



MINISTRY RESOURCES

- Create breakfast, lunch, and supper clubs for families in need.
- Offer debt counselling seminars.
- Develop and implement anti-poverty projects in collaboration with other church departments and community organizations.
- Develop a community vegetable garden.
- Provide food baskets for needy families.
- Offer grief recovery and other relevant support groups.
- Offer seminars on money management.
- Offer seminars on small business development.
- Offer seminars on preparing for retirement.
- Offer return to work/employment and recruitment opportunity workshops.
- Prepare meals for refugee and homeless shelters and other homeless feeding projects.
- Provide warm clothing, blankets, and essential provisions in winter time.
- Provide family hygiene packs and personal care products.
- Provide health and medical supplies in conjunction with the Health Ministries department.
- Provide school supplies for needy children.
- Run community classes on adult literacy, hygiene, and basic sanitation.
- Run disaster relief seminars.
- Offer spiritual and counselling support with assistance from pastoral and other professionals.

OUR RESPONSE

“The poor should be treated with as much interest and attention as the rich. The practice of honoring the rich and slighting and neglecting the poor is a crime in the sight of God.”

E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 550

“When God blesses you financially, don’t raise your standard of living. Raise your standard of giving.”

Mark Batterson

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

*Father God, as I see the needs around me,
help me to be compassionate and willing
to respond with appropriate action.
Amen*



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POVERTY

Suffering is all around us. Where you see a need, let compassion move you to respond with appropriate action.



THE CHALLENGE

Poverty is a global problem. However, due to compounding issues, such as gender discrimination, poverty places a disproportionate burden on women, affecting every aspect of their lives.

“When women are poor, their rights are not protected. They face obstacles that may be extraordinarily difficult to overcome. This results in deprivation in their own lives and losses for the broader society and economy, as women’s productivity is well known as one of the greatest generators of economic dynamism.” (United Nations, *Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*, Beijing, 2015)

Poor access to essential resources – *“Women have far fewer resources to cope. They are likely to be the last to eat, the ones least likely to access healthcare, and routinely trapped in time-consuming, unpaid domestic tasks. They have more limited options to work or build businesses. Adequate education may lie out of reach. Some end up forced into sexual exploitation as part of a basic struggle to survive.”* (United Nations, *Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*, Beijing, 2015)

Low pay – Women in most parts of the world, are often found in low-paid and undervalued jobs. They also carry the responsibility of most unpaid care work. (International Labor Organization, Geneva, 2015)

Discrimination – *“Globally, the gap in labor market participation rates between men and women has decreased only marginally since 1995. Currently about 50 percent of all women are working, compared to 77 percent of men.”* (G20 Leaders’ *Communiqué*, Brisbane Summit, Australia 2014)



WOMEN’S POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- In developing countries a smaller proportion of women have cash income compared to men.
- Women’s lack of access to and control over resources limits their economic autonomy and increases their vulnerability to economic, social, and political changes.
- Single female headed households are more likely to be poor than male-headed households.
- Single mothers with children have higher poverty rates than single fathers with children. (Source: *The World’s Women 2010: Trends and Statistics*. United Nations, New York, 2010)

GOD’S REQUEST

“For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, ‘You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.’”

Deuteronomy 15:11, NKJV

“The work of the gospel is to be carried by means of our liberality...when you meet suffering souls who need help, give it to them. When you find those who are hungry, feed them. In doing this you will be working in lines of Christ’s ministry. The Master’s holy work was a benevolent work. Let our people everywhere be encouraged to have a part in it.”

E. G. White, *Welfare Ministry*, p. 29

THE BENEFITS

“But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Hebrews 13:16, NKJV

“Those who will receive the most abundant reward will be those who have mingled with their activity and zeal, gracious, tender pity for the poor, the orphan, the oppressed, and the afflicted.”

E. G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 340



HOW TO BEGIN

- Before commencing any community service initiative or ministry, undertake a survey to identify felt needs in the community.
- Undertake a survey to review the urgent needs of women in the church and community who may be impacted by poverty. Engage the help of external agencies that specialize in this area of work.
- Use the information gained from the survey to help you and your team plan your project and prioritize your activities.
- Endeavor to meet the individuals most affected and spend time listening to them.
- Share this information with your local church board and membership to gain their support and assistance.
- Where appropriate, work with local advocacy groups that may be able to offer additional advice, expertise and assistance.
- In promoting this form of outreach, alert women in the church and community of the diverse opportunities for service in this ministry.
- Form a project team, select a coordinator, and delegate duties for each individual.
- Prioritize your plans and programs according to the most urgent needs identified in the survey.
- Organize a prayer team to pray for this ministry and the activities you will undertake.
- Work with your church pastor and other church departments, such as community services, deacons and deaconesses, and Children, Family, Health, and Women’s Ministries.