

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION

Young Women Enabling Transformation (YWET)

PROGRAMME BRIEF

Women, as a class, are the largest oppressed group in the world. It is as though half the population of the world are oppressing the other half. Women's oppression is also the most widespread. There is not a culture in the world where women are not accorded second class status. Further, historically, women were the first group of people who were oppressed, making women the class who have borne the chains of oppression for the longest.

Women's oppressions are manifest and perpetrated through the pyramidal structures of patriarchy which work to appropriate women's labour, sexuality and fertility. This hierarchical structure is perpetrated through overt violence on women's bodies. Overt violence is found in 'generalized' forms as in domestic violence and the battering of women as well as in forms of gender specific violence such as sexual harassment and rape. Both these forms of violence work together to subjugate women and do not work as separate and distinct categories. In fact, the chains of patriarchy are first forged inside the household and the family and women are not safe from sexual violence even the context of the home.

Further, patriarchy is bolstered by a whole range of ideologies that draw from as separate fields such as science and theology to justify the oppression of women and legitimize systems of violence and exclusion. In fact, while the world has significantly changed, bringing the women's question to the foreground, religion continues to be the bedrock on which patriarchy rests itself. The church in particular remaining the last boys club.

Christian theology and spirituality has in the past and continues to provide legitimacy for the second-class status of women in the world and in particular to exclude their gifts and talents from the ministry of the Church. There can be no denying that the church has played and continues to play a large, if not fundamental role, in the oppression of women, in both church and society today.

The vision of the disciples of Jesus was however to create a radical discipleship of equals which seeks to dismantle all hierarchies and over turn all structures of oppression. Unfortunately, this vision was subverted by the church of Empire which once more sought to re-establish patterns of kyriarchy that centralized power in the hands of a minority elite and offered theological justification for oppression.

As the Council for World Mission, an organization that is committed to resistance of Empire as being the legitimate form of mission in our context today we recognize that the primary obstacle to freedom and equality in church and society is patriarchy and therefore we are committed to its annihilation. However, we recognize that we cannot merely wish patriarchy away and that it has infiltrated our structures, institutions, policies and theology. In an attempt to live out our commitment to justice, we recognize the sinfulness of patriarchy and work towards its deconstruction.

We recognize that this means the commitment of resources and energy towards the constructive work of building a community of women and the creation of a critical mass of women and young women in particular who will work towards the destruction of patriarchy and the envisioning of an alternative society.

It is with this vision in mind that we propose a capacity building training for young women that will enable a critical and creative resistance towards patriarchy as well as contribute towards constructive alternatives. Recognizing the lacuna of young women within our ecclesial structures this training is specifically directed towards the building of a collective of young feminist women in our churches.

Objectives

Therefore, we propose an intensive four-week course with the following objectives.

- To provide a safe and secure space for women to articulate their oppressions and aspirations
- To provide the tools of social analysis that would enable participants to critically discern the structures of patriarchy and creatively seek alternatives in church and society
- To offer the necessary Biblical and theological skills required to transform the patriarchy in our churches

Who is this for

This is open to young women aged 24 to 30 years, at the start of the Programme. She must be interested in exploring mission issues in international and multicultural contexts; able to relate well with others and mature enough to cope with stress; and committed to sharing the experience upon returning home. Ideally, she must have completed a first degree and preferably other further trainings. English proficiency is an advantage, as this is the language of communication on the Programme.

Programme Dates

The Programme will be from **30th June to 31st July 2019**.

Where is it

The Programme will be held in **Kingston, Jamaica**.

The Council for World Mission will arrange for and will cover the participant's international travel, accommodation and meal expenses throughout the Programme, including stipend during the field placements. The participants will need to arrange for their own passport and required visa/s. CWM will provide assistance in preparing required supporting documents for visa application. Participants will need to bring extra spending money for expenses outside those covered by CWM.

How to Apply

Interested applicants may contact the General Secretary of the Denomination Church. You may also contact Sudipta Singh, Mission Secretary for Research and Capacity Development at (email): empowerment@cwmission.org.

Duly completed application must be submitted via email at the above-mentioned email address or at hard copy to this address: Research and Capacity Development Unit, 114 Lavender Street, #12-01 CT Hub 2, Singapore 338729.

Deadline of application is on 15th February 2019.