries
- Volunteer at local victim centered shelters
- Mentor at-risk children
- Adopt an anti-human trafficking agency and support them for a year
- Do mission trips with anti-human trafficking organizations
- Adopt children in foster care
- Hold Human Trafficking Roundtables
- Conduct self-esteem and peer pressure presentations with youth
- Pray for all victims of human trafficking
- Open victims/ survivor shelters
- Report instances of human trafficking

Some of the most helpful responses to communities addressing the social concern of human trafficking arrived from churches

that have been willing to step in and serve in any capacity. Churches that are most effective when they embrace Matthew 25:35-36, (NIV): “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

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