



MINISTRY RESOURCES

Organise and offer support-related events, programmes, educational seminars and resources such as:

- *Bible studies for Busy Women* (GC Women's Ministries resource)
- Child care facilities for mothers to enable them to attend seminars
- "Day of Rest" – a special meeting for mothers while a team takes care of their children
- Emotional resilience workshops
- Health seminars on coping with fatigue, looking after yourself, and wellness tips
- Life-balance seminars
- Seminars for working mothers
- Seminars on how to meet your own needs
- Seminars on how to simplify and organize household tasks
- Seminars on self-esteem, building confidence, and overcoming feelings of guilt
- Stress management and relaxation classes

OUR RESPONSE

"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others".

Philippians 2:4

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

Dear God, Thank You for Your love for us. Help us to reflect this love to others as we reach out in practical ways to "bear one another's burdens" as Galatians 6:2 instructs us. We are grateful for the invitation of Your son Jesus who tells us: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
Amen



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WOMAN'S WORKLOAD

Women from all cultures around the world experience the challenge of excessive workload.



THE CHALLENGE

Women from all cultures around the world experience the challenge of excessive workload. This has negative implications for their physical, emotional, spiritual, social, relational, and economic well being. Prevailing issues such as equal opportunity challenges, political and economic transitions, strict social and cultural norms and the slow process of change makes progress difficult.

Work capacity - Although men have begun to take on more care responsibilities, women continue to shoulder most of the responsibility for family care. This often either limits their access to paid employment or confines them to part-time positions, which are generally not as well paid. (Source: Global Wage Report 2014/2015)

Work equality - Two decades after the world's largest gathering of women adopted a far-reaching agenda for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, women are only marginally better off with respect to equality at work. Shauna Olney, Chief of the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch of the ILO. (International Labor Organization) states: *"The overriding conclusion 20 years on from Beijing is that despite marginal progress, we have years, even decades to go until women enjoy the same rights and benefits as men at work."*

Discrimination - In a report on gender equality at work the International Labor Organization said: *"Women continue to experience widespread discrimination and inequality in the workplace. In most parts of the world, women are often in undervalued and low-paid jobs; lack access to education, training, recruitment; have limited bargaining and decision-making power; and still shoulder responsibility for most unpaid care work."* (Source: International Labor Organization, Geneva, ILO News, March 2015)

These challenges diminish the time women spend in enriching their spiritual lives through bible study, prayer, and devotional time with God.

NEGATIVE IMPACT ON HEALTH AND FAMILY

"If the mother is deprived of the care and comforts she should have, if she is allowed to exhaust her strength through overwork or through anxiety and gloom, her children will be robbed of the vital force and of the mental elasticity and cheerful buoyancy they should inherit."

E. G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 375



GOD'S REQUEST

"My brethren and sisters, in your ministry come close to the people. Uplift those who are cast down.... Work in a way that will cause hope to spring up in the place of despair."

E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 246

THE BENEFITS

A good work-life balance enhances the wholistic well being of women and enables them to be more productive in every aspect of their lives.



HOW TO BEGIN

Prior to commencing any interventions or projects to relieve women's workloads, ensure you do adequate research including consulting with woman to ascertain their most urgent needs.

- 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 aspect of ministry.
- Organize a prayer team to pray for this ministry and the activities you will undertake.
- Undertake a survey to review the main needs of women in the church and community, and to engage the help of external agencies that specialise in this area of work.
- Share this information with your local church board and membership to gain their support and assistance.
- Prioritize your plans and programs according to the most urgent needs identified in the survey.
- Form a project team, select a coordinator, and delegate duties for each individual.
- Work with your church pastor and other church departments such as community services, deacons and deaconesses, Children, Family, Health, and Women's Ministries.