

## **Seminar on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking from 05<sup>th</sup> - 07<sup>th</sup> February at PIASS/HUYE**

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From the 05<sup>th</sup> to 07<sup>th</sup> of February 2020, in collaboration with the Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB), the Protestant University of Rwanda (PIASS) organized a seminar on “Preventing and fighting human trafficking” at Huye Campus. The seminar involved 50 participants Church leaders, head teachers, chaplains in secondary and primary schools, representatives of Tumba Sector which is located in Huye District where PIASS operates, and representatives of Compassion International.

The seminar discussed the following topics which are related to the issue of human trafficking:

- Concept of human trafficking in the Bible
- Human trafficking history: Case of slave trade in East Africa
- Awareness of possible dangers and mechanism of combating human trafficking in Rwanda
- Sexual exploitation: one of the major reasons for human trafficking
- Child trafficking: Characteristics, complexities and challenges
- Refugees and migrants on the risks of slavery
- Agricultural and domestic human trafficking

Participants made reflections in groups and came up with commitments to apply in their context in order to prevent and fight against human trafficking:

1. Commit to promote the culture of gender equality in the society because gender inequality is among the factors of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.
2. Women and young girls are the most vulnerable for sexual exploitation and human trafficking in general. Thus, they should be empowered to prepare their future instead of being dependent.
3. Commit to encourage hard working and the culture of saving in order to reduce poverty which exposes many victims to human trafficking.

4. Child-rearing, conflict resolution and poverty reduction in families should be promoted in order to prevent human trafficking.
5. To mobilize children in families, schools and churches to raise the awareness of human trafficking issue and strategies to prevent and fight against it through trainings and other forms of teachings.
6. Protestant churches in Rwanda should stand to rebuke messages that promise people to cross the borders in order to have a better life, which is not always true because being abroad does not necessarily imply being rich as some people suffer human trafficking in that process. Among those messages, include prophecies and false teachings that lie people that a better life is found abroad.
7. Churches and their members should contribute to the programs of the government that fight human trafficking by collaborating with established centers and reporting every case of human trafficking in order to seek justice.
8. Pastors and preachers should pay attention on the way they interpret Biblical texts by recognizing biblical contexts and societies which tolerated slavery and utilize biblical texts in which God rebuked slavery and other practices related to human trafficking.
9. Strategies for poverty reduction and homegrown solutions should be highlighted because poverty is at the highest level among the factors causing human trafficking.
10. Migration as a factor of human trafficking should be given a worth attention so that people migrate with right motives.
11. Exploiting and mistreating house workers should be condemned because it is against the government policies and human rights.
12. Participants in the seminar conclude to own the above commitments and implement them in our respective institutions through clubs and engaging other trainings to help our community understand and cope with this issue of human trafficking.

Office of FTRS Dean



