

IFAGE- MCC Positive Masculinity and Biblical Gender Equality Training Report

The year 2024 holds exciting opportunities for the Institute of Faith And Gender Empowerment (IFAGE). We're not just saying this; we genuinely believe it's part of God's plan.

This January, from the 9th to the 11th, IFAGE, led by Rev. Dominic Misolo and Executive Member Bishop Josesh Wasonga, took on the important task of training delegates from the Faith-based Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)-Mozambique. Participants joined from West and East African countries, including Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Lesotho.

This year holds promise, and our recent training signifies a step towards positive change and empowerment.



The MCC-Mozambique group photo during a break from sessions on 10th Jan 2024 at Beira, Mozambique.

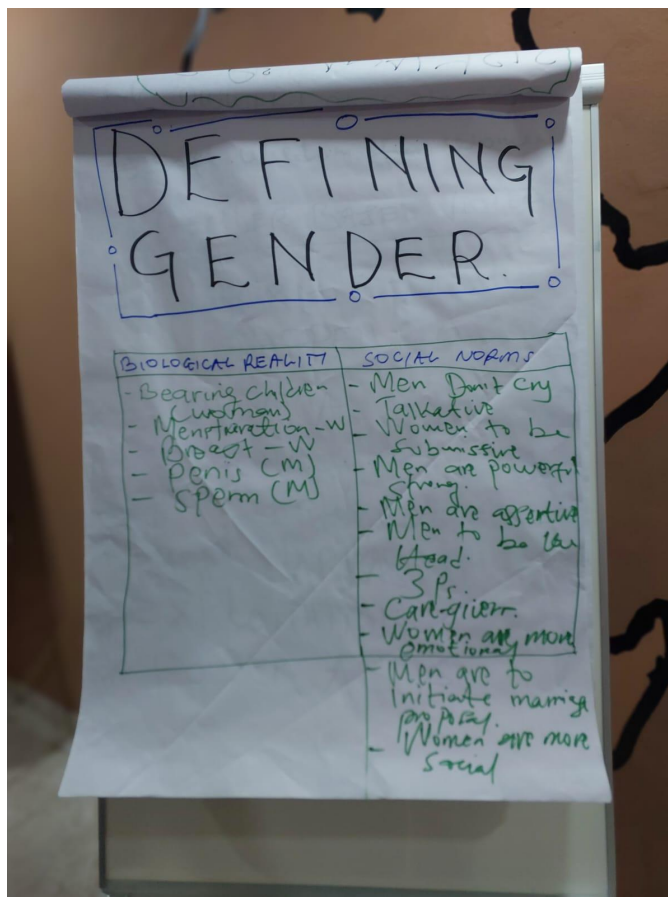
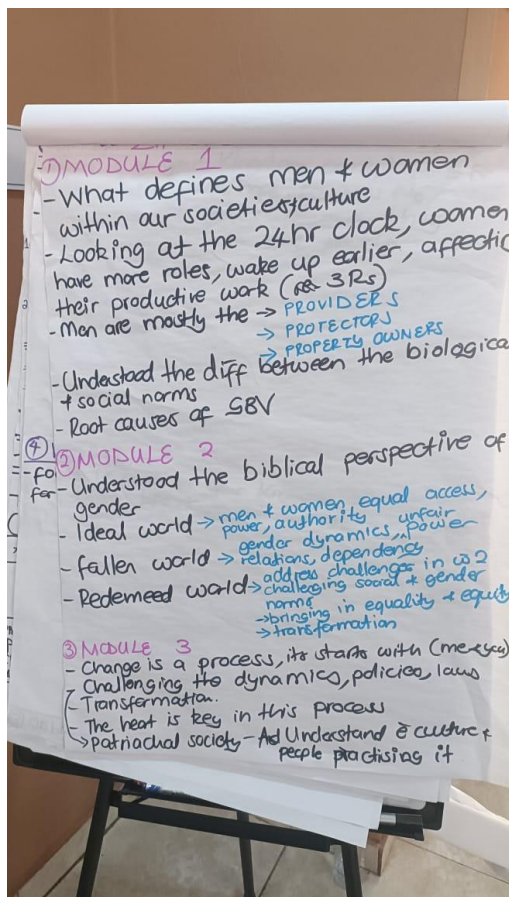
IFAGE's Commitment to Biblical Gender Equality Advocacy:

At the core of IFAGE's mission lies a commitment to advocating for gender equality and justice from a faith perspective. This commitment translates into using the Bible as a powerful tool for women's empowerment and enhancing gender knowledge. We advocate for contextualized biblical interpretation to counter and reduce the tendency of misinterpreting scriptures that exacerbate gender inequalities and discrimination, including Gender-based Violence (GBV). This is the foundation of all our trainings, the MCC Mozambique was not excluded.

Transformative Conversations through Biblical Gender Equality Dialogue:

IFAGE's well-researched and proven Biblical Gender Equality Dialogue toolkit played a pivotal role in guiding an engaging, thought-provoking, informative, lively, enlightening, and meaningfully productive conversations in Beira Mozambique. Rev. Misolo and Bishop Wasonga facilitated discussions on a broad spectrum of topics, delving into the role of gender in the context of the Bible and Christianity. Some of the key topics included:

Topic	Content for Discussion	Emerging Discussions
Introduction to Biblical Gender Equality:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Defining gender equality in the biblical context.-Historical perspectives on gender roles in the Bible.	Exploring Gender Dynamic/Gender role in the biblical and societal context.
Creation Narratives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Examining Genesis 1-3 and the creation of man and woman.- Adam and Eve: exploring their roles and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Discussion on the role of Adam and Eve and their impact on gender roles.
Women in the New Testament	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analyzing the roles of women in the life of Jesus.- Exploring the contributions of women in the early Christian church.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Discussion on the significance of women in the early Christian community.
Egalitarian Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Exploring theological perspectives that advocate for gender equality.- Discussing the biblical basis for egalitarianism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Discussion on theological frameworks supporting equality.
Creation of Positive Masculinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Identifying positive masculine traits in biblical characters.- Discussing how these traits contribute to a healthy understanding of masculinity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dialogue on what constitutes positive masculinity in a biblical context.
Gender Equality in Church Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Discussing the role of women in church leadership positions.- Examining different denominational perspectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Examination of challenges and successes in different denominations.
Contemporary Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Addressing contemporary challenges to gender equality in the church.- Discussing how biblical principles can inform responses to gender-related issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dialogue on applying biblical principles to modern-day gender issues.



Some topics discussed during the Introduction to Biblical Gender Equality Session during the MCC-Mozambique Training

Paving the Way Forward: A Future Focused on Gender Knowledge and Equality:

Through these conversations, IFAGE strives not just to educate but to inspire a paradigm shift. By challenging preconceptions and providing a platform for open dialogue, we aim to shape a future where equality is a shared value and women and men are free from gender based violence.



The MCC-Mozambique in a group discussing; common positive masculinity traits that can promote gender equality



A delegate giving a group presentation after the group discussion on positive masculinity

IFAGE remains dedicated to its vision of transforming communities by empowering women and fostering gender equality. The journey continues, and as we navigate the year 2024, we do so with a renewed sense of purpose, confidence, and unwavering commitment to being agents of positive change. The ripple effects of these discussions are bound to create lasting impacts in communities and contribute to a future of true equality and justice.

This impactful training conducted in collaboration with the Mennonite Central Committee ended in intense and SMART action planning where participants meaningfully engage in strategizing on how to replicate what they learnt in the spheres and continue the gender equality advocacy.



Delegates from Nigeria presenting their action plan on 11th Jan 2024 at the MCC-Mozambique training

This ignited an unwavering desire within IFAGE to amplify our efforts. We are committed to scaling up our initiatives and spearheading the establishment of a robust Side by Side faith movement for gender equality and justice.



Rooted in the pressing need for widespread gender knowledge, we strive to create a transformative legacy that resonates across borders. This is not just a conclusion but a commencement—a call to action that resonates with the urgency and importance of our collective mission.

Together, we envision a Side by Side Faith movement becomes a beacon of hope, illuminating the path towards gender equality, justice, and profound peace.