

Gender Justice Workshop



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How to use this resource

Welcome to your Christian Aid Ireland Gender Justice Workshop pack. In here you will find all the resources you need to run a Gender Justice Workshop that will challenge you to think about what gender justice is, why it is important and what we can do to move towards it.

The workshop is aimed to be interactive and engaging. You will find numerous resources below that you can 'mix and match' to suit your group. However, we do feel it is vitally important that we spend time listening to the voices of our partners. Please make sure you include their stories in your workshop.

The session outline below is for a ninety minute session, however you can take out elements or add in more if you wish to decrease or increase the length of the session. You may wish to involve others in your group to lead different parts of the session. We have also included post-session questionnaires with the workshop. We would be grateful if you could return these to us after you have used the resource, as this will help to improve our resources in the future.

'To reflect before God on gender is to think about what it means that we are male and female... it is to ask what it would mean to experience our being gendered as gift rather than danger, a source of life and hope rather than of oppression or fear.'

Rev Dr Susan Durber (European President of the World Council of Churches and former Christian Aid head of theology)

Christian Aid Ireland works in some of the poorest countries in the world to tackle the causes and consequences of poverty and injustice. We are key part of ACT Alliance, the worldwide ecumenical network for emergency relief.

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Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
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90 MINUTE SESSION OUTLINE

Welcome (5 mins)

Introduction to Christian Aid Ireland (5 mins)

Opening Worship and Prayers (5 mins)

Activity (20 mins)

Hearing from our partners (20 mins)

Time in Scripture (20 mins)

Action (10 mins)

Closing Prayers (5 mins)

Welcome

You are very welcome to our workshop on Gender Justice.

Gender Justice seeks to systemically redistribute power, opportunities and access for all people regardless of gender, and recognises that until we do, we will be unable to achieve equitable, sustainable, resilient and thriving societies.

At the very beginning we want to highlight that gender injustice, including gender-based violence, is not just something that happens in the distance but can be a real and lived reality for many in our own society, towns and churches. As we talk about this, we recognise that for some people here, we may be discussing very difficult topics. We want this to be a safe place. Please don't feel under pressure to participate in discussions if you find them uncomfortable and if you just want to take a break feel free to do that. And please, as we listen and chat, be careful with the words we use. May we all engage in the activities outlined from a well-meaning place, a place where we seek to listen, understand and sense the Spirit's movement. In this workshop we will look at some of the causes of and responses to the inequalities that exist for women in many of the countries where Christian Aid works and what can be done to support women in communities, to bring about change that will promote dignity and hope for the future.

We will look at stories of some of the women Christian Aid Ireland has the privilege of working alongside, some of the work they are doing through their partners and some information which may be helpful regarding Gender Justice. There will be a few interactive elements in the session so be prepared to break into groups and discuss together, hopefully to discover ways that we can better understand and support all who are caught in this cycle of injustice.

Netsai Kateera, is a mother of three from Zimbabwe. She received equipment and training in welding and metalwork from Christian Aid's partner providing an alternative source of income for her and her family.

Credit: Christian Aid / David Brazier



Introduction to Christian Aid Ireland

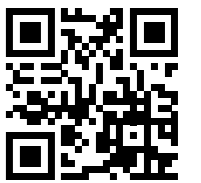
Christian Aid recognises that at the heart of the causes of poverty is the unequal distribution of power and unfair abuses of power. One of the most pervasive inequalities both locally and globally is that between men and women. For this reason, Gender Justice is at the heart of the work of Christian Aid, seeking to ensure that women and girls can have access to essential human rights such as education, health, work and shelter. We want to ensure that their voices are heard and respected in their communities and that all are able to live life to the full, free from fear and protected from any form of violence.

Across our world, women disproportionately bear the burden of poverty. As they are often the main carers for their families, on many occasions their own needs are placed last. They will possibly have more limited options for work, forcing them into labour where they may be vulnerable to exploitation, and access to education is often curtailed due to circumstances outside their control.

AT CHRISTIAN AID IRELAND



We Stand against poverty



Optional video: We Are Christian Aid Ireland
Scan the QR code or visit: <https://caid.ie/CAI>

Opening Worship and Prayers

a) Before beginning, inform people of how this prayer will work and make sure they have copies of the words.

Leader: In the beginning God made the world. Made it and shaped it. Filled it with seeds and signs of fertility. Filled it with love.

Leader: All that is tender, firm, fragrant and curious

All: **God's is the hand that created you**

Leader: All that speaks, sings, cries, laughs or keeps silent

All: **God's is the hand that created you**

Leader: All that suffers, lacks or longs for an end

All: **God's is the hand that created you**

Leader: The world belongs to the Lord. The earth and all its people are His.

Amen

b) You can light a candle on a table to help the room focus.

We have come together in this quiet space, to reflect upon our lives in the light of Christ. To pray for ourselves and for others, to deepen the sense of affection and understanding we have for each other and for all people.

In between each sentence below engage the group to take a deep breath and leave a short pause.

Leader:

Be

Be still

Be still and

Be still and know

Be still and know that

Be still and know that I

Be still and know that I am

Be still and know that I am God

As we read, listen and pray, may we always be ready to encounter the God who is already and always with us. Amen

Activity

Choose one of the two activities below, each should take 15 minutes. Alternatively, if you have time, you can do both.

Following the activity, you can say or share this:

The Patriarchal system in which men are the primary authority figures is one of the most persistent causes of unequal power relations. We cannot stamp out poverty without addressing the fundamental inequalities that exist between men and women.

In the world we live in, by virtue of being a woman you are more likely to live in poverty. Men are also negatively affected by gender norms and the patriarchal system. For example, Men are pressured to conform to roles such as fighting as soldiers during war, or the stereotype that showing emotion as a man is a sign of weakness and the negative mental health impacts associated with that. But on a global scale, it is women who pay the greater price, particularly in poor countries.

When considering inequalities, we must consider intersectionality. Intersectionality refers to the ways in which systems of inequality based on gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical ability, age, and other forms of discrimination "intersect" to create different effects. For example, a black woman may experience sexism and racism, but she will experience sexism differently from a white woman and racism differently from a black man.

a) Imagine a farmer

Give everyone in your group a piece of paper and a pen and ask them to imagine a typical African farmer in their heads. Then get them to think about the questions below:

- How much land do they own?
- What crops do they grow?
- How much livestock do they have?
- How long do they work a day?
- How much do they earn?
- Where did they learn to farm?
- What are their hopes and fears?

Now get your group to imagine the farmer is a woman, if they haven't done so already. Ask the same questions again. Do their answers change from those they gave earlier? A typical African farmer is a woman. 75% of farmers in Africa are women.¹

1. International Women's Day podcast. Available at: <https://audioboom.com/boos/703280-international-women-s-day>

How much land do they own?

Probably none. An international comparison of agricultural census data shows that less than 20% of landholders are women. The situation is particularly bad in western and central Africa as well as the northeast and north Africa, where generally less than 10% of landholders are women.²

What crops do they grow and what livestock do they have?

They are often told what to grow by men and probably have no livestock.

How long do they work a day?

Longer than men. Everywhere, women devote between one to three hours more a day to housework than men; two to 10 times the amount of time a day to care (for children, the elderly, and the sick), and one to four hours less a day to market activities.³

How much do they earn?

Much less than men. In today's world, women constitute half the world's population, perform nearly two-thirds of its work hours, and receive one tenth of the world's income.⁴

Where did they learn to farm?

On the job; they probably didn't go to school. 66 million girls are out of school, globally. Two-thirds of the 774 million illiterate people in the world are women and girls.⁵ There are many reasons girls don't go to school. Families may not have the money to send all their children to school and will choose to send the boys first. In some countries, girls will be married when they are of school age; sometimes to get a dowry for the family. Others get married young 'for their protection' or because it's culturally accepted. Therefore, some parents don't want to 'waste' money on sending their daughters to school. Yet early marriage is one of the ways the cycle of poverty remains. In some cases, girls stop going to school for a week at a time each month when they have periods and don't have underwear or sanitary materials. Some girls drop out of school due to high rates of sexual and gender-based violence by their peers and teachers.

2. Christian Aid, Gender Justice for All: achieving just power relations between men and women, July 2014. Available at: www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/Reports-Gender-Strategy-July2014-J2623_tcm15-78960.pdf

3. Ibid

4. UN, Gender dimensions of the global crisis and their impact on poverty. Available at: www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/meetings/egm10/documents/Nandal%20paper.pdf

5. UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report, Youth and skills: Putting education to work, 2012. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf>

What are their hopes and fears?

Globally, adolescent girls and young women (between 15 and 24 years of age) are twice as likely to be at risk of HIV infection compared to boys and young men in the same age group.⁶

75% of AIDS cases in sub-Saharan Africa – the region hardest hit by the disease – are women and girls.⁷

In many nations, violence against women is perceived as acceptable or justifiable. In a single year, an estimated 150 million girls are victims of sexual violence.⁸

The number one cause of death for girls aged 15-19 is childbirth.⁹

A child born to a literate mother is 50% more likely to survive past the age of five.¹⁰

Gender inequality in Ireland:

Although many aspects of gender equality have improved in recent decades there is still gender inequality in Ireland.

On average women in Ireland have lower monthly earnings and are at higher risk of poverty than men. They are more likely to have caring responsibilities for children or grandchildren, those who are elderly or people with disabilities. On average women spend more time doing cooking and / or housework every day and are less likely to be involved in sporting, cultural or leisure activities outside of their home. Women are also less well represented in parliament, regional assemblies and on the boards of large companies.¹¹

6. See note 2.

7. UNAIDS, Report on the Global Aids Epidemic, 2010. Available at: www.unaids.org/globalreport/Global_report.htm

8. UNIFEM, The Facts: Violence against Women & the Millennium Development Goals. Available at: www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Media/Publications/UNIFEM/EVAWkit_02_VAWandMDGs_en.pdf

9. World Health Organization, Adolescent pregnancy. Available at: www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs364/en/

10. UNESCO, Education Counts Towards the Millennium Development Goals, 2011. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001902/190214e.pdf>

11. Gender Equality Index 2023, https://eige.europa.eu/modules/custom/eige_gei/app/content/downloads/factsheets/IE_2023_factsheet.pdf

b) The Power Walk

Explain that you will read out a story that has several questions in it. The answers to the questions are either yes or no. If they believe the answer is yes for them, after reading the role card, they should take a step forward.

If they believe the answer is no, they take a step backwards. If they are unsure, they stay where they are. Each person will have to judge themselves what the answer is to each question.

Conclusion

After the Power Walk game has been completed, get the group to review what happened. Who answered yes to all the questions? Any women? Who didn't say yes at all? Why? The Power Walk illustrates the need for gender equality.

Power Walk Story

Read aloud the following:

We are in Makeni, Sierra Leone – a country in West Africa. It is the fourth largest city in the country and is a major commercial, educational, transportation and economic centre. The city has a population of just over 110,000. Christian Aid partner AAA (Accountability for all) is holding a meeting in the town hall to discuss how much the local government spends on public services like schools and hospitals and what it means to citizens. They placed notices around the town, at churches, the marketplace and town square to let people know the time and place of the meeting. They are encouraging everyone to attend.

Power Walk Questions

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------|
| 1. | Can you read the notice? | Yes/No |
| 2. | They announced the meeting details on the radio. Do you own a radio or did you hear the announcement? | Yes/No |
| 3. | Elders and respected people in the community were personally invited. Did you receive an invitation? | Yes/No |
| 4. | The meeting is held at 7.30pm - after people have finished work or their daily chores. It gets dark at 7pm. Can you leave your house to attend the meeting? | Yes/No |
| 5. | There are steps up to the front door of the building. Do you enter? | Yes/No |
| 6. | There are a limited number of chairs near the front. Do you sit on one? | Yes/No |
| 7. | An attendance sheet is sent around for people to sign. Do you sign it? | Yes/No |
| 8. | After the first speaker has finished speaking, people are asked for comments or questions. Do you speak? | Yes/No |
| 9. | A vote is taken on whether or not to form a budget monitoring committee. Do you vote? | Yes/No |
| 10. | The vote is passed in favour of establishing a committee. They are seeking volunteers to go on the committee. Do you volunteer? | Yes/No |
| 11. | An election then takes place as more people volunteered than were necessary. Do you get elected? | Yes/No |

Role cards

Cut out the role cards and give each participant one card so that everyone has a different role. (you can photocopy these pages)

Make sure the participants do not show their cards to others at this point.

You are a man. You are the village chief. You live in the best house in the village and are among the wealthiest. You are a member of the main political party and you influence your community on how to vote. No one from outside can come into the community without your prior consent.

You are a woman, taking care of your family alone. Your husband died last year of suspected AIDS but you don't know because he was never tested or received treatment. You are now raising five children alone. You never went to school and you cannot read or write. Your children don't go to school anymore either as they must work to help you support the family.

You are 16, pregnant and single. You had to leave school when you got pregnant so now stay at home helping your mother around the house. You were good at school and are literate. You listen to the radio when you can.

You are a man, aged 60, and a traditional healer. You can't read or write but catch up with the news on the radio. You are very respected in the community.

Role cards

You are a teenage girl, 15, attending secondary school. Your family are proud of you as you are the most educated among them. You often let them know what's happening in the district.

You are an elderly widow. You live alone in a home next to your son and daughter-in-law. You are frail and don't get to go into the village very often due to health problems. You are also illiterate.

You are a man and a poor farmer living on the outskirts of the village. You have spent your whole life working on your family's small plot of land. You are a member of a minority ethnic group and you do not fully integrate with the rest of the village. You don't have any means of transport. You never went to school.

You are a 15-year-old girl, recently married and pregnant with your first child. You dropped out of school at age 10 and never learned to read and write as the quality of teaching was very poor. You live with your husband who is almost 40 and believes that a woman's place is in the home.

You are a married woman, pregnant with your 6th child. You are 28 years of age. You are moderately well off and live with your husband, children and mother-in-law in the centre of the village. Age is respected in your family and your mother-in-law's views take precedence over yours, so you are not encouraged to have/offer opinions.

You are a single woman in your late teens. You work with your aunt on a market stall and have some education, so you are literate. You live with your parents whose main ambition is to find you a husband. Your parents worry about your safety and will not allow you to travel alone but you can travel with a relative.

Role cards

You are a Pastor at the Church of the Ever-living Christ. You are a man, 48 years of age and live in a nice house. People seek out your opinion, as a respected man.

You are a man and a teacher, 30 years of age and married with three children. You finished primary school and two years of secondary school. Your opinion is respected.

You are one of the top five richest businessmen in the country, aged 37.

You are a grandmother, looking after nine children. You can't read or write. You are in relatively good health but have little money.

You are a 24-year-old man who lives with his parents. You had polio as a child and need a wheelchair but can't afford one. You can't walk properly. You went to primary school but didn't complete your studies as the teacher assumed you were mentally disabled and didn't make an effort with you. You can write your name and have limited reading skills.

You are a young single man in your early 20s. You have some primary level education but now you work with your parents on their farm or doing casual labour for neighbours. You live at home and are still considered a youth in Sierra Leone until the age of 35 or until you have married.



Hearing from our partners

Christian Aid Ireland has the privilege of meeting and helping to support inspiring women in the communities where we work. These women have often been disadvantaged by their circumstances, and Christian Aid Ireland partners provide support through teaching new skills, and supporting them in business or farming ventures. The benefits that such activities can bring, not just to the women involved but to their families and the whole community is clear to all.

Let's look at a few stories from different countries to help us to hear the voices of some of these women.

Musfirat Jannat Ria, from Bangladesh, was supported by Christian Aid's partner to set up an embroidery business, which has helped her to stay on in education. In her area it is common for girls to marry young with little scope for study or future work.

Credit: Christian Aid / Fabeha Monir



Credit: SARCAF/
Christophe
Muzaliwa.

Gloria baking bread using the oven she had built with the savings she made from the flour she sold.

'Gloria', Democratic Republic of Congo

Gloria (not her real name), a 35-year-old mother of nine from South Kivu, Eastern Congo, was farming cassava with other women when she and two others were brutally assaulted by an armed group. Badly injured, they were found later by their husbands.

"There were three of us weeding the cassava field. We saw a group of six armed men coming towards us. They forced us to undress and they raped us," Gloria said. "My husband took me to the hospital and a month later, he decided that we should move because the risk of being raped again was still there."

In her new village, Gloria connected with SARCAF (Service d'Accompagnement et de Renforcement des Capacités d'Auto promotion de la Femme au Sud-Kivu), a Christian Aid partner supported by Irish Aid, the Government of Ireland's development cooperation programme. SARCAF provided psychological and emotional support for four months, helping Gloria begin her recovery.

With \$75 from SARCAF, she began selling cassava flour, which helped support her family. Later, she joined a bread-making course through another organization SARCAF linked her with. Using her savings, she built an oven and began baking bread, which became popular in her community. The income allowed her to send her children to school.

Gloria also joined a village savings and loan scheme set up with SARCAF's guidance. Starting with 12 members, the group grew to 34, including other survivors and local farmers and traders. The collective fund enabled Gloria to save and buy a plot of land where she built a new house.

Now, Gloria hopes to expand her business and continue building a stable future for her family.

"This year I bought sheets and boards and I built a house. In the future, I have it in my mind to create a cafeteria. I also intend to create a wholesale bread store in my house where shopkeepers can stock up and resell," Gloria said.

Marlen Lourdes Salguero Hernández, Honduras

Marlen leads the Women and Energy project in Belen, Honduras. Through Christian Aid's partner OCDIH (Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras), she has received training on the installation of solar technology and is a member of a women's network coordinated by OCDIH. To date, she has installed 38 systems. She received a loan to support this work, which helped her adapt to the challenges of climate change whilst earning a better living. Marlen is a leader in her community, supporting other women to gain financial independence and protect the environment.

Climate change is destroying livelihoods in this part of Honduras. Marlen's husband lost half of his coffee farm due to strong storms. Her business, making and selling food and clothes, did not earn her enough to get by and support her family. She was on the verge of changing her life dramatically and migrating to the US, as many families are forced to do.

Marlen said, "Here, we have had many disasters. My husband lost half a coffee farm. Then the pandemic made it worse, but we have not stopped the project, we have always tried to do the best to continue working. Climate change affects the crops. If it rains a lot, or if there is drought, or the temperature is too hot or cold, it damages the crops"

"As a family, we are accustomed to planting trees. Now it is our goal and purpose to take care of nature. We planted 100 trees. We also recycle and take action to educate other families to do so. To educate others to respect nature, is a reward"

"What we are trying to do with the women's network, is spread the message to recycle, to use natural resources carefully, to reduce the burning of forests. Women are not the weaker sex. On the contrary, we are the strongest people"



Credit: Christian Aid /
Rosamelia Nunez

Joyline Kwava, Zimbabwe

Mother of three Joyline Kwava (43) is among almost 350 volunteers working as women's health champions, part of a Christian Aid-funded Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) project run by the charity's local partner, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches.

The project was set up to tackle the issue of child marriage, which is illegal in Zimbabwe, but still is a common occurrence with more than a third of girls married before their eighteenth birthday and 5% married before they reach the age of fifteen.

Domestic abuse is another serious issue that is addressed, as 40% of women aged 15-49 having reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner. (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency and UNICEF 2019).

Women affected often tend to be judged by their community for having failed at their marriage. Health champions, like Joyline, support and help women facing domestic abuse to report the offences to the police.

The project also distributes washable sanitary pads to women and girls. Disposable sanitary pads are available in shops but cost too much for many families. This leaves women and girls with no choice but to use unreliable cloth rags during their period.



Women and girls are heavily stigmatised and considered to have brought shame on their families if their clothes become stained during their period. As a result many girls do not go to school and many women are reluctant to go to church during their period. The SRH project aims to tackle the stigma associated with menstruation, so that women and girls can participate fully in the life of their community.

Since joining the project, Joyline has been visiting places of worship to talk to faith communities about these issues. Joyline said: "I'm happy to be making a change. I'm happy to help women speak up for their rights."

Mother of three Joyline Kwava (43) is among almost 350 volunteers working as women's health champions, part of a Christian Aid-funded Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) project run by the charity's local partner, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches.

Credit: Christian Aid/Lisa Fagan

Carolina Solano Gutiérrez, Colombia

Sisma Mujer is a Colombian organization that has worked since 1998 to end all forms of violence against women. They are a partner of Christian Aid funded with money from Irish Aid, the Government of Ireland's development cooperation programme. They provide legal and psychological support to survivors of sexual and domestic violence and work towards ending impunity for these crimes in Colombia.

Carolina Solano Gutiérrez (right), a lawyer and Deputy Director for Justiciability at Sisma Mujer, pictured here in front of Dáil Éireann alongside Roisin (left) from Christian Aid, visited Dublin in November 2022 to speak to politicians.

During her time in Dublin, Carolina discussed the work of Sisma Mujer over the last six years to document and present cases of sexual violence before national and international courts, including before the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) which was created following the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016 between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The purpose of the JEP is to investigate and prosecute those responsible for sexual violence during the conflict, including the highest members in the chain of command.

A cornerstone of this work by Sisma Mujer has been to push for the JEP to open up a macro case (which is one that groups individual cases together) on sexual, reproductive and other forms of gender based violence rather than treating them as isolated incidents. Carolina explained why it was so important for such a case to be heard.

"What has been happening in the JEP is that there are people who think that sexual violence was committed only by bad apple individuals rather than it being a military strategy of the armed groups," Carolina said. Following six years of sustained advocacy on this issue by Sisma, the JEP finally agreed in 2022 to open such a case.

Carolina added "We have been pushing for the court to recognise that sexual violence was committed by every armed group throughout the conflict,"



Carolina Solano Gutiérrez (Right) pictured outside the Dáil.

Credit: Christian Aid/ Conor O'Neill

Hannah Finda Sesay, Sierra Leone

Hannah Finda Sesay is vice-president of the Kailahun Women in Governance Network, which helps women to become active in local, regional and national politics and government. Christian Aid's local partner in Sierra Leone, SEND, support the Network with funding from Irish Aid, the Government of Ireland's development cooperation programme.



Credit: Christian Aid / Maria Collison

Kailahun is in Sierra Leone's Eastern Province and most people lack access to good health care and schools. Like many rural areas in Sierra Leone, women in Kailahun also struggle to escape stereotypes, which expect them to take all the responsibility for household chores and the rearing of children. Women and girls are also often discouraged from continuing their education or taking up jobs traditionally done by men.

At the local level, culture and tradition have long played a role in determining women's access to power. As well as encouraging women to stay at home, traditional beliefs, customs and local laws have for a long time strongly discouraged women from getting involved in local politics or community affairs.

The Kailahun Women in Governance Network has provided a range of support to nearly 9,000 women across Kailahun, including providing them with training in lobbying, public speaking and leadership skills to help build their confidence to successfully demand change and improvements in their local communities. The network also provided financial and practical support to women to campaign for the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act, a new law that was passed in January 2022 which guarantees that women hold at least 30% of elected and appointed positions, all the way from local council to parliamentary seats and cabinet posts.

As Hannah explains, the network is keen to see more women enter into politics. "We want to change the mentality of saying that women are not capable of decision-making or that women cannot be parliamentarians."

"We tell the political parties that we need more women in parliament, we need more women in politics. We'd like a female to stand for president in this country."

Time in Scripture

Choose one of the two passages below to look at as a whole group or split the group into two and study both separately and then feedback to each other after.

John 4:1-30

Introductory question:

Do you have a story, which you would like to share about a woman who has been helpful or influential in your life? Allow participants time to share stories.

Bible passage:

We now turn to John 4: 1-30, the story of Jesus with the woman at the well. Have the group read through the passage silently before one person reads the text aloud.

Questions:

One facilitator asks the following questions while another facilitator captures the response on a flip chart or notebook.

1. What strikes you from the passage? Individual reflection – share as a group.
2. What characters are in this passage? Present or in the background.
3. How do the characters relate to each other?
4. Where do you see Jesus challenge expectations about gender equality in this passage?
5. What examples of transformation are found in the story?

Ask someone to read the passage aloud again.

Mark 5:21-43

Bible passage:

We now turn to Mark 5: 21-43, the story of Jesus healing the woman with the haemorrhage and Jairus' daughter. Have the group read through the passage silently before one person reads the text aloud.

Questions:

One facilitator asks the following questions, while another facilitator captures the response on a flip chart, notebook or laptop.

1. What strikes you from the passage? Individual reflection – share as a group.
2. What characters are in this passage? Present or in the background.
3. How do the characters relate to each other?
4. Where do you see Jesus challenge expectations about gender equality in this passage?
5. What examples of transformation are found in the story?

Have someone read the passage aloud again.

Further questions to consider

- What parallels do you see between the challenges faced by women in the case studies and those faced by women in your own community or parish?
- How do issues like domestic violence, lack of representation, or access to education manifest locally?
- In what ways can local faith-based organisations help in addressing these issues, both in Ireland and globally?
- Which aspects of the women's stories stood out to you as particularly inspiring?
- What practical steps could be taken to support women in your local area, using lessons from these global examples?

Action

In Christian Aid Ireland we encourage our supporters to give, act and pray in response to their knowledge and heart for the issues we work on and people we work alongside. As a group discuss some of the ways you could take action, whether small or big, to move towards gender justice both globally and in our own lives and communities.

- Could you share the stories of Christian Aid's work with others?
- Could you run an event to raise awareness of Christian Aid's work?
- Could you support a local organization working with survivors of gender-based violence?
- Could you commit to pray regularly for gender justice?
- What else could you do?

Closing Prayers

Come together as a large group to end with the closing prayers. Choose one or more from below.

- A) God, we cry to you for justice for all people in the world. .
Help us to dig out the roots of gender-based violence and discrimination.
Inspire us to break down the structures that silence and disempower women and girls.
Make us united in condemning abuse, in all its forms.

God, we cry to you for refuge for the survivors of violence.
May those in power recognise their responsibilities to support survivors.
Show us how to amplify the voices of women and girls speaking up for change.
Give us the courage to act against inequality.

God, we cry to you for change, for transformation.
Send us the strength to persist in activism when we face barriers.
Fill us with determination as we seek to renew our world.
May we see a day when every person will be free to flourish and know life in all its fullness.

Amen

- B) Lord, we offer ourselves to you,
That we may be prophets of this century,
Outraged by the injustices, inequality and violence,
especially gender-based violence.
As sisters and brothers in Christ,
May we challenge all situations of injustice, inequality, oppression
and violence and act as guardians for all women,
in the loving strength of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

- C) We pray, Lord, for women everywhere – of all races and ethnic groups, of all creeds,
tribes and nations and especially for all who live in situations of violence or oppression,
recognizing that they, like us, are your daughters, created in your image and likeness.

Amen.

- D) Say the Grace together.

Feedback Survey

Thank you for attending the event today. We really value your feedback, which helps us to improve future events like this. All feedback is anonymous.

Please fill in the following details:

Gender _____ Prefer not to say

Age (tick the relevant box)

Under 18 18 – 30 yrs 31 – 50 yrs

51 – 70 yrs Over 70 yrs

Did the event today deepen your understanding of the global justice issues being addressed?

Yes No Unsure

Did the event today deepen your understanding of the systems/drivers that perpetrate gender inequality?

Yes No Unsure

Did the event today help you gain a greater understanding of Ireland's aid programme and role in overseas development cooperation?

Yes No Unsure

Do you have any other comments or suggestions that you would like to share?

Thanks for your feedback!

