

**EQUIPPING THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN HONDURAS TO  
RAISE AWARENESS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

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This project attempted to equip the Honduran Church to raise awareness and thus influence the prevention of sexual abuse of children. Pre-seminar research indicated that few leaders had been able to rise above cultural restraints to address the pervasive problem of child sexual abuse in their churches or social agencies.

The purpose of the project was to develop and produce a seminar that could be reproduced to proactively address the problem of child sexual abuse in Honduras. The three-hour *Seminario Abuso Sexual Infantil* (Child Sexual Abuse Seminar) sought to accomplish the following: (1) increase awareness of the nature and scope of child sexual abuse in Honduras; (2) point out biblical principles that demonstrate that child sexual abuse is sin and that God demands social justice; (3) inform as to spiritual, emotional, and physical consequences of abuse; (4) educate parents and children's workers to recognize symptoms of sexual abuse; (5) equip parents to discuss sexual abuse with their children; (6) equip parents, neighbors, teachers, and church leaders to respond appropriately when abuse is discovered; (7) inform as to community resources available in helping to educate children about abuse; (8) present video testimonials demonstrating the difference the "God factor" has made in the healing of adults who were victimized as children; and (9) encourage attendants, especially church leaders, to respond in mercy to the needs of victims and their families.

The seminar was presented to 360 church and community leaders in the Assemblies of God Evangelistic Center in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The findings of the project confirm that the participants gained both increased knowledge of child sexual abuse in their country and an understanding that the Church has a role to play in promoting awareness of this sin of social injustice.