

Practical Tools



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Practical Tool 1: Undertaking a gender audit in your church - guidelines and template

“Black women have not historically stood in the pulpit, but that doesn’t undermine the fact that they built the churches and maintain the pulpits.”

Maya Angelou (1928-2013)

This tool offers a summary overview of the self-reflection questions included in Tool 6, to form a template you can use as a starting point to do your own analysis.

How to use this template

1. Read through all the sections and questions first.
2. Decide which issues you want to focus on, according to what you think are the most important issues in your church.
3. Many of the questions you can just answer as a task team. But you need to look for some of the answers by analysing church documents, or by talking to some of the people who could give you the answers. It is important to ask leaders as well as ordinary members in the different ministries of the church.
4. For analysing written documents:
 - a. Decide which documents you want to analyse. These might include your church’s constitution; policies; canons or statutes; constitutions of men’s, women’s or youth organisations; prayer toolkits or liturgies or orders of service for special occasions like weddings and baptism; Bible study and Sunday School materials and newsletters.
 - b. Choose the questions in this template that are relevant for analysing documents, or phrase your own that relate to the issues you have decided to focus on.
 - c. Decide who on your team would be best to analyse the documents. This obviously needs to be someone who has at least a high school education, preferably some higher education.
 - d. Keeping in mind your questions, read through the documents carefully, and then write notes to summarise the answers.

5. For interviews:

It saves time to talk to people in small groups, although some (like the pastor in charge) you might want to talk to one-to-one.

- a. Decide which groups of people you want to talk to. Decide which questions are relevant.
- b. You might want to re-phrase them to make them more appropriate for your congregation.
- c. You might also want to change some questions for different types of people, e.g. clergy, lay leaders, youth and/or teenagers, women's and men's organisations leadership, and ordinary members – women and men.
- d. Draw up the sets of questions you have decided to ask for each type of respondent.
- e. Decide who in your Gender Transformation Team would be best to speak with the different groups of people you want to speak to. Some of the questions might not be easy to answer, and it might help to think who the respondents might be more relaxed and open with.
- f. Note down the different answers given by different people in your group – record their age and gender if possible, as well as their position in the church.

6. Set a meeting date of at least 3-4 hours to do the analysis together.

- a. Bring together all your answer sheets, and go through the notes on the different questions one by one. Try to agree on the main themes that come through the answers, and talk about what strikes you.
- b. Draw together the information you learn based on the table with the 4 boxes, to give you a good summary of what is happening in your church.
- c. It might be useful to compare answers of different types of people – especially compare the answers of leaders vs ordinary members; and between women and men. This will help you to analyse whether you might need to work differently with different types of people in your church.

When you have collected up all the responses and made meaning of them by analysing them and drawing up a report of what you have observed, you will be ready to decide what are the most pressing issues in your church (Step 3), to prioritise them (Step 4) and start planning your first activities (Step 5).

JOINT STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT BY LESOTHO'S RELIGIOUS LEADERS ON GENDER EQUALITY

PROLOGUE

<p>"The world of humanity has two wings; one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of women becomes equal to the world of men in the acquisition of virtues and perfections, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be." (Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha, Sec. 227, p.302[13])</p>	<p>"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)</p>	<p>"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him: male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27(NIV))</p>	<p>O Mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh is that (believer) who has At-taqwā [the pious believer of Islāmic monotheism who fear Allāh much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allāh much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)]. Verily, Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Aware. <i>Sūrat Al-Hujurāt</i> (Holy Quran- The Dwelling) 49:13</p>
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We, Religious Leaders in Lesotho,

Concerned about gender-based injustices in society, gender-based discrimination, gender-based violence, inherent poverty and the HIV and AIDS pandemic,

Acknowledging that "God Created Man in His own image, in the image of God He created him: male and female He created them" Genesis 1:27 (NIV) and that men and women alike are the revealers of His name and attributes and from a spiritual view point there is no difference between them,

Called, as Religious Leaders, to proclaim and preserve God's love and righteousness,

Committed in the name of the Almighty, to promoting gender equality, universal love and inclusion for all, women and men, boys and girls, to ending gender-based violence, human trafficking and injustices.

Commit to work together within our communities

- To speak openly and objectively about issues relating to gender injustices in our society
- To work together to eliminate the root causes of gender inequality in our society
- To pay attention and act on gender inequalities that lead to risky behavior, domination and violence
- To teach against tendencies that promote discrimination and deny equal opportunities

Source: Christian Council of Lesotho

Example questions to guide your gender analysis

The questions below are taken directly from the boxes in Tool 6 that ask: **What happens in your own church?**

Your analysis of gender in your church should focus on two things:

- how gender issues are dealt with *inside* your church congregation, as well as on
- the work or ministries your church has in the community *outside* your church congregation, including any public statements, projects, etc.

Sometimes these two overlap, but make sure you cover everything.

The rest of this tool simply lists the main themes identified in the gender audit research processes in the initial five participating countries, and offers ideas for the kinds of questions you can ask yourselves, to help you understand how your church is dealing with the issues at hand.

Men's and women's organisations

- What roles do the women in your church play; and the men?
- Do you have a women's organisation? What is its vision and role?
- Do you have a men's organisation? What is its vision and role?
- Do the men's and women's organisations ever work together? What issues do they work with?
- How could the women's and men's organisations be helped to see their roles and develop their respective ministries differently?

Leadership in practice

- Examine how many men and women are active in different leadership structures in your church, and
- What roles do the men and the women play?
- Are any women in senior leadership, and how do they use the power of their positions?
- How many in senior leadership are men, and how do they use the power of their position?
- Think about the last church meeting you attended. Who spoke and who made the decisions? Who was silent? Why?

How deeply is gender embedded?

Policies and statutes

- Does your church have a gender policy? Does it have a gender committee or group?
- Is gender ever discussed in relation to practice and preaching?
- How much money is allocated to gender work in your church? Is it enough?
- How could you begin to introduce discussions about gender and develop a gender policy?

Teachings and language

- Next time you attend a service, take note of the Scripture texts that are read, and how they are interpreted in the sermon.
 - What was the theme of the text?
 - How was God's image interpreted in the reading, and did the language include men and women?
 - Who were the active people in the text? Did the women in the stories have names? And the men?
 - Were women's experiences reflected in the Scripture or in the sermon?

Marriage, gender based violence, children and youth

- Listen carefully to sermons and other teachings in your church about marriage, divorce, relationships, youth and the family. How are Bible texts used, and what advice is given to men and women?
- How do your church leaders relate to the youth? Do you think young people feel able to speak to their elders?
- When your church speaks out about gender based violence, listen carefully to what is said. Is the focus on society only, or also the church itself? Are people encouraged to talk to each other about GBV?
- Are there any church programmes on gender and / or HIV? Is there any support from your church for women and girls, or men and boys, experiencing gender-based violence or living with HIV? How do leaders and members in your church talk about HIV and AIDS? Is the tone about punishment and judgement, or is there a more loving approach that offers support?

Thorny issues: teen pregnancy, abortion, contraception and sexuality

Find out what your church leaders, and what the ordinary women and men in your church think about:

- Abortion
- Using condoms to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS
- Who makes decisions about sex and contraception in their relationship, and do both partners have control over their own bodies and decisions to keep them healthy.
- Do you think it would be different if women were involved in making decisions about things that directly affect their bodies?
- What is the official position on homosexuality and other sexuality matters in your church?
 - Do you know any homosexual people? If yes, do you know how they feel about the way the church relates to them?

Practical Tool 2: Guidelines for preparing and conducting contextual Bible studies

Ujamaa Centre

The guidelines in this tool are selected from the manual, Doing Contextual Bible Study: A Resource Manual, compiled by Gerald West and Ujamaa Staff (October 2007). They are intended as background reading for those who intend to use the Contextual Bible Studies in Tool 3. Readers are recommended to obtain the full manual, which can be downloaded from the website: www.ujamaa.org.za.

Understanding the construction of a contextual Bible study

Much of what is discussed in this Practical Tool will make more sense once you have actually participated in a Contextual Bible Study, or facilitated one. Nevertheless, some orientation to the Contextual Bible Study process is useful. In fact, it is strongly encouraged that you read through this section before using any of the studies in the next tool. There are five steps which can be identified in the construction of a contextual Bible study. But please note once again that these 'steps' are a guide rather than a set formula.

Step 1 – Choosing a theme

Contextual Bible Study always begins with the reality of the local community. It is always guided by the issues or themes that a particular local community is dealing with. Groups which are already organised usually have a very good idea of the issues confronting them in their community. Newly formed groups, however, may need some assistance in coming together to do social analysis of their context. This is an important first step! Contextual Bible Study always begins with the contextual concerns of the community.

A note on choosing a theme

Each of the studies in the Manual has a theme. Some can be used for more than one theme. When you choose a study, it is important to choose one with a theme which is relevant to the context of the study group. In fact, it is a good idea for the group to see a list of themes, and to decide for themselves which one is of the greatest concern to them and their community. (The Contents page of the Manual provides a list of themes.)

Step 2 – Finding a biblical text

Once the theme is determined, the actual planning of the Bible study can start. A biblical text that refers to this theme, or 'speaks into' it, is needed. The Ujamaa Centre uses two approaches here. While we can and do read the texts that the group chooses, we also bring to them texts and resources with which they are less familiar. In other words, we read familiar texts in unfamiliar ways (by approaching them differently), and we read unfamiliar texts (those texts that are neglected or forgotten).

Reading familiar texts in unfamiliar ways and reading unfamiliar texts allow the group participants to engage with aspects and parts of the Bible to which they have not previously had access. In this way, the Contextual Bible Study process enables the group to establish lines of connection between their own context and community, and new discoveries within the Bible.

A note on finding a text

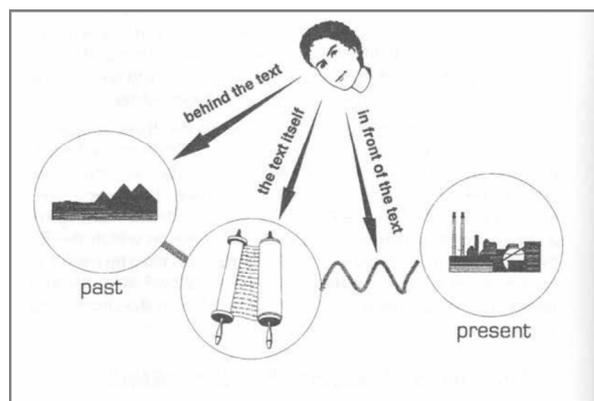
In the next tool, certain scriptural texts have been chosen and worked with during the construction of the studies. You and the group participants should feel free to make the study your own by adding and exploring other texts pertinent to the chosen theme.

Step 3 – Questioning and reading

Once the biblical text has been chosen, the task of constructing the Bible study itself begins. To do this, two kinds of questions are typically used. The Bible study begins and ends with contextual questions which provide the framework for the study. These contextual questions are also called 'community consciousness questions', because they draw on the resources of the community. They draw on the lived experience and the embodied theologies of the participants themselves. Within this framework of contextual questions, we construct carefully formulated textual questions, which constantly force the group to engage with the biblical text. These textual questions are also called 'critical consciousness questions', because they draw on the systematic and structured resources of biblical scholarship. (The challenge for the socially engaged biblical scholar is to construct questions that open up the biblical text in such a way that it has the potential to address the context of the participants.)

The resources of biblical scholarship can be characterised as consisting of three dimensions of the text (in other words, three ways of reading the text; see the diagram below):

- ***behind the text*** (focusing on the socio-historical world that produced the text);
- ***on the text*** (focusing on the text itself as a literary composition); and
- ***in front of the text*** (focusing on the possible worlds the text projects beyond itself towards the active reader).



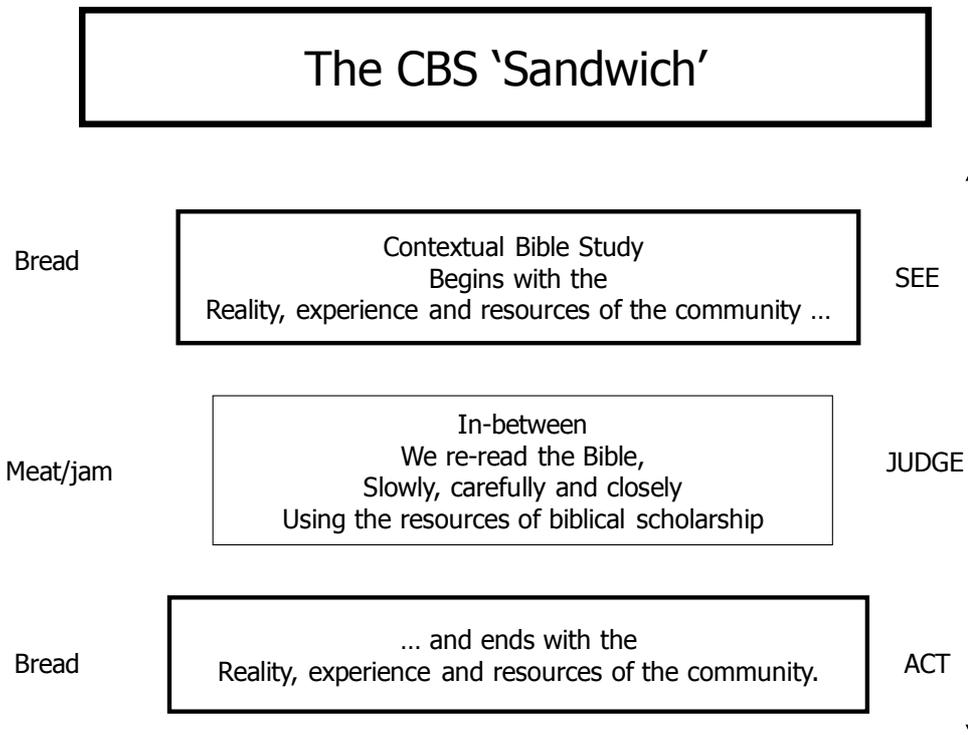
When the text is examined for the construction of a Bible study, generally these three dimensions are used in a specific way:

1. We begin with an *in front of the text* mode of reading, asking participants what they think the text is about. Here they are asked to draw on their own understandings of what the text projects towards them, or is telling them directly.
2. Then the focus moves *on to the text* itself, allowing it to 'have its own voice' among the voices of the participants. Questions which draw the readers in to a close, careful and slow reading of the text are used here.
3. Next, questions which invite the participants to probe the world *behind the text* can be used. Often these kinds of questions will be generated by a careful focus on the text (see above); but if not, the facilitator can construct a question or set of questions which explore the historical and social world from which the biblical text originates.
4. Finally, we return again to *in front of the text*, to examine what the text now projects to us as participants, only to discover that this is deeper, fuller, more meaningful or even quite different from our first reading of the biblical text!

Literary questions (point 2 above) slow down the reading process, enabling the participants to read the text more carefully and closely than they usually do. (John Riches from the Contextual Bible Study Group in Glasgow, Scotland, talks of the need to slow down the reading process, allowing readers more time with the text.) Literary questions also open up the narrative world to the reader, inviting the reader to enter and locate themselves within this world. Linked to this, socio-historical questions, whether arising from the participants or given by the facilitator (point 3 above), allow us to move back in time and space to enter the real world of biblical times in all its rich detail. Finally, having heard the voice of the text in its own world (the world *of* the text and the world *behind* the text) we allow the text to speak afresh to us in our own context (point 4).

In summary, we move from our initial engagement with the text, to the text in detail (literary and socio-historical detail) and then back to our engagement with the text, but this time having heard its voice. This process enables us to blend our voices with the voice of the biblical text and so hear God speaking a new word to us; and we then commit ourselves to God and each other in a plan of action.

It is this *combination* of contextual and textual questions that constitutes the Contextual Bible Study method. By fusing community consciousness with textual consciousness, the text speaks anew to our realities, as shown in the CBS 'Sandwich' diagram below.



It is important to note that the process of 'Seeing' begins before the Contextual Bible Study, since the theme of the Bible study comes from the social analysis of the community with whom the Bible study is being shared. Similarly, the process of 'Acting' continues long after the Contextual Bible Study is complete, for the action plan is always the action plan of the local community and so is dependent on their resources and timing.

Step 4 – Articulating and owning (making the Bible study our own)

Once the Contextual Bible Study is used in a group, what emerges belongs to the group. The power of the Contextual Bible Study process is that it allows participants to articulate and own their own interpretation of a particular text in relation to their context. The combination of contextual and textual questions has the potential to establish lines of connection between the biblical text and the contextual theologies of the participants. (Theologies refer to how people grow to understand God and God's involvement in their lives and their involvement in the work of God in their world).

If the Bible study is a safe place for participants – a place of trust and affirmation – then they may begin to articulate their own theologies. For many marginalised people these theologies are different from the public theologies of the church. Because of this, many Christians go to one church 'by day' and another church 'by night'! Because they are made in the image and likeness of God, there is a deep yearning to have their personal theological journeys and questions engaged by the church, affirmed by the church, articulated by the church and enacted by the church. Unfortunately this seldom happens in the church, but the Contextual Bible Study process provides an opportunity for this to happen.

Step 5 – Developing a plan of action (act)

Contextual Bible Study **always ends with action**. Each small group that participates in the Bible study must develop an **action plan**. Contextual Bible Study is not merely about interpreting the Bible; it is about allowing the Bible to equip us to change our world so that the kingdom of God may come on earth, as it is in heaven! Because the Contextual Bible Study process empowers participants to articulate and own their local contextual theologies, there is now an increased capacity to act. Provided the group remains in control of the process, action is a necessary outworking of Contextual Bible Study. Groups usually know what can and cannot be done in their local communities, but some kind of action is always possible.

Participants can plan three different types of actions: those that can be done with no additional resources; those that can be done with some additional resources; and third, those that will require substantial resources.

Contextual Bible Study should make a difference both in the lives of the participants and in the **public realm**! So participants are encouraged to plan an action that moves from the Bible study group into the public realm of the church and/or society.

A note on developing a plan of action

Contextual Bible Study on its own cannot accomplish the move from study to action. It is a good idea, therefore, to provide participants with additional resources from non-governmental, governmental, and community-based organisations to take their plan of action forward.

The role of the facilitator

Contextual Bible Study is a collaborative process and therefore requires a form of **leadership that enables the group to collaborate and learn from each other**. We are all familiar with dominating forms of leadership, like those used by most teachers. These styles of leadership are inappropriate for Contextual Bible Study.

Practical Tool 3: Facilitator's guide¹¹⁵

This guide is designed to help readers who want to use parts of this toolkit in small groups or other educational settings within their churches and communities. It outlines our approach to education and learning and offers some guidelines for facilitating learning that are inclusive and safe, and draw on the wisdom and experience of all participants.

TIP Read through the whole introduction before you facilitate any sections of these tools. It gives you a good overview of the intention as well as the structure of the toolkit and the different activity types.

The approach is especially important when working with issues like gender and sexuality, which people often find threatening or difficult to talk about. But it also aims to be consistent with the inclusive, welcoming and life-changing ministry that Jesus modelled in his earthly life.

A good start is to recall your own experiences as a workshop participant:

- Try to remember a time when you sat in a workshop that was really badly facilitated. How did you feel? What do you remember from what you were supposed to have learnt? What made the facilitation bad?
- Now try to remember a time as a workshop participant when you felt alive, time flew by. What do you remember from what you were to learn in that process? What was it about the facilitation that made it so successful?
- Now, as you work through this facilitator's guide, think also about your own approach to facilitation. What would your participants say about their experience in one of your workshops? What could you do differently to make your workshops more effective and enjoyable? (Make notes in the margins of this practical tool, or on paper, to remind you.)

The educational approach: popular education

The purpose of this toolkit is to break down stereotypes and prejudice. So our work is not neutral. It is about challenging gender inequality and injustice in church and society. We believe this is wrong and harmful, and is something that Jesus and other leaders would not support.

¹¹⁵ Many ideas in this guide are adapted from: PACSA Gender Desk (2007) *Asifunde: A Training Manual for Peer Educators*. Pietermaritzburg: PACSA). In turn, *Asifunde* drew on the following documents:

*Paulo Freire (1985) *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*. London: Macmillan.

*Liz Mackenzie (1992, 1995). *On our Feet*. Centre for Adult and Continuing Education, University of the Western Cape.

*Anne Hope and Sally Timmel (1984,1995). *Training for Transformation*. Kleinmond, Western Cape: Training for Transformation Institute.

“Popular education” is **based on respect for the knowledge and understanding of the learner** and tries to build on it. It is a type of education which:

- Takes place within a democratic framework
- Is based on what learners are concerned about
- Poses questions and problems
- Examines unequal power relations in society
- Encourages everyone to learn and everyone to teach
- Involves high levels of participation
- Includes people's emotions, actions, intellects and creativity
- Uses a variety of activities.

Popular education follows a **cycle of stages** that:

- Begins with people's own experiences
- Moves from experience to analysis
- Moves from analysis to encouraging collective action to change oppressive systems
- Reflects on and evaluates its own progress

In Christian circles, these principles have been adapted into what has become known as the **see-judge-act** method. This involves:

- **Seeing**, and analysing one's situation and/or context
- Making a **judgement** about what is wrong and needs to be changed, and
- Deciding on (often collective) **action** to bring about the desired change.

Paulo Freire was a Brazilian philosopher whose ideas about popular education described above have been adapted by organisations and activists in Africa and other parts of the world. In summary, these are the key principles he put forward:

Education is never neutral

Education can be designed to maintain an existing situation, imposing on the people the values and culture of the dominant class or group in society. Or education can be designed to liberate people, helping them to become critical, creative, free, active and responsible members of society. The first way uses education to keep things as they are, even if it they are hurting some people in society. The second way empowers ordinary people to re-think what they have been taught to enable them to bring about change for the good.

Jesus used the second kind of education. He used stories (parables), and asked probing questions, to help people reflect on their own lives and make decisions to change things for the better.

Education should be relevant to the learners

All education and development projects should start by identifying the issues important to the participants NOW. People will act on issues which they feel strongly about. There is a close link between emotion and motivation to act.

Education should be problem-posing

Learners should be acknowledged as thinking, creative people with the capacity for action. The facilitator aims to help them identify the aspects of society which they wish to change; to identify the problems; find the root causes of these problems; and work out practical ways to change the situation.

Education is a mutual learning process

The challenge to build a just society is very complex. No individual knows exactly how to do it, no one has all the answers, and no one is totally ignorant. Each person has different perceptions based on her or his own experience. To discover valid solutions, everyone needs to be both a learner and a teacher.

The role of the facilitator is to set up a situation in which genuine **dialogue** can take place – a real learning community where each person shares her or his experience, and listens to and learns from others.

Education must lead to positive action

Paulo Freire insists that for education to be meaningful, it must enable the learners to think about how things could be different and to decide on steps to make changes for the better. This might be in their own lives (e.g. making better life decisions) or social transformation (e.g. mobilising others to demonstrate outside a police station where officials have sided with a rape perpetrator or humiliated a complainant).



USAID funded Southern Sudan Interactive Radio Instruction project.
Source: www.wikimedia.org

What is the difference between *training* and *facilitating*?

There are various interpretations of what it means to “facilitate” and what it means to “train”. Sometimes they are used to mean the same thing. For the purposes of this toolkit, we define them as follows:

To ***train*** means to transfer skills or knowledge from the trainer to the trainee, which is sometimes useful and necessary, but experience in education shows that knowledge transfer on its own seldom brings about lasting change or improvement.

To ***facilitate*** means:

- To make something possible. In other words, as a facilitator you will make learning possible;
- To make it possible for people to reflect on their lives and learn new ways of thinking about their situation so that they can make valuable changes in their own lives.

Some challenges of good facilitation

Communication and dialogue: All activities in this toolkit try to allow for two-way communication known as dialogue. This means that all participants and the facilitator need to be good listeners, as well as being sensitive to not talking too much or trying to convince others that only their views are right.

As facilitator, this means being humble enough to allow people to express themselves, even if you do not agree with them. The facilitator also does not have to know everything. There is a lot of knowledge and experience in every person. It is important to make it clear that you also want to learn from the others, so people feel confident to share their ideas.

Activism and advocacy - challenging negative or destructive myths, attitudes or behaviour: This is a difficult balancing act. We are called to respect other people’s opinions, while also helping them make informed decisions and challenge superstitions and destructive prejudices so that they can be part of transforming society for the good. This includes challenging stereotypes and prejudice related to race, gender, culture, financial position or background.

But how to do this without imposing our viewpoint as if we know what is right for others?

Because of cultural ideas about what topics are appropriate to discuss, the way we approach such issues is very important. Asking open questions starting with *why* opens up dialogue that can help people to think more deeply about their underlying prejudices or uncritical assumptions, and can enable them to shift their mindsets. It is not about convincing others to think like you do, but about helping them to find their own deeper truth (which may not be exactly the same as yours).

Methodology

People learn most by being actively involved in their learning. **Avoid talking too much**; let others be active in the discussion. It is the facilitator's role to facilitate or enable a good conversation to take place – not necessarily to lead it from the front!

The Golden Rule – Be fully prepared!

A fully prepared facilitator is confident and can allow a group dialogue to take its course, bringing it back to focus when needed. It means being able to hold a conversation, watching its direction, without interfering unless the group wander completely off the topic! There are different ways to prepare and they are all vital:

Workshop preparation

There is nothing worse than becoming flustered in front of participants! Most often this happens because we are not properly prepared. You need to work through a whole section, make sure you understand everything; and carefully plan how you will manage each activity in the workshop you are to facilitate, and how you can make the links between activities so that the group process is going in a clear direction. This will help you not worry too much about the exact outcome, and allow space for the group to dialogue freely, within the general direction you have set.

Social analysis

Part of preparation is taking time to think through what might be some of the root causes of the social issues that will come up in the session. This will help you to help the participants to analyse the root causes of their own problems as they raise them.

It is helpful for people to understand some of the deeper social dynamics that influence our lives and decisions if we are to make some changes.

For example, women may sometimes not believe they can take on leadership positions, and step back whenever elections take place in their church. It is helpful to consider the types of influences that can make women believe this, such as biblical interpretations used in their church, and how they were brought up as children. This then will help you as facilitator ask questions that will help the women in your group think through where their beliefs come from, so that they can then make a decision to look at themselves in a new way.

Emotional preparedness

Who I am as a woman or man is closely linked to who I am as a person. Many of the issues that will be covered are difficult, and there are often no easy answers. For you to be able to hear properly what participants share and help them to probe the issues further, you will need to have faced and worked through the issues yourself, or at least have tried to understand your own response to them.

When preparing, give yourself time to think about how you **feel** about the issue under discussion, and be aware of any negative or unresolved feelings that surface. Then, when these are discussed in the group, be aware of your feelings. **Do not react without thinking.** Note your feelings, try to listen well, and go back to your feelings later. Then take time to work with those feelings, either on your own in a quiet time or with others in the group.

Educational methodology: opening spaces for dialogue

Use a range of activities in your workshops. This is important because it keeps your learners interested and allows you to emphasise what you want to in an appropriate way. There are different ways that you could use the activity outlines called based on a “Time to talk” task in the toolkit in ways that promote genuine **DIALOGUE**.

A dialogue is not the same as a discussion. A discussion focuses on conceptual understanding. It is often competitive and may involve people trying to persuade one another. A dialogue is basically a conversation, a process of listening and sharing ideas and experiences, exploring an issue deeply and learning from one another.

This means that the way you facilitate any activity needs to open up safe spaces for dialogue to take place, and for all participants to feel confident to contribute and that their ideas are valued.

This section explains how different types of activities can be facilitated in a way that promotes dialogue.

“[Dialogue] is a chance to explore shared beliefs as well as differences of opinion and understanding. It is a method, a tool of reflection, allowing us to shed light on sensitive issues.

But it is also a goal in itself, reinforcing the dignity and equality of the persons participating and the relations between us. It is a help for us to link and understand which consequences our own beliefs or opinions can have on other people's lives, as well as our own life.”
One Body: Human Dignity (2014)

Reading the text

Sometimes when the toolkit offers information, you can either explain it in your own words, having read it beforehand, or you can invite the group to read important extracts together.

Reading the text together can equalise the learning, if you invite every participant to read a few sentences or a paragraph, and so you read as a group. This has the advantage of showing that the information provided belongs to the whole group, and not to the facilitator as the 'expert'. It also makes it easier for participants to disagree with or argue against what they have read honestly, if they do not have to confront you as facilitator directly. So it opens up a safe space for a critical conversation that can honestly grapple with the issues deeply.

Plenary discussion

When appropriate, allow for free flow of discussion in plenary (the whole group together). This can take place after a shared reading of an extract, or once you introduce a topic, or when you guide the group in sharing insights after a small group exercise.

But in order to make sure the process moves forward, you will have to offer leadership to the discussion, by periodically summarising what has been talked about in groups or the plenary conversation, and inviting participants to share their views on what seems to be emerging.

Sometimes you also give input, allow participants to respond, note their points and weave them into the conversation. But all the time, the intention is to open up dialogue between all participants, to allow for collaborative learning to take place.

Brainstorming

With this method you allow participants to respond quickly with their first thoughts about something. They give ideas spontaneously on a subject. They should not censor themselves in any way. You record what they have said and use this for further discussion or clarification at a later point, if necessary. This allows for generating ideas without judgment.

The emphasis is on getting ideas out and not on working through solutions. The importance of brainstorming is to let ideas flow freely for discussion and assessment. If participants start analysing each other's ideas or working towards solutions, gently remind them that there will be space to do that later.

Group discussion

Groups of 4-6 discuss an issue or topic. This method is useful if you are working with a big group. This method allows for all participants to take part – particularly those who are shy and afraid to speak in big groups.

Make sure that you:

- ✓ Give clear instructions, or if you have copied the material or written them up on a flip chart, go through the instructions and questions together first.
- ✓ If you decide you need feedback to the plenary (which is often not necessary):
 - Ask the groups to make sure they have a note taker and choose the presenter beforehand
 - Ask groups to choose someone to lead the discussion
- ✓ Check up on the group from time to time and find out if people are clear about the task you have given them

Respect confidentiality: Often it is in these small groups that personal stories emerge, which participants may not want to have reported on to the whole group. So be clear what you would invite the presenters to report back after the group session. It might just be to draw out key learning or insights that came out of the conversation.

Sometimes it is helpful just to open up a general reflection on the small group process to everyone, to share what has struck them or a learning they want to share with the bigger group.

Buzz groups and pairs

Another form of group work is getting participants to discuss in buzz groups of two or three people. The facilitator asks the group to speak to the person sitting next to them and discuss, in pairs, the question posed for a minute or two. Buzzing can be used in a number of ways, for example, as a warm-up activity or in the middle of a lecture, and to:

- Get more participation going
- Encourage learning from each other
- Allow people to use their mother tongue
- Stimulate people to think independently

You can use this or small groups as a way to allow for more intimate conversations to take place. The toolkit does not prescribe when you should use pairs or small groups – use your discretion.

Responding to stories or case studies

This method uses actual stories or case studies as a starting point talk about difficult or complex issues.

Usually, the questions that follow a story take the group from reflecting on the story to relating it to their own lives and their community. It helps participants to think deeply about their own situations without having to talk about them directly if they prefer not to. It helps them develop critical thinking skills and to gain new perspectives on concepts and issues.

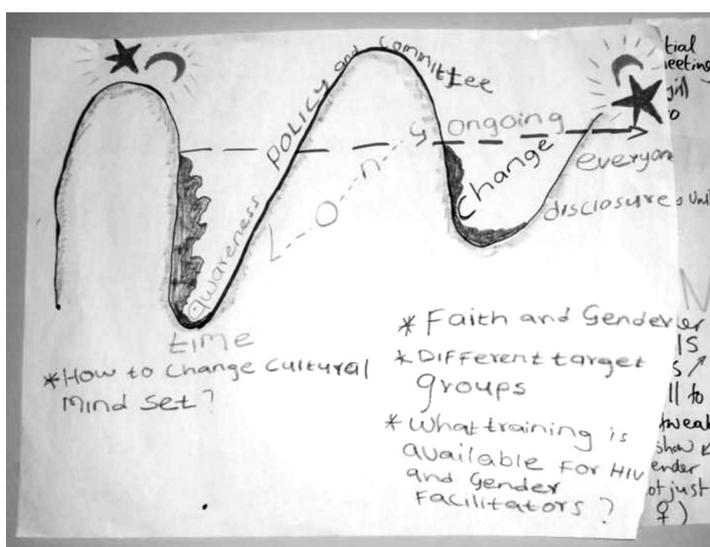
This toolkit uses stories and case studies as the main method, as it helps to link theory and practice, and enables participants to apply their learning directly into their lives.

Tips for good facilitation of learning in groups

People are not empty containers that need to be fed learning and knowledge. Instead, all people have valuable experience and knowledge to share, that needs to be honoured, valued and built on.

Learning happens when a group of people explore an issue together, share their ideas, learn from each other, and in the end come to a new understanding. Each person might learn something different or consider something different to be important.

Here are some simple guidelines for how to make sure you create a learning environment that is conducive to genuine share and enjoyable learning:



Gender and HIV MS group report on poster 2012. Source: PACSA

A lot depends on you

Whether a group is in a relaxed environment where people feel free to explore and learn together depends a lot on how you handle things.

Being well prepared is a must, so you can feel relaxed.

As a facilitator, you will be most effective when you are being your natural self and allowing your own personality to be expressed.

People get permission to be themselves from the way a facilitator behaves – through modelling. If you are stiff and formal, the group tends to be like that. If you are relaxed and expressive, the group tends to be like that too. Be conscious of the way the group is reflecting you.

Be a leader, not a dictator

Remember that you are the leader in this group and that you need to act like one. This does not mean that you will dictate but rather that you keep calm and controlled so that participants feel safe in your presence but also know what the boundaries are. This will create an environment that is conducive to exploring new learning, rather than one in which everybody waits passively for you to share your wisdom.

Ask questions

Being a leader also means creating spaces for others to offer answers or to take an issue further. This is what facilitation really means! You can do this by posing questions yourself, instead of feeling you need to offer answers. This will also help participants to go deeper into an issue rather than being satisfied with superficial or easy answers.

You do not have to have all the answers

Relax, and see if others can help to explore new understandings of an issue before jumping in to offer your opinion. If others do not have an answer, admit you also are unsure. But commit yourself to finding out more information. Then remember to do it, and remember to report back at the next session! If you do this, participants will respect your honesty and you will show by example that it is possible to find out answers to difficult questions.

You do not have to compete with your participants

You need to feel self-assured as the facilitator. If a participant wants to compete with you, do not be pressured by her or him. Just steer the workshop in the direction you need it to go. Find ways to affirm that person but make your boundaries clear. People often do this if they are insecure or feel threatened by the topic. Relax – and be yourself, and make it clear that the space belongs to everyone to learn from.

Keep on your toes – always be alert

You have to be a step ahead of participants because they will be looking to you for guidance and leadership. It is important that you anticipate questions and possible challenges. Again, being well- prepared helps.

The best way to do this is to go through the entire session in your imagination while you are preparing. Make sure you have prepared in all 3 ways outlined above.



Your most important asset as a facilitator is your awareness. Be awake and present in each moment – listening, looking, sensing. Being aware of your own emotions and what is going on inside you is also important.

Stay clear

This relates to being awake and present moment by moment. As a facilitator, notice when you get caught up in another person's issues. Try not to take personally any criticism or comment on ideas or beliefs expressed in the group. And remember the goal of the process, based on the section of a tool that you are working on. Bring the group back into focus when needed.

Develop discernment

Make sure your eyes and ears are open all the time. In other words, do not judge a person's negative behaviour, but try to be aware of it and understand it. Judgement implies putting people in boxes. Discerning implies awareness and objectively analysing a situation.

Use humour

A sense of humour is a great asset to a facilitator. The use of humour can effectively defuse some tense moments. There is nothing better than a light touch at the appropriate time.

Respect: it works both ways

Establish an environment of respect from the outset. You need to show respect to participants and vice versa. Facilitation is about honouring each group member and encouraging full participation.

Remember to always approach group members as capable, aware and fully functioning people who are committed to the group purpose.

Avoid judging people's contributions

Participants may express points of view that you do not agree with, perhaps even views you think are destructive. Be careful not to be judgmental. Let them have their say.

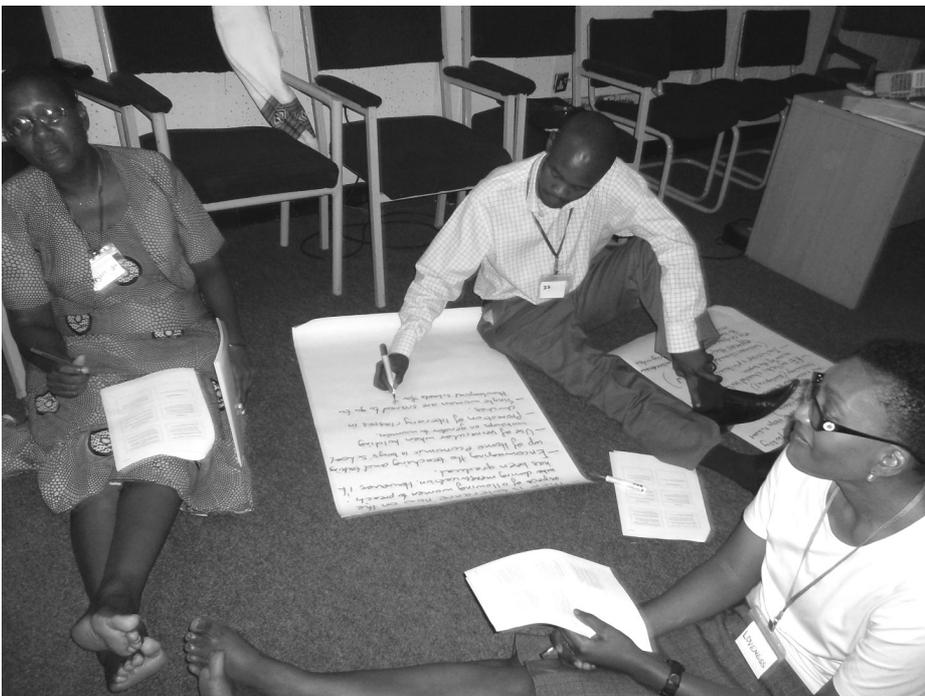
But of course, you also do not want others to absorb negative attitudes or incorrect information either.

So what can you do?

- It might be useful to ask others if they agree, and let the participants debate the issue rather than responding yourself.
- You could ask some probing questions that challenge the person to think about the issue from a different angle.
- You could offer social analysis that might help the participants understand the issue more deeply. But avoid 'lecturing' or imposing your views directly.

Keep the group together and focused

It is your task to hold the group together and make sure that the participants are focused on the task. Do not allow any participant to disrupt the group. Watch the time. Stick to the time limits for activities as much as possible. This way you will be able to steer the group forward and complete the tasks at hand.



Group work. Source: PACSA

Try to get low talkers to participate

Give those who are not participating a chance to do so. Encourage them, but do not force them if they are too shy.

Be aware of gender and other power dynamics, and open up spaces for the less powerful.

Try not to let high talkers dominate

Do not stifle those who are trying to make a worthy contribution and provide leadership. Sometimes people speak because they like to receive attention. However, there are times when those who participate a lot have something valuable to offer and are simply showing a keen interest in learning. Try to strike a balance.

If someone is dominating the group, try taking them aside during a break and ask them to hold back a little. You can do this by telling them how impressed you are with their knowledge but that you feel the others may be depending too much on them. Ask for their help in making sure the others also participate. This way, they will not feel undermined.

Some facilitators use the concept of 'airtime': explain that every person in the group has the same amount of airtime (you could even decide how much time that is or how many turns to speak), and once this is used up, they have to be quiet until the next activity. This helps participants to be more selective and make more constructive contributions.

Be adaptable

There is no single technique that will always work at a particular time for a particular group. It is a matter of choosing what to do in a particular moment, whether or not to intervene and how to intervene. You can plan ahead, but you always need to be ready to adapt to what is happening in the moment.



Cotonou-Fête nationale 1er août 1999 (4). Source: www.wikimedia.org

Practical Tool 4: List of useful organisations, training materials, and publications¹¹⁶

Where to get support for gender transformation work in churches

Theological networking

Circles of Concerned African Women Theologians exist in many countries in Africa.
<http://www.thecirclecawt.org/>

Ecumenical church organisations and church networks

These exist at all levels, from global to district:

World Council of Churches (WCC)

A fellowship of 358 churches represented in most countries worldwide.

Programme for Women in Church and Society

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/women-in-church-and-society>

All Africa Council of Churches (AACC)

Regional fellowship of WCC partners in 38 African Countries

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/africa>

Fellowship of Councils of Churches in Southern Africa (FOCCISA)

FOCCISA Gender Justice Network

<http://home.fhjn.org>

National Councils of Churches who are FOCCISA Health Network members all have gender related initiatives, are in the process of establishing them, or are integrating a gender perspective in their HIV programmes:

Botswana Christian Council - www.oikoumene.org/en/.../botswana/botswana-council-of-churches

Christian Council of Lesotho - www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/africa/lesotho/ccl

Christian Council of Malawi - <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/africa/malawi/mcc>

Christian Council of Mozambique - <http://www.ccm.co.mz>

Christian Council of Tanzania - www.cct-tz.org

Christian Council of Zambia - www.ccz.org.zm/

Council of Christian Churches in Angola - www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/africa/angola/cica

Council of Churches in Namibia - www.ccnamibia.org

Council of Swaziland Churches - www.swazilandcc.org

National Council of Churches of Kenya - www.ncck.org

South African Council of Churches - www.sacc.org.za

Zimbabwe Council of Churches - www.zcc.co.zw/

¹¹⁶ Resources related specifically to sexual diversity can be found at the end of Tool 13.

Other church networks in Africa and Southern Africa

Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM, Roman Catholic)
<http://secam-secam.org/>

Some national Episcopal conferences, such as the SACBC in South Africa, ZEC in Zambia and ECMMW in Malawi, have gender initiatives as part of their Justice and Peace departments.

Association of Evangelicals of Africa (AEA)

Pan African Christian Women Alliance. <http://www.aeafrika.org/commissions/pan.htm>

Some national Evangelical Alliances have gender related initiatives, such as EFZ in Zambia.

Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC). www.oaic.org

The website of this organisation is silent on gender or women's issues, but it may be worth following up.

The Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) www.tgnp.org

Churches' gender programmes or women's ministries

Check if your church has a Gender or Women's ministry, at local, district, national, regional or global level. (Many Anglican, Methodist, Reformed and Lutheran churches do.)

Other useful organisations and networks

Gender Links - www.genderlinks.org.za

Norwegian Church Aid

This organisation has regional African offices which have Gender programmes.

<http://www.kirkensnodhjelp.no/en/>

Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action (PACSA) www.pacsa.org.za

Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/sadc-and-gender-protocol>

Sonke Gender Justice - www.genderjustice.org.za

Ujamaa Centre - www.ujamaa.ukzn.ac.za

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) www.unwomen.org

Women and Law in Southern Africa www.wlsa.org.zm

Many national Parliaments have Women's and Gender Ministries, which should be possible to find on google.

Training materials and toolkits

Aitken, Marilyn (WLTP). 2011. *Emthonjeni: a journey of discovery for young women*. Underberg, South Africa: The Grail.

CAFOD, Christian Aid and Trocaire (n.d.) *Monitoring Government Policies*. London and Ireland.
www.cafod.org.uk
www.christianaid.org.uk
www.trocaire.org.uk

Hope, Anne and Timmel, Sally. 1999. *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers*. Book IV. Kleinmond, South Africa: Training for Transformation Institute.

INERELA (2012). *SAVE Toolkit*. <http://inerela.org/wp/wp-content/downloads/INERELA%20SAVE%20Toolkit%20Full.pdf>

Khan, Zohra 2009. *Just Budgets: Increasing accountability and aid effectiveness through gender responsive budgeting*. One World Action.

Knutson, Lebethe et al 2004. *Called Gathered Sent: A Bible Study Guide on the Role of Men and Women in Church and Society*. Cape Town: Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA)

One Body (n.d.) *AIDS and the Worshipping Community: Bible studies, liturgies and personal stories from South and North*. Oslo: The Nordic-Foccisa Church Cooperation

One Body (forthcoming in 2014). *Human Dignity - Inherent in every Human Being: Towards gender equality, including young people and overcoming abuse*.

<http://www.norgeskristnerad.no>

PACSA (Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness):

2007. *Gender, Violence & HIV/AIDS. A PACSA Workbook for Churches & Communities*. Pietermaritzburg: PACSA.

2008. *Asifunde: A Training Manual for Peer Educators*. Pietermaritzburg: PACSA

2011. *Gender Based Violence: Churches and counsellors make a difference! Pietermaritzburg: PACSA*.

<http://www.pacsa.org.za/publications>

PACSA (renamed Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action) and Sonke Gender Justice (2013). *Men and Masculinities in South Africa: A three part series comprising stories, analysis and faith based resources*. Pietermaritzburg: PACSA.

<http://www.pacsa.org.za/publications/books>

Sonke Gender Justice (2006) *One Man Can: Working with men and boys to reduce the spread and impact of HIV and AIDS*. Johannesburg: Sonke Gender Justice.
www.genderjustice.org.za/onemancan

Soul City (2001) *Violence against women: Training materials*. Johannesburg: Soul City, the Institute for Health and Development Communication

Veneklasen, Lisa and Miller, Valerie (n.d.) *A New Weave f Power, People and Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*. Practical Action Publishing.

World Alliance of Reformed Churches 2003. *Created in God's Image: From Hierarchy to Partnership. A Manual for Gender Awareness and Leadership Development*. Geneva: Imprimerie Corbaz SA.

Zambian Church Mother Bodies (Council of Churches in Zambia [CCZ], Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia [EFZ], and Zambian Episcopal Conference [ZEC] facilitated by Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation) have produced various useful publications:

2009. *The Voice of the Church on Matters of Gender in Zambia: Addressing ourselves to issues of gender injustice and gender based violence*. Lusaka, Zambia

2011. *The Church's Curriculum on Gender Injustice and Gender-Based Violence in Zambia*. Lusaka, Zambia.

This curriculum is developed into 3 parallel Training Manuals:

- Gender Training Manual for the Youth*
- Gender Training Manual for Lay Leaders*
- Gender Training Manual for Clergy*

2011 - *Testimonies of the Women Theologian: Stories from the heart*. Lusaka, Council of Churches in Zambia.

Research articles and books

Ackermann, Denise M. 1991. "Towards Our Liberation: A New Vision of Church and Ministry", in *Women Hold up Half the Sky: Women in the Church in Southern Africa*, Denise Ackermann, Jonathan Draper and Emma Mashinini (eds). Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 93-105.

Affirming and Inclusive Ministries. 2009. *The Evil of Patriarchy in Church, Society and Politics*. Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Al-Zubaida, Layla, Paula Assubuji and Jochen Luckscheiter. 2012. *Women and Land Rights: Questions of Access, Ownership and Control*. Perspectives #2.13. Cape Town: Heinrich Boell Stiftung.

Chitando, Ezra and Chirongoma, Sophie. 2012. *Redemptive Masculinities*. EHAIA SERIES Geneva: World Council of Churches

Council of Churches in Zambia. 2008. *Gender Audit of Member Churches of the Council of Churches in Zambia*. Lusaka, Zambia.

Dube, Musa 2001. *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible*. Geneva: World Council of Churches.

Freire, Paulo. 1985. *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*. London: Macmillan.

Gennrich, Daniela. 2013. *NCA Gender Audit Process in SADC countries: Follow-up report 2007-2013*. www.norgeskristnerad.no ; www.pacsa.org.za

Gennrich, Daniela. 2013. *Report on the Journey of the Zambian Churches towards Gender Justice: 2007-2013*. www.norgeskristnerad.no ; www.pacsa.org.za

Haddad, Beverley 2003. "Choosing to Remain Silent: Links between gender violence, HIV/AIDS and the South African Church", in African Women, HIV/AIDS and Faith Communities. Isabel Apawo Phiri, Beverley Haddad, Madipoane Masenya (eds). Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 149-167.

Hinga, Teresia M., Anne Nkirote Kubai, Philomena Mwaura & Hazel Ayanga. 2008. *Women, Religion and HIV/AIDS in Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: Circle of African Women Theologians and Cluster Publications.

Kanyoro, Dube. 2004. *Grant Me Justice! HIV/AIDS & Gender Readings of the Bible*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

Lowe-Morna, Colleen, K Rama, L Makamure and M Makaya-Magarangoma. 2013. *SADC Gender Protocol Barometer*. Johannesburg: Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance.

Maxson, Natalie. Forthcoming in 2014. *Journey for Justice: The Story of Women in the WCC*. Geneva: World Council of Churches

Morrell R. 2001a ed. *Changing Men in Southern Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

Neyrey J H. 2003. *Jesus, Gender and the Gospel of Matthew*. in Stephen D Moore and Janice C. Anderson. *New Testament Masculinities*. Atlanta: The Society for Biblical Literature.

Njoroge, Dube 2001. *Talitha Cum! Theologies of African Women*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

Norwegian Church Aid. 2012. *Report – Pilot Study on Numbers of Women in Positions of Leadership*. Oslo, Norway: NCA. www.nca.org.za

Phiri, Govinden, Nadar 2002. *Her-stories: hidden histories of women of faith in Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

Phiri, Isabel Apawo 2000. "Domestic Violence in Christian Homes: A Durban Case Study", in Journal of Constructive Theology, vol. 6 no 2. December 2001: 85-110.

Radford Ruether, Rosemary 1983. *Sexism and God-Talk: Towards a Feminist Theology*. London: SPCK.

Rakoczy, Susan, ed. 2000. *Silent No Longer: The Church Responds to Sexual Violence*. Pretoria: SACBC.

Ryan, Mary, 2006. *Behind Caring: The contribution of feminist pedagogy in preparing women for Christian ministry in South Africa*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Pretoria: Unisa.

Practical Tool 5: Glossary of common terms

Sometimes we use the same words, but mean different things. This Practical Tool explains how this toolkit has used specialised words.

Culture is made up of the social customs or accepted ways of doing things, marking special events, and distributing roles and privileges. In wider society, it includes social, political and economic practices. Cultures also include the attitudes, expectations, behaviour, religious beliefs, basic worldview, and the ritual practices of people.

Cultural practices are accepted ways of doing things in a particular group. These are often based in social assumptions or values a society places on certain things. A cultural practice can become a tradition if it is passed on from parents to children, until it becomes an acceptable practice in that culture.

Gender – the meanings attached by a society to what it means to be a 'real' man or a 'real' woman, including:

- correct behaviours
- appropriate roles in the home, work place, church and public life
- expressions of emotions
- expressions of one's sexuality and sexual preferences.

Gender is not the same as '**sex**', which just refers to biological differences as men or women.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) – any act violent act between men and women that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm, whether occurring in public or private life.

Gender justice is when a society (or church or family) is organised in such a way that all members have equal chances to succeed, can participate fully in all aspects of life, and live dignified, fulfilled lives.

Gender injustice happens when women are prevented from living freely and are dominated and controlled by men. Men who do not meet the criteria for, being 'real men' can also suffer gender injustice.

Gender Order – ways in which society selects and defines which ideas about gender should regulate social behaviour.

Gender Roles – expected duties and responsibilities, rights and privileges of men and women/boys and girls dictated by cultural and social factors and influenced by religious, economic, and political systems.

Gender Relations – organised social practice that determines the relationships between men and women, whether in personal life, inter-personal interaction or a larger scale. These can be between individuals or organised in social structures. These relations are related to power, production, feelings, or symbols.

Heterosexism – attitudes, bias, and discrimination in favour of opposite-sex sexuality and relationships, including the assumption that everyone is heterosexual or that opposite-sex attractions and relationships are the norm and therefore superior.

Homophobia – fear of, discrimination and bias against gays and lesbians (men and women in same-sex relationships).

Masculinity – culturally defined characteristics of what it means to be a man– as understood by individuals or whole communities or societies.

Masculinities – concept that there is no one pattern of masculinity that is found everywhere, because different cultures and periods of history construct gender and masculinities differently.

Patriarchy is a social system where it is normal for power to be in the hands of men: in the family and home; in society; in church and religion; in politics and in the economy.

It is not necessarily the deliberate control of individual men over individual women (although in some cases it may be). It is mostly about individuals working within a dominant world view which predetermines how much power they have in their relationships and their lives.

Most societies in the world are patriarchal.

Power – This book mainly makes use of the definition of power that is mostly used in the world – i.e. – **power-over**. This refers to the ability to make other people do what you want them to do or believe what you want them to believe; this may be because of physical strength, or because of a higher position in society or an institution, or because traditional beliefs give one type of person more power over another. **Power-under** is a negative term, used to explain the destructive use of power (usually power-over) by individuals and groups who are suffering from unresolved trauma and emotional damage, which leads them to 'act out' defensively or aggressively – mostly against the people who are closest to them or powerless and not objectively a threat at all.

