



THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING POLICY

FOREWORD

Human trafficking is contrary to the principle of a society free for all to enjoy their God given dignity. The exploitation of human beings dehumanizes the individuals who are trafficked, rewards the inhumanity of the traffickers, and weakens the moral and social fabric of society at large. Traffickers need to be stopped and held accountable, but they also need those who will help them to a transformation of heart and mind. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is committed to working to restore dignity to persons who have been exploited and fully understands that this is not easy.

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is opposed expressly, to the corrupt abuse of power against other human beings that is inherent in trafficking for personal economic gain. As a faith based organization, we therefore have the responsibility, both individually and collectively, to work for the liberation of those who have been enslaved in this manner, and to establish the legal and social mechanisms by which human trafficking can be stopped.

The Church is cognizant of the duty it has to its members, both clergy and laity, employees, contractors and the Zimbabwean citizenry at large and has taken a stance to actively engage and do its part in the fight against Human Trafficking. Our schools, societies, centers, homes and agencies will from now make use of this policy in their pursuit of promoting the rights of all people and the fight against human trafficking.

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Presiding Bishop

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1.0 BACKGROUND

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is committed to high standards of ethics and integrity in all aspects including the prohibition of actions that would support trafficking in persons and procedures to prevent such acts and report any violations. As human trafficking has spread and as more vulnerable people have become involved, more people are recognizing those involved in trafficking as victims forced into low-paid labour, bondage or the sex trade directly or through desperate circumstances over which they had little control. Their rescue and rehabilitation have become top priorities. Prostitution and slavery are addressed in Christian scriptures and as a people of faith the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe believe that fighting human trafficking is a moral and religious imperative.

The urgency has arisen more so to now especially when traffickers have infiltrated the church and waylay church members as targets from all levels and ranks. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is moved to take action within its spheres and to the best of the organisation's ability. Human Trafficking presents new and unique challenges to our church and to our country. This challenge presents an opportunity to work across all of our divisions and with our community partners, to develop and refine a program that could emerge as acceptable model across Church. Communities of faith have a crucial role in the anti-trafficking field. As integral members of the community, faith communities are in a position to identify situations of trafficking, report tips to law enforcement, connect victims with life-saving resources, and advocate for social change.

This policy describes the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's guiding principles with respect to combating trafficking in persons. The MCZ is opposed to all forms of trafficking in persons and is committed to mitigating the risk of trafficking in persons in connection with its operations and programs. This policy document seeks to provide a comprehensive guideline on how the church, her members, church employees (both

clergy and laity) her agencies and partners has chosen to respond to human trafficking in all spheres of the church life, including worship, training, educational institutions, social responsibility, relief and development activities including but not limited to activities being carried out in facilities under the auspices of the Methodist church or her agencies. The church leadership understands the importance of anti-trafficking and felt compelled to demonstrate their commitment to safeguard the physical, spiritual and emotional safety of all members and employees who interact with the church at different levels.

2.0 THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

In the final chapter of the book of Proverbs, 31:8-9 the writer implores the need to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves and to plead the cause of the destitute. It therefore becomes clear that scripture calls us to an action based approach when it comes to oppression and any form of human rights abuse. This policy is informed and guided but not limited by the following scriptures;

Isaiah 1:17 says, 'Learn to do right, seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.' (NIV)

Joel 3:3 says, 'They cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine to drink.' (NIV)

Ezekiel 34:16 says, 'I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.' (NIV)

Jesus taught that no one should live in physical or spiritual bondage. He said, the Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, this is the year the Lord has chosen. (Luke 4: 18 –

19). He was quoting Isaiah 61: 1 – 2. Later in Isaiah 61 are these words, I, the Lord, love justice! But I hate robbery and injustice. (v. 8).

Consequently, Christians are called upon to work for the elimination of all forms of human trafficking.

2.1 OUR PLEDGE

As the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, we pledge to conduct our worship and all other activities in ways that deliberately respond to issues of human trafficking, equip the congregants and members of the MCZ and disrupt the flow of trafficking syndicates. We endeavor to transform the church into a safe space for all and promote the rights of our members, laity and clergy.

We promise to follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of employees and provide them employees with a copy of this Anti-Trafficking Policy that provides clear guidelines for reporting any suspected or actual human trafficking and conforms to the requirements of Laws – the Constitution of Zimbabwe (Amendment No.20) of 2013 and the Trafficking in Persons Act [Chapter 9.25].

2.2 OUR IDENTITY

WE are the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, a Connected Oasis of Life, Peace Justice and Hope working to combat human trafficking with a deliberate and established Christian standpoint notwithstanding the various forms of human trafficking. We seek to exercise care informed by scriptural guidance in restoring the freedom and dignity of those affected.

2.3 OUR SHARED VISION

An Empowered and Connected Christian Community Impacting Society to eradicate all forms of human trafficking in order to enjoy abundant life and God given dignity. We are mindful of the need to empower our employees and members and the need to develop strong partnerships with like-minded individuals and organizations with the view to transform society.

2.4 OUR MISSION

To transform lives through a Holistic Approach Grounded in Scriptural Principles by preventing trafficking of people and to provide a safe haven for survivors for their protection and rehabilitation. This we do by:

- **Responding** to victims of human trafficking effectively and immediately.
- **Equipping** key stakeholders and communities to address and prevent human trafficking.
- **Disrupting** the business of human trafficking through targeted campaigns

Being guided by the theological rationale, we endeavor to provide sustainable solutions to all aspects of human life, including promoting, protecting and safeguarding the rights of all.

2.6 OUR CORE VALUES

2.5.1 Integrity - We value consistency in our teaching, preaching and practice

2.5.2 Transparency and Accountability- We place all things on the table and take responsibility of the outcomes

2.5.3 Commitment and Professionalism- We always strive to do the best, give the best and act in the best interest of all.

2.5.4 Compassion – the love of Christ drives our mission

2.5.5 Inclusivity- Our approach is not discriminatory, the young, the old and those living with disabilities are involved in their own way.

2.5.6 Stewardship – We are driven by the spirit of custodianship of all under our care

3.0 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

As an organization aspiring to become empowered and connected Christian Community impacting society, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is committed to tackle head on issues of human trafficking and providing a safe environment for children, youths and adults who associate with the church. This policy is aimed at addressing and outlining the response of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe towards human trafficking in prevention, protection, prosecution, partnership and prayer. The Methodist social principles advocate for the total protection of children and adults from all forms of human rights violations, ranging from economic, physical, emotional and sexual exploitation.

For the avoidance of doubt, this policy refers to Human Trafficking in its entirety as expressed by the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the Trafficking in Persons Act [Chapter 9.25].

To that end, it is intended that these written guidelines shall be distributed to all persons in leadership positions, personnel of the church, whether appointed or volunteer staff members. There shall be appropriate in-service programs to educate MCZ personnel in the recognition of signs of human trafficking, to inform them of the procedures to be followed should an incident of human trafficking be brought to their attention.

3.1 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This Policy applies to all members of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe: Children, youths, adults and all workers and officers appointed or volunteers. It is an instrument that is to be used as a point of reference in decision making. All members of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, visitor, employees attending the Church sponsored activities shall bound to this policy. This policy shall give operational guidelines and a code of conduct of any member or stakeholder of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The policy shall be in force in all societies, districts, regional and international fellowships, institutions and organizations, service agencies and all other places where the Church in Zimbabwe activities are taking place.

4.0 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Abuse: improper treatment that is unjust, wrong and corrupt and infringes on fundamental human rights as listed in the Constitution. This shall mean all forms of abuse including physical, economic, emotional, and sexual abuse as defined

Child or young person: A child or young person is regarded to be any person under the age of 18 years.

Child-Sex Tourism: the commercial sexual exploitation of children by men or women who travel from one place to another, usually from a richer country to one that is less developed, and there engage in sexual acts with children, defined as anyone aged under 18years.

Human Trafficking: 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. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Partners: For the purposes of this policy, partner refers to any organization or person that The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe deliver program services with. These include individuals or organization that supports financial specific projects or programs.

Protection: Protection includes ensuring that individual basic human rights, welfare and physical security are recognized, safeguarded and protected in accordance with, church, biblical and international standards.

Staff: Staff refers to full time, part time, clergy, laity or casual persons working in Zimbabwe or abroad, and those engaged on short term contracts such as but not limited to: consultants, researchers, suppliers, photographers etc. working in Zimbabwe or abroad.

5.0 THE MCZ RESPONSE

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has seeks to reduce the worldwide phenomenon of abuse of individuals or groups of people for personal gain, now defined by the United Nations as human trafficking. It seeks to establish places of refuge for victims, sought legal changes that would both prevent trafficking and punish those involved, and it has created alternatives for those vulnerable to trafficking. Through its institutions and centers and individual members, the MCZ continues to plan and undertake culturally and biblically appropriate responses which will help to eliminate the development or continuation of any form of human trafficking.

The Church recognizes that there is a great deal of sex trafficking, and that the majority of those trafficked for sex are women and girls. It rejects this commodification of women in any circumstance – including pornography, prostitution and sex tourism - and works both to eliminate human trafficking for this purpose and to create alternatives for women who would otherwise be forced into prostitution. The MCZ will further work against any activity that trafficks people for the sale of human organs and any other form of human trafficking. The MCZ seeks to develop strategies and methods which assist trafficked people to re-enter and make a home in their chosen place of residence through a strategic plan.

Often the incidence of human trafficking is hidden within a society. The Church therefore will take an active role in researching where human trafficking is occurring and

aims to raise public awareness as a result. The MCZ calls upon all legislators in local, national or international jurisdictions to create laws and enforcement mechanisms which criminalize trafficking and which will punish those engaged in such activities.

All law enforcement agencies are encouraged to actively prosecute perpetrators of human trafficking and to work with other government and community organizations to free people from any present or future coercion or threat. Human trafficking flourishes because there is a demand for the services trafficked people are forced to provide. The MCZ therefore undertakes education and awareness raising activities so that those who use products or services supplied by trafficked people are confronted with the human misery, suffering and injustice created by their continuing use of these services or products.

It is also recognized that there are a number of credible organizations working locally and globally on the issues of human trafficking. Cooperation and networking with these agencies to achieve the elimination of human trafficking and to provide support to trafficked people is also paramount.

5.1 RECRUITMENT & TRAINING IN THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE

- All MCZ staff are required acknowledge receipt and understanding of this policy and accompanying resources upon hire and whenever they complete any trainings.
- The MCZ employees, its members and any contractors are responsible for complying with this policy as well as completing any associated training mandated as a condition of continued employment.
- When engaging outside parties, MCZ employees and its members will ensure that the requirements of this policy are communicated to MCZ sub-awardees, independent contractors, and vendors.

5.2 ENFORCEMENT OF THE POLICY

- Any form of violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action that may include but is not limited to termination of employment for MCZ employees and termination of the relationship with MCZ for non-employees.
- The MCZ prohibits retaliation against any employee who reports any violation of this policy or who cooperates with any investigation of such reports.
- Employees who engage in any retaliation or other violation will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment and reporting to local authorities as appropriate.
- Any supplier or supplier personnel who engages in any prohibited activities, fails to report suspicious activities, or engages in retaliatory actions will be subject to action including termination of the business relationship and reporting as appropriate.

6.0 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED HUMAN TRAFFICKING WITHIN THE MCZ PLACES OF WORSHIP, INSTITUTIONS OR ANY OTHER PLACE ASSOCIATED WITH MCZ PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

- Should a member, employee or visitor of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe receive any information about, or observe, actual or suspected related human trafficking conduct at a project site/ institution or society he or she must immediately inform the Methodist church head of office.
- Where appropriate the matter will be referred for further investigation with the Police in line with the Trafficking in Persons Act [Chapter 9.25].
- In the event that the head of office is the perpetrator, the member, employee or visitor shall call the national call center on a toll free line and inform the attendant all the details of the incident including the people involved.

- Any member who has knowledge or suspicion that a child or adult is at risk must report this to the head of office, who will determine what action to take within 24hours.
- Any individual who has knowledge or suspicion that someone is at risk under the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe non-program area should report to the nearest Zimbabwe Republic Police station. This should be done within 24 hours as anticipated by the law.
- A follow-up on the referral within 72 hours to Police or the organization that you would have reported to.
- All investigations are done by relevant departments of the Zimbabwe Republic Police, which department shall make referrals to other government department including the Social Welfare and the National Prosecuting Authority of Zimbabwe.

6.1 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS BY THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE

- Any agreement between The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and partner organisations which provide services to children, youth or vulnerable adults will require assurance that Anti-Trafficking Policies and/or procedures are in place, acknowledging that lack of such can put both the members and the Methodist church in Zimbabwe at risk.