

Tool 8: Learning from each other: the Zambian story



“Throughout the centuries, the voice of Jesus about equal value and equal respect for both women and men has been echoed by many people in the church... Sometimes they have been heard ..., sometimes they have either not been heard at all or have been silenced.”

One Body³⁶

³⁶One Body (forthcoming in 2014). *Human Dignity - Inherent in every Human Being: Towards gender equality, including young people and overcoming abuse*. <http://www.norgeskristnerad.no>

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This tool sums up the main milestones and lessons from Zambia's remarkable gender transformation journey between 2007 and 2013. It is presented here as a good practice model, for others to learn from.

Where did it all start?

In 2006 when Norwegian Church Aid first suggested the idea of gender audits in churches, ecumenical organisations in Zambia, Malawi and South Africa rose to the challenge.

The first Zambian audit was completed in 2007. However, the sample was not seen as representative enough, and so the Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ) undertook a second audit in 2008. The second audit presented an opportunity



Leaders of EFZ, CCZ, and the Zambia Episcopal Conference sign declaration committing member churches to working for gender justice and reducing GBV. Source: Norwegian Church Aid www.kirkensnodhjelp.no

to directly address the concerns of its member churches. It gave the Christian Council in Zambia (CCZ) a good understanding of where its member churches stood regarding gender issues.

The recommendations from the second audit led to the adoption of an action plan in 2009.

Jesus exhorts us to “read the signs of the times” (Matthew 16:4) and act wisely. The church mother bodies in Zambia, together with NCA Zambia’s Gender Programme, read the signs of the times, and began a journey that is both inspirational and an example to the Church elsewhere in Africa.

Margaret Machila, who was NCA Zambia Programme Manager until July 2010, sums up the journey as follows:

“What was key to our process is that as a team, we had a unity of purpose. We knew exactly what we wanted and worked towards it. We made strategic choices...While historically the time was right, which could be called ‘historical accident’, but I prefer to refer to it as “prophetic” or “divine” guidance. As one reflects back on the journey, there are clearly critical incidences that inspired us. We learnt from positive experiences. But we also learnt from what you may call ‘negatives’ and turned these around as ‘challenges’ as we looked for alternate ways of addressing various scenarios.... Oddbjorn Flem then NCA Country Representative, also created an enabling role because he allowed creativity in the process of working through partnerships.”

In September 2013 the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action (PACSA) was asked by NCA to visit Zambia and meet some of the main actors to listen to their various perspectives on the story. The impact of the gender audits is hard to quantify, and many people and other factors contributed to the milestones on this journey.

The most important outcome of the audits has been the open conversations that have taken place between church members and leaders from very different church traditions, and their visionary joint actions. Gender is now talked about quite often even among ordinary church people.

This tool tells the story in short, and tries to give a picture of how complex and difficult the journey has been.

It also draws out some lessons from the successes and struggle of the Zambian journey that might help churches and mother bodies in other countries map their own journeys.

Milestones^{37 38}

"I remember the past 6 years almost as a maze of struggle and uncertainties. Being a veteran in the work, I appreciate the little gains, in the Church at a political level. This is essential – to build on the little gains." Rev Suzanne Matala the General Secretary of the Council of Churches in Zambia

2007 – NCA study of a small sample of six national churches, commissioned by NCA South Africa in collaboration with NCA Zambia and undertaken by Women and Law in Southern Africa.

2008 – Gender audit study of 15 member churches of CCZ, commissioned by CCZ

2008-9 – Launch and presentation of the study at joint meetings of the three Mother Bodies, the Gender in Development Division (GIDD) of the Zambian Government and NCA's Gender Programme.

A Partner Representative Committee was established that developed a common position on gender for all their member churches in Zambia. It was a collaboration between Government, NGOs and churches.

2009 – Publication of a Joint Gender Document by the Church in Zambia: The Voice of the Church on Matters of Gender in Zambia: Addressing ourselves to Issues of Gender injustice and Gender Based Violence, written by the 3 main Mother Bodies in Zambia: The Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and the Zambian Episcopal Conference (ZEC).

The 40-page document has a biblical and theological foundation, and is based on international, regional and Zambian Human Rights and Gender rights instruments and constitutional documents, as well as on a situational analysis. It **acknowledges** that:

- *"Gender Inequality (GI) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) hinge on a violation of human rights, leading to instability in the home, community, and the nation at large"* (pg. 14)
- *"GI and GBV are widespread in Zambia, and manifest in a variety of social and cultural practices as well as economic deprivation at all levels: family, community and society at large"* (pg. 9)
- *"[I]n some cases, the Churches have been insensitive to Gender Based Violence, by either providing fertile ground for men's abuse of power within their families through some wrong interpretations of Scriptures of maintaining Structures that are insensitive to issues of gender and power imbalances"* (pg. 1)

³⁷ Details about specific steps taken internally by CCZ, ZEC and EFZ are omitted in this summary. The full report is available from PACSA (consultancy@pacsa.org.za) and NCA (gendersa@nca.no).

³⁸ It is important to acknowledge that various church bodies, including Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), had already begun conversations on Gender Based Violence, and had produced a draft booklet on GBV in 2006. However, this story begins with the 2007 NCA-funded audits, because these were done by churches in other countries then as well.

Rooted in a spirit of **repentance**, the partners **committed themselves** to:

"promoting the attainment of gender equity and gender equality within our Church structures and the society in which we all live" (pg. 1)

A summary of this Declaration was **signed** by the leadership of the three Mother Bodies, jointly with officials of the Zambian Government in 2009 and is displayed in the Gender Office at CCZ as a visible sign of commitment by churches in Zambia to work with the rest of society towards attaining gender justice and ending gender based violence.

2009- A multi-sectoral Gender Forum and GBV Partnership (the Citizen's Forum) was formed during this year. The Non-Governmental Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOC), a 100-member based NGO which is the umbrella body in the area of gender in Zambia, was a central actor. Rev Suzanne Matale of CCZ became its Vice Chairperson, which placed CCZ in a strategic position in the whole national gender transformation process. This Citizen Forum led the 16 Days of Activism during the year, and publicised and workshopped the Churches' Declaration in a number of forums and communities.

2010 - CCZ, EFZ distributed thousands of copies of the Declaration and gender pamphlets amongst their member churches.

2011 The publication of the Zambian Government's Institutional framework for Mainstreaming Gender in the Nation, coordinated and led by the Minister of Gender and Child Development (MGCD). This ensured that gender would be addressed and mainstreamed through a number of structures at all levels of government and civil society: Cabinet, Parliament, Gender Focal Point Persons and gender subcommittees in every line Ministry, Provincial and District Administration, and civil society partners.

2009- 11 - Joint Church Mother Bodies' development of a training curriculum for key church stakeholders (clergy, lay leaders and youth), which was launched in late 2011 and has been gradually adopted by seminaries of different churches.

2009-13 - Ongoing workshops for women, men and clergy in the churches and youth - using the basic curriculum, and a specific curriculum on GBV developed together with NCA Zambia. CCZ, EFZ and ZEC have all used the curriculum in their programmes, and some have been translated.

2010 - Formal adoption and launch of CCZ Gender Policy. EFZ Gender policy developed.

2011 - The newly elected PF-led Government created a National Ministry of Gender and Child Development to which Ms Edwidge Mutale was appointed as the first

Permanent Secretary. She was until then on the NCA staff and engaged in the gender audit process. So she was the ideal partner in Government to the churches' process.

- 2011 - 12th April. TheZambian Anti Gender Based Violence Act No.1 of 2011 came into Law.
 - Publication of stories of women theologians and clergy.

- 2011 - 12 - Joint 16 Days Campaign against violence against women and children – the 3 Mother Bodies, State, and NGO coalition: “Create peace in the home for peace in Zambia. Let’s stand together to end violence against women and children.”

- 2012 - “Women in Governance” (WIG) programme established by Zambian Episcopal Conference (ZEC).

- 2012- Formal adoption and launch of the EFZ Gender Workplace Policy and HIV Policy which includes a Child Protection Policy to ensure that the EFZ prioritises safety and life-giving relationships.

- 2012-13 - Church sector contributed to the revision of Zambian Constitution – as part of Civil Society Forum.

- 2013- CCZ embarked on a follow up gender audit of its 24 member churches to ensure that changes in the area of gender justice are monitored.

- 2013 - Ms Edwidge Mutale, who had been the church collective’s main strategic partner in the national Zambian government, was transferred to Central Province. (This poses new challenges to the church and civil society sectors to find ways to build on what has been achieved for further collaboration.)

- Sep 2013 - PACSA is commissioned by NCA to meet with the Zambian partners and capture their experiences as a Model of Good Practice.

What makes Zambia special?

Talking about gender transformation is never easy, and in Zambia like in any country, there is still a lot of resistance. But the fact that it is being talked about, and that churches from all traditions are willing to begin to make some changes, is very exciting.



Reasons for the success of the Zambian process

One of the most important reasons for Zambia's success is that the three Mother Bodies had a history of working together and so trusted each other to grapple with something as complex as gender. Secondly, the process was driven at the highest level of leadership amongst the three Mother Bodies, and thirdly, funding was made available for much of the groundwork (from Norwegian Church Aid).



One of the Zambian success factors has been unity of purpose.
 Source: Council of Churches in Zambia

The other success factors flowed from this situation:

- The vision for gender transformation as an important part of social justice and national development, meant it appealed to all stakeholders;
- Gender was defined as including women and men, and leaders from different traditions accepted that they would work in slightly different ways - so everyone felt included and that their small steps were valued; The vision was mapped out into a clear and practical implementation plan and a Declaration of shared commitment;
- The work aimed at changing policy as well as raising general awareness raising;
- The whole process was based on a joint training curriculum, which was also translated into local languages and adapted for different groups. This meant that the different church bodies had a clear shared message to communicate with their member churches. This message was built on a strong theoretical foundation that went from helping women cope better to making deeper social changes;
- Government departments, NGOs and the church mother bodies stood together and spoke with one voice, which meant more people took their message seriously;

- The process was not allowed to be held up by those who resisted it, and the leadership simply worked with those who caught the vision, which influenced others too;
- Where there was good progress monitoring, like in the EFZ programme.

Finally, those leading the process are clear that gender transformation is an ongoing journey, and so they have accepted that not everyone will go at the same pace. They have also built in progress monitoring at times, to learn from their mistakes and improve as they have been going along.

External factors that contributed to the success

The participants at the 18th September 2013 reflective meeting on the Zambia journey agreed that perhaps a contributing factor underpinning all the others has been that culturally women have always been strong and resilient and were in the forefront of the fight for independence. Zambia is both patrilineal and matrilineal, and so women are more able to take the struggle forward with confidence.

Historically, the timing was perfect. The Zambian Government had just signed the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development in 2008, and it had begun to introduce new legislation on gender based violence, which had never existed in this form before. Some key figures within the CCZ member churches took part in negotiating the instrument at national and regional level. At the same time, local government officials have supported local church activities, and have then worked well together to support victims of GBV.

There were a number of key NGOs and NGO coalitions that were engaging with Government to take up gender issues more seriously and to take up the challenge that the SADC Protocol presented. This not only ensured that the voice of the faith based sector was heard in these wider national forums, but at the same time, it brought the conversation home – and opened the way for CCZ to address these issues from a human rights and social justice perspective. A number of the churches have had longstanding involvement in social justice work, and had a clear theological basis for this. This lent a certain credibility to the gender justice discourse, and made it easier to bring it into the churches, given that church people were being exposed to it in the public space already.

Politically, Zambia is an overtly Christian country, so naturally collaboration between the government and the faith based sector is more possible – CCZ does not cooperate blindly with Government on all issues of Government, but only where government's agenda and CCZ's agenda find clear common ground, such as with respect to gender justice.

Reflecting on the Journey

During the September 2013 follow up meeting, PACSA asked the partners to reflect on four key outcomes of their journey so far: setting a common gender justice agenda for the churches in Zambia, gender conscientisation / capacity building to reduce risk of gender injustice, discrimination and violence, education and inclusive spirituality and structural changes. These outcomes were then to be analysed in terms of the following questions:

- **What was the situation in 2007, before the first gender audit study?**
- **What is the situation in 2013?**
- **How did we get from there to here?**

1. Setting a common gender justice agenda for the churches in Zambia

“Transformation has begun in earnest – before it was cosmetic. We can see real change. Numbers have been increased and leaders are engaging around gender.”

What was the situation in 2007?	What is the situation in 2013?	How did we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A history of collaboration existed and conversations were taking place possibly because the Zambian government signed the SADC Gender Protocol in 2008 ■ The Zambian government began consultations on the Gender Based Violence Bill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Joint campaigns, prayer sessions, training materials ■ Workshops on gender, the SADC Protocol and masculinities ■ The three Mother Bodies have recommitted themselves to the joint Gender Agenda ■ High participation in the Gender training by both women and men ■ The numbers of women clergy in some churches have grown radically, showing a mind shift amongst senior church leaders ■ Churches are more open to report GBV cases and taking action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Joint Theological Declaration in 2009 precipitated by the launch of the 2008 CCZ Gender Audit ■ 2011 Anti Gender Based Violence Act – the three Mother Bodies partnered with the Ministry of Gender and Child Development to offer training ■ The churches made submissions on gender rights to government during the process to revise the Zambian Constitution

2. Gender conscientisation / capacity building to reduce risk of gender injustice, discrimination and violence

What was the situation in 2007?	What is the situation in 2013?	How did we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resistance to gender transformation amongst church leadership, and women's organisations and church members. ■ Gender' was seen as a 'women's issue' ■ Gender – seen as a challenge to tradition and culture – a western concept and un-African ■ Activists were sometimes too aggressive ■ GBV was blamed on women no longer respecting their husbands because of gender equality ■ Frequent misuse and narrow interpretation of Scriptures to support patriarchy ■ Very little gender advocacy (only women's organisations and some NGOs) ■ No advocacy in the church – silence on gender issues, silence and no reporting gender based violence ■ Women were quiet and accepted the status quo ■ No capacity building and lack of training material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Less resistance, improved understanding and a greater openness in churches to talk about gender ■ A better understanding that it affects Zambians and is not just a Western idea ■ Perceptions that gender is a threat to tradition/culture is still quite strong ■ Gender is still perceived negatively by some churches, but less so (eg. some church leaders still blame the increase of GBV on women being empowered) ■ Interpretation of Scriptures is slowly changing, though this is harder for some church traditions ■ A lot of advocacy and openness about gender based violence in particular 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Government signed the SADC Gender Protocol, embarked on a Gender Policy and a Gender Based Violence Act, and all this opened up the conversation ■ Creative strategies to open the conversation in churches ■ The 2009 joint Church Gender Declaration ■ Training materials and train-the-trainer in 2010 and shared Gender curriculum in 2011 meant there was a standardised approach for use in theological training institutions as well as informal training workshops ■ Ongoing sensitisation in churches, grappling directly with those who were unwilling to talk about gender ■ Inclusive language to talk about gender, so both men and women are drawn in ■ Setting up local GBV task teams that training and lead actions locally, so gender awareness is taking root at all levels



3: Education and inclusive spirituality.

What was the situation in 2007?	What is the situation in 2013?	How did we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Catholic church reports that it has always promoted girl child education, as seen in the number of schools built over years, including the numerous primary schools which were taken away by the Government in the 1970s ■ Pregnant teenage girls were expelled from their schools and most churches ■ Few women attended theological education, and gender was not included in any aspect of any curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ General Education: ■ Most churches and church schools continue to expel pregnant girls. . The Catholic church transfers them to another school ■ There is no topic on gender in school syllabi, but the Scripture Union and Ministry of Education are working towards an agreement ■ The teaching of Home Economics in boys' schools is slow ■ The promotion of literacy classes has started in some churches ■ Theological Education and Spirituality ■ Church leaders are encouraged to allow women to go for trainings (theological and other), and some offer financial support. But it is not easy for them to be accepted ■ Improved understanding of a definition of 'gender' from a Biblical and social perspective ■ Some gender manuals have been translated into the vernacular ■ Seminaries and informal sensitisation programmes in churches include activities in gender sensitisation for clergy, male and female lay leaders, couples leadership, and use of radio stations to raise gender debates and mobilise community participation in International Women's Day and 16 Days of Activism against GBV events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Government's re-entry policy, which allows girl children not to stop school because of pregnancy has forced churches to re-think their policies on pregnant teenage girls in schools and churches ■ The 2009 Joint Declaration on Gender addresses matters of education and theological education specifically ■ The 3 Mother Bodies address issues of theological training with their member churches ■ The joint Gender Curriculum launched in 2011 is beginning to be used in some seminaries and is used in most informal workshops and sensitisation processes

4: Changes in leadership and governance

What was the situation in 2007?	What is the situation in 2013?	How did we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Very few churches ordained women as pastors and priests ■ Most senior leadership structures were either restricted to men, or no one even thought to elect women into leadership ■ Specific Scripture texts were used to justify this ■ Women did cooking and cleaning for the men's leadership and decision-making meetings ■ Youth were excluded from senior leadership forums and so had no place to bring in new ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ More male clergy promote women clergy and encourage the election of women to lay leadership posts ■ EFZ reports that many churches specifically include youth in senior structures now ■ Women have been promoted to serve Eucharist as lay leaders in the Catholic Church. However, some churches still struggle with this ■ More women are ordained in some of the Evangelical and CCZ churches ■ More women appointed to serve on Executive Boards of faith based bodies ■ Increased women's participation in local gender committees ■ Lack of funding - often gender work is absorbed into other structures, but then can be forgotten ■ Both genders are invited to Gender workshops, to be inclusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Structural changes have taken place in all three of the mother bodies but not in most local churches. This has served as an example to the churches, and may have influenced some to change ■ In the mother bodies themselves, the gender desks have been changed to programmes that feed into human dignity and justice, to allow for improved gender mainstreaming ■ All three Mother Bodies have focused on building the capacity of women to take up leadership positions in a male-dominated world, and to build further awareness of gender in their churches



Summary of most important changes that have taken place

Understanding of gender

The joint standardised gender curriculum, which is used in both formal theological education and informal training of clergy, lay leaders and youth in the member churches by all three mother bodies, seems to have shifted the discourse in the churches. This may also have been influenced by the shift in the national discourse in Zambian society more widely.

Gender policies and desks

CCZ has an excellent gender policy, which serves as a blueprint to govern its internal relations as well as its approach to gender in its programme work. The Catholic Archdiocese of Lusaka is in the process of preparing a gender policy. The Zambian Episcopal Conference (ZEC) has expressed a hope that ultimately, all 11 dioceses will be guided by gender policies, or a shared gender policy. At local church level in the Catholic Church, many informal gender policies have been introduced in a number of churches, and more women are members of church councils and even executive committees.

The Catholic organisation Caritas Zambia has a Gender policy for the organisation. It has also developed a discussion document on gender in the Catholic Church and its advocacy for gender justice in Zambian society.



Marching for gender justice during the signing of the Zambian Church Declaration on Gender Injustice and Gender Based Violence

Source: Norwegian Church Aid www.kirkensnodhjelp.no

Some churches now have gender policies, but these were not available for study. So it is not clear how any of the Churches in Zambia have formally committed to transforming or if they have a plan of action to speak into gender justice debates in society.

Roles of women's and men's organisations in the Mother Bodies

The Anglican Church in Malawi has a Gender Desk, and it works closely with the Mothers' Union to raise gender issues amongst its members.

Leadership and ordination

There has been some progress in this area but there is still a long way to go. There are still churches who do not ordain women. People's attitudes to women ministers are not always positive, and they have little chance to minister in new ways. This is ironical, given that most church members are women!

Some stories from Zambian women clergy are included in Tool 9 on Leadership.

Aluta continua

Silence

There are still many gender issues that the church is quiet about. This seems to be because church leaders find it hard to accept the realities that people in their communities are struggling with. It is true, of course, that there are no easy answers, but there is a need for more voices to speak up and raise these issues. Sweeping them under the carpet means that the churches' ministries are limited to personal salvation and they miss the chance to serve the needs of the poor and marginalised in practical ways.

Abortion

This is not debated at all in most churches, and is assumed to be a cut and dried issue. However, some churches have tried to offer support to mothers in distress to enable them to keep their babies. They thus recognise that it is not just a moral but also a pastoral matter.

Condoms

There seems to be greater openness, at least for married couples where one person is HIV+. But there is still the belief that telling youth about condoms encourages them to have sex, so many youth have to go elsewhere for support.



Sexual identities and minorities

This is not addressed at all, and where it is, all the Mother Bodies speak out against acceptance of homosexuality. CCZ says that they do not want to address this issue yet, because they worry that then churches will once again close down and refuse to address any matters related to gender.

Gender Based Violence

This is talked about more often in churches, and churches hold community marches and make public statements condemning it. More churches seem also to be reporting that this is happening in their churches. But the sad thing is that when women are being abused, they still find it hard to tell anyone in their church, because of the cultural taboos making it hard for them to talk about it. And some people reported that they knew of men who participated in marches who continue to abuse their wives at home. So it seems to have stayed at the level of talking about GBV in general, but this talk has mostly not stopped domestic abuse or helped victims come forward.

It is not clear that this battle will ever be won without the churches being willing to go to the root cause: giving men too much power over women makes abuse more possible, and not confronting abusive cultural practices also leaves too much room for women to be abused. But it is good that GBV is covered in the joint core gender curriculum and GBV workshops.

HIV and AIDS and gender

Good HIV programmes exist in churches, HIV and AIDS is talked about more in churches, and there is less stigma. But no one seems to be making the links between Gender based violence and HIV and AIDS, even in the core gender curriculum. This may be because Zambia's 13% HIV infection rate is not as high as in other countries. But still, if these links are not made, the battle against HIV is unlikely to be won in Zambia.

Contradictions and unresolved issues

There is clear evidence that gender and gender based violence have become recognised as key social issues that need to be addressed across the nation, in political, civil society and religious sectors. The main strength of the process in Zambia is that the church, government and NGO sectors have been able to put aside any differences they may have about other matters, and work together as a coalition/s to address different aspects of Gender and GBV.

This offers a good practice model that is an example to other nations.

At the same time, national GBV statistics are amongst the worst in the SADC region. The SADC Gender Protocol Barometer of 2013 (pg 73, 166, 171), reports that Zambia has the lowest numbers of women in all spheres of Government. It also reports that the gender based violence

figures for 4 of the Provinces are the highest in Southern Africa.³⁹ This shows that the small gains made in shifting mindsets in Zambia are just scraping the surface, and that it is very urgent to mobilise more men and women.

As with any struggle for fundamental social change, this is a gradual process of bringing about change in social and cultural assumptions, and keeping watch that old habits and norms are continually challenged. A recent statement by Zambia's Minister of Defence brought home that there is still much work to be done. He said in public that a little bit of wife beating was acceptable, to show one's love for one's wife. In the church too, there are still many policies and doctrines that have not been transformed. The Bible continues to be misused by some people to teach gender inequality, or even pave the way for gender based violence.

Even in churches where women have been included in leadership structures or been ordained, there is still a subtle resistance in some quarters, almost as if it was a necessary evil to comply with government demands, but it is not understood as a necessary part of building the structures of the church and promoting integrated community development. One woman pastor shared:

"I was visited recently by a group of male lay leaders, asking me how it was possible that I had performed every Sunday for the past month! I tried to explain that I had not menstruated over any weekend, but there was visible unhappiness that I might have 'defiled' the Lord's ministry!"

This shows that attitude changes take a very long time, and the gender agenda needs to continue to be mainstreamed widely in the faith based sector.

One needs to be open and creative in challenging narrow and destructive social assumptions. One idea talked about was to re-interpret the doctrines related to Jesus redeeming blood, and to use them to challenge negative stereotyping of the shedding of women's blood.

While women are encouraged in many churches to study theology and consider ordination, being ordained also carries a stigma, particularly for young women. Many young women struggle with a sense of call to ministry, because they say they know they will never get married, because men are afraid to marry female clergy, for fear that they will not be good wives, or may undermine the authority of their husbands.

This shows that there are contradictions between the gender awareness raising work of the churches and the 'kitchen party curriculum' (the marriage advice given to young men and women), which is not yet transformed. The challenge remains how to open up spaces in the domestic realm to transform the 'kitchen curriculum'.

³⁹ In the four Zambian districts of Kitwe, Mansa, Kasama and Mazabuka, as many as 90% of women surveyed had experienced GBV at some point in their lives; 90% of these had experienced intimate partner violence, and 29% were raped by a stranger. *SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, 2013*. Johannesburg: Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance.



Conflicting messages also appear in the law. For example, in court a husband charged with abuse can say that he beat his wife because she provoked him, and the judge can use this to reduce his sentence. But a wife cannot use the same argument to have her sentence reduced.

Some people in the church (both men and women) dismiss the gender lobby as a group of elite women who are bent on destroying marriages. Many women stigmatise themselves as women. For example in about a radio talk show about a husband's unfaithfulness in marriage, not a single woman called in, but a number of men had many opinions about women's roles and how women should conduct themselves. One went so far as to say that the woman should not have been questioning the man, and that it was probably her attitude that was making him sleep around! No woman called in to contradict him.

The Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) annual reports point to specific priorities to tackle some recurring obstacles to change, which are worth adapting and adopting for local application:

- Improve capacity building for clergy and lay people to deeply explore the Scriptures in relation to gender, to go beyond superficial interpretations and draw out key gospel principles;
- Simplify and translate key gender concepts, so that they can take root in local culture and experiences;
- Continue to step up leadership training for women, and conscientisation of male leaders to step back and allow women to lead in ways that may not be the same as the men;
- Improve monitoring and evaluation, capture changes through stories and look out for unexpected signs of change.

Conclusion

This tool has tried to sum up the main milestones in the Zambian story, and to write up the lessons that those most directly involved have learnt on the journey. There is clearly still a long way to go. There are no instant answers. But the successes cannot be over-exaggerated and need to be celebrated. Across all the churches whose members and officials who contributed their perspectives, there is clear evidence of forward movement, and the example and leadership of the 3 Mother Bodies has offered crucial leadership in all their (varied) journeys.

What makes the Zambian story unique is the willingness of many actors, from diverse doctrinal and ideological backgrounds, to work together; and the strategic approach taken by those leading the process. This has meant that the focus has been on the work itself, not on power struggles or arguments about different opinions.

Lastly, there has also been regular and honest self-reflection of the main actors, who continue to meet and monitor progress regularly (at senior and implementer levels). This has meant that they have been able to be flexible and change strategy as needed, and they have not lost focus. This all takes extraordinary leadership and vision, sacrifice and humility.

