



## **Economic and Social Council**

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### **Commission for Social Development**

#### **Fifty-sixth session**

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and  
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:  
priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to  
achieve sustainable development for all**

### **Statement submitted by Concepts of Truth, Inc., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council\***

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## Statement

### **Educating A Holistic Health Model Eradicating Emotional Poverty**

Ten years ago, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution (S/19-2, Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, Par. 27. 19 December 1997) declared that eradicating poverty was such an enormous issue that failure to do so would threaten the social fabric and political stability of all countries. Today, the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) believes that "eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is the greatest global challenge and is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development."

Poverty continues to be a pervasive problem world-wide. Although extreme poverty rates have been cut by more than half since 1990, one in five people in developing regions still lives on less than \$1.90 a day, and there are millions more who make little more than this daily amount. Over 700 million people still live in what the U.N. classifies as "extreme poverty," and women are disproportionately more likely to live in poverty than men due to unequal access to education and paid work. Moreover, every day tens of thousands of people abandon their homes to seek protection from conflict, leaving them displaced and destitute.

Poverty, however, is more than the lack of income and resources necessary for insuring a sustainable livelihood. The UN's report on the Sustainable Development Goals finds that poverty includes hunger, malnutrition, limited access to education, social discrimination, and exclusion, as well as the lack of participation in decision-making. Poverty is multidimensional. In essence, material poverty frequently coexists with educational, social, and emotional poverty. As Citizens for Public Justice explains, "Material poverty can have an exacting toll on those who experience it. In addition to the increased risk of illness and exclusion, it can lead to emotional poverty, that is, vulnerability, isolation, and intense emotional suffering.

Material and emotional poverty have been found to increase women's vulnerability to sexual exploitation and resulting unwanted pregnancies, which further intensifies their emotional poverty through confusion and despair. These women also have an increased risk of sexually transmitted diseases, with HIV/AIDS being the leading cause of death for women of reproductive age worldwide. According to the Conclusions and Recommendations from the Report of the Secretary General (2017 ECOSOC main Theme E/2017/64), these complex problems require a multidimensional solution - one that incorporates "mutually reinforcing policies and strategies" and focuses on the full integration of people living in poverty into economic, social, and political life. Such a broad solution necessarily includes relevant education and holistic health. Education provides a defense against emotional poverty, and learning how to explore and evaluate options is a necessary tool for navigating the world and its risks. Experiencing holistic health includes a healthy body, mind, and spirit.

Concepts of Truth International (COTI) recognizes the power of education and addresses the complex issues of poverty and its relation to holistic health. COTI's sexual health curriculum teaches that the human person exists as a multidimensional being and that one's sexuality is integrated in all dimensions of their humanity. The lessons stress that one's sexual health depends on the choice to save sex for one monogamous partner and to make healthy informed choices in relationships, love, and responsibility. These choices affect the whole person's present and future well-being as well as their progeny. For women who have had involuntary or voluntary termination of pregnancy, COTI provides compassionate and liberating counseling for them and their loved ones, regardless of their faith, lack of faith, or background. COTI helps women and men find holistic health through the grieving process as they

learn about the tasks of healing receiving peace and comfort, and finding relief from conflict trauma or the possible trauma after abortion and miscarriage.

Successfully implementing education and holistic health care solutions requires that we “AACCT”. First, there must be Awareness of the problem since so many of the wounds that people suffer are invisible to others. The next step is Access, which means giving the victims of trauma and loss access to those who can help so that their voices are heard. Communication is then key to confronting past events and emotions in a restorative manner and plotting out healthy constructive strategies for the future. The final steps are Commitment - cementing a relationship between the clients and the counselors to ensure that the former receive consistent and effective treatments - and providing them the Time they need to reintegrate into society and pull out of emotional poverty.

COTI acts to spread awareness of the possible trauma of pregnancy termination and its consequences on individuals and society by providing worldwide access to competent and caring counselors who acknowledge and affirm the client’s emotions. COTI’s counselors and consultants communicate deeply with their clients, instilling in each individual a due sense of human dignity deserving of love. COTI is committed to providing each person with the knowledge that will enrich their sexual and mental health and release them from the pain and guilt of past abortions or miscarriage, which often causes multidimensional poverty. COTI thus equips each person over time with the confidence they need to be free from the vulnerability and emotional suffering that impoverishes them and their relationships.

The challenge of meeting the AACCT model are that many traumatic wounds are on the inside, not visible to the human eye; but the visible coping mechanisms used to manage these unresolved losses can be catastrophic. The fallout is devastating personally, relationally, and economically to the individual and to those who love them or to those who are in community with them. It is therefore important to acknowledge grief and traumatic experiences/losses/events (personal or vicarious). The world has become much smaller because of modes of instant communication. We watch on the nightly news natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and personal traumas. The images are imbedded in our psyche as we watched the body cameras of police officers as they dodged bullets to get to the wounded, helpless and trapped. Many times, we are told to focus on the good and not the bad; but a good strategy for holistic health care, (body, mind spirit) is to process the traumatic event in a safe environment with safe persons so we do not feel isolated by the event or decision and feel alone because of comments/postings on news/social media regarding the topic, bullied into silence or shame. Events (good and bad), whether we played an active role, or as an observer, are not neutral; we walk away changed. We are changed for the better (empowered, qualified, unshackled) or changed for the worse (enslaved, forbidden, revoked).

There is power in unpacking the baggage. When we process the trauma, we get to decide the take-a-ways, the direction from here, and how we can or will use this event to empower another person to make healthy life choices. COTI’s staff have personally experienced and come to understand when an individual can walk through this process, they can and will continue to move forward to holistic well-being and make healthy life-choices. Those hurting do not have to resign to “managing the consequences” of traumatic losses; but we can find our voice, receive comfort and practical life-skills to thrive and move forward. Then, as we teach and empower others toward personal sustainability with what we have learned, we will eradicate many major forms of poverty toward whole-person sustainability. In contrast, if we do not reach out to others and broken people remain in their hopelessness, then that cycle not only continues but perpetuates more hopelessness in future generations. A quote

from one of COTI's clients says, "If an individual is unable to process the perceived injustice, there is no hope for healing or vision of inner peace."

Concepts of Truth, Inc. recommends that Member States and this Commission:

- Endorse education and holistic health care solutions on the value of the "AACCT" model;
- Enact policies requiring accountability from member states to educate in sexual health programs which incorporate the whole person learning theory;
- Promote measures that any and all mental health care programs worldwide provide best practices for holistic health care in order to allow the processing of traumatic events in a safe environment with safe persons.

If the Commission for Social Development and Member States implement these recommendations, we believe the citizens who choose to participate will be empowered to taking another step toward eradicating personal, familial, communal, and international poverty to achieve sustainable development for all.

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