



TALKING GENDER

For CIDSE as a network of Catholic social justice organisations, the gender concept refers to the socially-constructed roles, attributes, activities and opportunities that a given society considers appropriate for women and men. This shapes the relations between women and men, and affects their access to resources, health, education and decision-making. The origins of gender inequality are not individual women and men but the systems which determine gender roles.

A TOOLKIT FOR THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Recognising the need for capacity and confidence building at the intersection of gender and faith, CIDSE has published the “Believe in Change” toolkit in English, Spanish and French. This is a basic resource to understand and approach gender equality for the staff of church organisations – particularly the Catholic church – and those who intend to work with them. The case-studies and exercises address the reality and experiences of the organisations and actors with whom CIDSE’s members and partners work, mainly in the Global South.



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BELIEVE IN CHANGE

A TOOLKIT FOR THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
 TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY



THE CATHOLIC MANDATE FOR GENDER JUSTICE

Catholic Social Teaching is founded on respect for the dignity of humanity and the common good. The implementation of these principles requires that women and men are able to fully exercise all of their human rights. There is systemic inequality worldwide between women and men resulting from attitudes, practices and structures that are discriminatory on the basis of gender.

Given the position of influence of church organisations and faith leaders, they have the opportunity to truly inspire long-lasting, faith-based change that tackles all forms of inequality and injustice based on gender discrimination.

“It is important for the Catholic Church to work on gender inequalities, not only because NGOs and governments have put into their constitutions that all people should be treated equally, but because it is part and parcel of our faith. All people are created in the image of God and we are equal before God.”

Bishop Martin Mtumbuka,
Bishop of the Diocese of Karongo,
Commission of Justice and Peace, Malawi, 2013



“Gender is a topic that deserves to be discussed with intention. Tasks can be better divided between men and women for their development and dignity as people. This toolkit considers that men and women should be treated equally in dignity, opportunity and respect.”

Fr. Samuel de Jesus,
Symposium of Episcopal Conferences
of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM)

A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR REAL CHANGE

This toolkit can support organisations and communities to question, challenge and transform gender inequalities they experience in their own lives, workspace or neighborhood. It includes concrete tools for facilitating dialogue to open the pathway for understanding and acting. Some group contexts for discussion could include:

- Staff gender training;
- Exchanging with faith leaders;
- Display of gender-related exhibitions in your organisation.

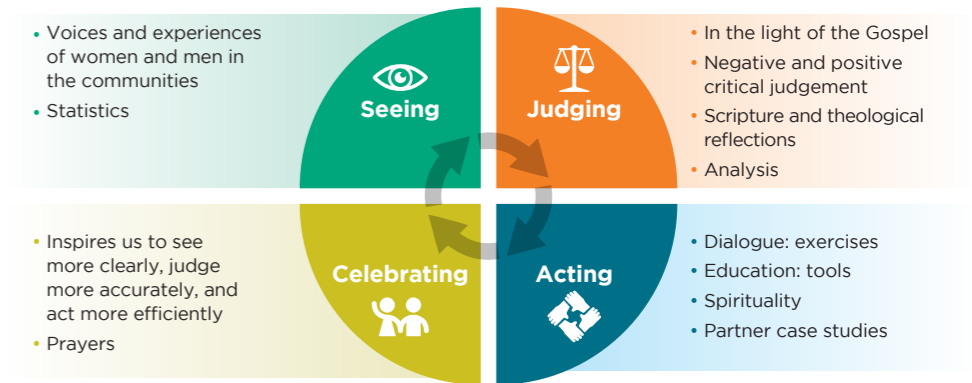
ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AT ALL LEVELS

To address gender equality at different scales, the toolkit is divided into chapters that can be read on their own to provide approaches targeting different actors and their potentials for change.

CHAPTER 1	CHAPTER 2	CHAPTER 3	CHAPTER 4	ANNEXE
Individual If you are interested in learning about successful development interventions to raise women's confidence and awareness, read this chapter.	Family If you are looking for entry points that focus specifically on family dynamics and household relationships this chapter may be especially useful.	Community If you are mainly interested in working with communities to change discriminatory social and cultural norms, this chapter focuses on community interventions.	Society If you want to explore working on gender equality issues at the societal level see this chapter, as it discusses levels of change at national level.	Practical tools, exercise handouts and suggested training schedules.
Practical tools and theological reflections				

A FAITH-BASED METHODOLOGY

Each of the four chapters follows the same methodology used in *Laudato Si'*, the pastoral cycle of 'Seeing, Judging, Acting and Celebrating'. This can guide communities through a process of change: observing the presence of gender inequalities, analysing these from the perspective of faith, resolving to act on our values, and reflecting on actions taken. In the annexe you can find the suggested schedules for trainings that indicate how to initiate this process.



The toolkit has already been used to conduct gender trainings with the staff of international faith-based organisations and with local communities in Africa and Asia.

“The toolkit was very valuable for us as young people to approach the subject of gender equality, as we face the rapidly-changing reality in our countries. It's true many changes are happening in support of women, but there is still a lot left to do to achieve equality in responsibilities and rights for men and women. The role women play in society is very important and needs to be valued.”

Glendy Elizabeth Fernandez Davila,
Coordinator of the International Movement
of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth (MIJARC) Peru

