



Embracing  
Intersectionality  
for Health Equity  
& Justice

## BACKGROUND OF THE ISJA TOOL

This ISJA tool is based on the Contextual Bible Study (CBS) model, an initiative of the Ujamaa Centre at the University of Kwa Zulu Natal in South Africa. The Ujamaa Centre was set up in 1985 to facilitate capacity strengthening on good governance and development in faith-based institutions and civil society. The primary aim of the Ujamaa Centre is to address oppressive structures which trap people and keep them oppressed and minoritised.

The CBS model for reading the Bible has been used in different ways by the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (CCAWT) to influence desired change. Some of their successes include:

- » A reduction of cases of gender-based violence (GBV) in places where the method was consistently used to address GBV.
- » Acceptance of the ordination of women in some churches that traditionally did not ordain women into priesthood. The CBS method was used to address patriarchy, culture, and the selective reading and application of Biblical texts which were used as reasons to deny women ordination.
- » Acceptance and implementation of the concept of *Theology for the People of God*, which opened theological training to all people in their diversity – instead of only to a select few who fit prescribed criteria.
- » A theological curriculum transformation. Adoption of curricula that focus on religion as a resource for social transformation, so that graduates are equipped to support social transformation from a religious perspective.

This model was adopted and tailored for use in the MW project to facilitate SRHR issues analysis from a religious perspective. The alternative term SJA was adopted, so as to embrace religious diversity. SJA was then intersectionalised, following the enablers of intersectionality mentioned earlier, and the term became ISJA.