

Ministry Aids Persecuted Christian Women in Developing World

Window International Network staged an event in Indonesia in May to reach women who face oppression and abuse

Don't tell Beverly Pegues that women can't be used as evangelists. Pegues leads Window International Network (WIN), a group that just conducted a successful women's conference in Jakarta, Indonesia.

WIN formed in December 1999 to carry out a mandate to deliver the gospel into the 10/40 Window—where the majority of people have not heard the gospel. WIN leaders hope to empower and encourage indigenous women in these regions to carry out the Great Commission themselves.

The Jakarta conference was specifically designed to empower women who live in the 10/40 Window to do just that.

"Women in the Window are the most oppressed and the least esteemed in all the world," Pegues said. "Why shouldn't the weakest part of the body of Christ become the strongest and the most effective in an area that is the most difficult to penetrate for the gospel?"

WIN's strategy is to finance women from the 10/40 Window to come to the conference so they can be trained and encouraged.

WIN sponsored more than 100 women in its last three conferences.

“We search out women who are actively working in their countries, with cell groups and church planting,” Pegues said. “Once we have identified those women, we bring them together with women from Western countries who desire to work in the 10/40 and need the contacts to accomplish projects.”

The women who attend gain prayer and financial support.

“I was able to accomplish in three days at this conference, what would have taken me five years to do,” one attendee said. “I met women who were on the front lines so I was able to effectively develop programs that had been on my heart for years.”

WIN leaders chose Jakarta because it typifies the persecution and suppression of women occurring in the 10/40 Window. Daily, women in the Window are subjected to domestic violence, war, humiliation, female genital mutilation, forced abortions, economic prejudice and decreased educational opportunities. Many of them know what it's like to give everything for the gospel, and their perspective is necessary to create an understanding of what it will require for Westerners to reach these countries with the gospel.

Because economics is the most restricting factor for women, they learn at WIN conferences how to secure micro business loans—sometimes as little as \$50. With these loans, a woman can start a small business and have the ability to feed her family. The conference brings in those who help women know how to respond through disaster relief, how to set up literacy

programs and how to develop schools.

Intercession is a major part of the conference. As mothers, women are encouraged to become "global mothers," with a world vision, who take up the burden for the next generation.

"We must fight in the spirit for the youth of the world," Pegues said. "The word given to the serpent in the garden was that there would be enmity between Satan and the woman [see Gen. 3:15]. The woman has a destiny to stand against Satan. That means there is a greater call for women to intercession."

A woman, whose identity is protected, organizes prayer journeys into areas where Christians have been killed.

The next conference is slated for May 2002 in Jakarta.