

The Role of Clergy in Addressing Domestic Violence in Ethiopia

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Presentation Outline

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- Notes on GBV (Domestic Violence)
- What Needs to be done
- Who should do what
 - Religious Leaders (Major Stakeholders)
 - Gender Experts
 - Others

GBV: Domestic Violence

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- Domestic Violence particularly wife beating common, despite being made criminal
- Justified by many, and taken as an expression of love by some
- GBV Causes: immediate; short-term; long-term also underlying and fundamental →
- This led to research Underlying Causes

GBV: Domestic Violence

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Underlying/Fundamental causes

- ❑ Taking women's rights abuse as tradition
- ❑ Upheld/Sustained by folklore
- ❑ Religion used as cover
- ❑ Ethiopians who give top priority for their faith, observe strictly anything labelled religious

GBV: Domestic Violence

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Research Findings

- ❑ Church Teachings not oppressive for women
- ❑ Women's contribution to the church not adequately covered in preaching
- ❑ Addressing social issues in teaching and education, extremely limited

GBV: Domestic Violence

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As a result

- Eve's part in the original sin stressed by all
- Many take women as inferior, not worthy of respect of their human rights
- Women accept subordination and violence and abuse

What Needs to be Done

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Intervention by Stakeholders

- Government
- Non Government Organizations
- Gender Experts
- Health Professionals
- Media (Radio, Television, Press)
- Community Based Organizations
- Community Members (Elders, Youth)
- Religious Leaders

What Needs to be Done ➔

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Religious Leaders (Major Stakeholders)

- Clergy respected and accepted, can Change Attitudes, to address domestic violence
- Their involvement critical as seen in the past
- FGM & Early Marriage prevalence reduced notably attributed to religious leaders
- A revisit of hitherto preaching to integrate gender matters in their sermons

What Needs to be Done ➔

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Religious Leaders

- Equality of persons inherent in the Bible, thus Human Rights (HR) to be viewed as Church's basic teaching
- Clergy to teach faithful about GBV and gender equality, and that Church was first to declare HR and gender equality
- EOTC has incorporated GBV in its pastoral counseling training

What Needs to be Done ➔

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Religious Leaders

- As counselors for couples and family need to address gender equality based on the Bible
- In matrimonial services need to give equal emphasis to Ephesians 5:24 and 5:25
- Address the problem of using religion as justification for abusing women, by delivering Church's appropriate teaching

What Needs to be Done ➔

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Gender Experts and Stakeholders

- Need to Realize
 - Stakeholders' Collaboration is essential
 - Male involvement in gender work is critical
 - Active participation in Human Rights activities based on the Bible is crucial

What Needs to be Done →

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Gender Experts and Stakeholders

❑ Need to Realize that

- The Bible that came Millennia before UN, is basis for HRs: Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:16-18; and Galatians 3:28 content same as 1948 UDHR
- Ethiopian Philosophers Zera Yaekob and Habtu raised the issue of gender equality 17th Century, long before anyone did

What Needs to be Done ➔

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Conclusion: Ethiopians should know

- Gender equality for Ethiopians will come from
 - Ethiopia
 - The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church

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Thank You