

# We're stronger together

**The GenderWorks Toolkit is a practical,  
two-part guide to help:**

- Women's groups campaign successfully on issues of gender, poverty and social exclusion

**and**

- Public bodies meet their obligations under equalities legislation and tackle poverty among women more effectively.

# Contents

## Acknowledgements and Foreword 4

Toolkit credits plus how to order copies.

A GenderWorks training participant and member of the Saheli Asian Women's Group explains why this toolkit is so useful.

## Introduction 6

### Why women?

A look at the links between gender and poverty, and the need for women-only services.

## Women's groups – the confidence to campaign 17

### Real Women, Real Power 18

Five inspiring stories of women's groups who achieved change in very different ways.

### Top tips for successful campaigning 32

Key messages from real women on how to achieve your aims.

### Self-analysis 34

Exercises and case studies to help you think about your group and how you can best achieve change.

### Lobbying letters 48

Practical examples to help you communicate with a range of audiences.

### Language, terminology and human rights 54

A look at the language used around issues of gender and poverty, and why switching the debate from needs to rights is important.

### If you've got a minute... 58

Practical suggestions about what you and your group can do in a minute, an hour, a morning or a day.

### Useful reading 59

A selection of training packs and lobbying kits to help you achieve change.

## **Public bodies – meeting equalities obligations 63**

### **A guide to gender mainstreaming 64**

The theory behind the concept and the business case for adopting it.

### **How to gender mainstream 67**

A practical guide to implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy.

### **Gender impact assessments 70**

A step-by-step guide to conducting your own.

### **Gender budgeting 76**

The gender mainstreaming tool that give you ‘bite’.

### **Gender disaggregated data 82**

What it is and why it’s important, plus a list of resources and a look at the Equality Measurement Framework.

### **Participation 84**

Analysing how inclusive you are, and why involving users in the design and development of services is so essential.

## **The law and you 87**

### **The impact of the European Union 88**

A guide to what difference the European Union has made to gender equality, and what mechanisms can be used to push for change.

### **The law in the UK 93**

A look at legal principles, discrimination and the Gender Equality Duty – how to meet it and how to use it.

### **The introduction of the Single Equality Bill 101**

A look at the new act and what it means for gender equality.

## **Conclusion 103**

### **We are stronger together!**

A look at the benefits of shared learning.

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Copies of this toolkit can be ordered by contacting Oxfam in Scotland, First Floor, 207 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4HZ, tel: +44 (0) 141 285 8882, email: [scotland@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:scotland@oxfam.org.uk)

## Foreword

**From a member of the Saheli Asian Women's Group who took part in GenderWorks' 'Making the Gender Duty Work' training course.**

*"The GenderWorks training has made us more confident and better informed about the options available to us when challenging decisions by local authorities which have an adverse effect on our group or our service users. We have already used some of the guidelines set out by the Gender Equality Duty when negotiating our contract for funding – before, we didn't know about the duty.*

*"We now talk with a greater understanding of our rights, and it has made a huge difference – now*

*we fight back even stronger! Knowledge really is power, and getting information through the internet is just not the same. Having the chance to meet a group like Southall Black Sisters was so very important and had a huge impact on us... we did not feel alone with our struggles.*

*We thoroughly recommend this toolkit, as it contains many of the materials used on GenderWorks training courses, which have proved so useful to us in our work."*



Credit: Ian MacNicol

# Introduction – Why women?

**Despite a misconception that women have achieved equality, women continue to be the majority in socially and economically disadvantaged groups all over the world.**

In the UK, for example, the Women & Work Commission announced in 2009 that the gender pay gap had widened to 22.6 per cent, from 21.9 per cent in 2007; this means that women are paid, on average, 22.6 per cent less per hour than men<sup>1</sup>.

Women's pay and employment prospects are further reduced by having children. A 2009 report from the Fawcett Society found that while partnered women without dependent children working full time earn nine per cent less than men on average, for mothers with two children working full time, the pay gap is 21.6 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

The same report found that the gap in hourly earnings between full-time men and part-time women is even worse, at 36.6 per cent. But if women did not shoulder the bulk of child-caring responsibilities, men who want to have children would be unable to work full time and earn higher salaries.

***“People think we (women) have these rights, women have this and that and are equal to men. I say, come to our women's drop in, see what trauma women have had to face precisely because of their gender, then you tell me we have equality!”***

– Violence Against Women activist, Manchester

## **Oxfam's work on gender**

Oxfam has long-term experience of working with women living in poverty. We know that people's experiences of being disadvantaged differ according to their gender, as well as their race, age and where they live. We know that people's needs, assets and the barriers they face to overcoming poverty are also gendered.

Oxfam supports work around the world helping women to overcome the discrimination they face, and secure their basic rights. This includes backing efforts to get heard in the places that count.

In Sierra Leone, for example, where women are under-represented in public life, we funded training for local women's organisations, so they could lobby decision makers more effectively on issues affecting girls and women. They also looked at how women could get more involved in society.

Several participants later stood as candidates in local elections, and won seats – a great achievement in a country where women struggle to enter politics.

Oxfam has run similar schemes in Uganda, Mexico and the Caribbean.

<sup>1</sup> Women & Work Commission, 2009: “Shaping a fairer future: A review of the recommendations of the Women & Work Commission three years on”

<sup>2</sup> Fawcett Society, 2009: “Not having it all: How motherhood reduces women's pay and employment prospects”

## The GenderWorks project

In 2008-2009, Oxfam used its experience of working on gender issues around the world to run a project called GenderWorks in Europe. With our partners Lamoro in Italy and the Austria-based WAVE Network (Women Against Violence Europe), we worked with women to explore the links between gender, poverty and social exclusion.

The project used the concept of shared learning on several different levels:

- We worked with women's groups and women experiencing poverty to create networks of support and expertise.
- We worked with public bodies, encouraging them to recognise women's groups as a vital source of information about how policies and services work in practice.
- We worked with our European partners to develop an improved understanding of the links between gender and poverty, and to share our experiences with the UK government and other European Union member states.

***“Women work two-thirds of the world’s working hours, yet receive only about ten per cent of the world’s income. This is because women are responsible for most of the world’s unpaid labour, which often goes unrecognised – like childcare, cooking and cleaning”***

– UNESCO<sup>3</sup>

## Bringing it all together

This toolkit brings together our experience as Oxfam with our learning from the GenderWorks project.

The first section provides tools and inspiration for women to campaign successfully for policies and services that meet their needs. The second part helps public bodies understand how meeting their responsibilities to consult with women and promote gender equality can actually help them function more effectively. And a final section provides both parties with information about laws and policies on gender and equality at national and European levels.

We hope that whether you are a grassroots women's group, service provider or policy maker, you will use this toolkit to build the shared learning approach into your own work.

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO Gender Quiz, April 2007 (Section for Women and Gender Equality)

The following activities have been designed to help members of both women's groups and public-sector bodies reflect on the position and representation of women in society, and enable learning about why using a gender perspective is essential.

## Activity: Gender quiz

### Purpose:

This exercise can be used to facilitate discussion and learning about the belief that women have achieved equality.

### Resources:

The gender quiz below and the answers on the opposite page.

### How to use:

Ask participants, either individually or in pairs, to answer the questions below. (The quiz can be adapted for a particular group, region or country.)

After ten minutes, bring the group back together and generate a discussion based on their answers.

Was anything surprising? Did anything in particular stand out?

## Gender quiz

Test your knowledge of equality issues by filling in the blanks below.

1. In the UK in 2009, \_\_\_\_ per cent of Members of Parliament (MPs), \_\_\_\_ per cent of the Cabinet, and \_\_\_\_ per cent of peers in the House of Lords were female.
2. In 2009, \_\_\_\_ per cent of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) were women.
3. In 2009, Sweden had the strongest representation of women in parliament in Europe, at \_\_\_\_ per cent.
4. In 2008, Rwanda had the highest percentage of women in parliament internationally, at \_\_\_\_ per cent.
5. In the UK in 2008, female graduates earned, on average, \_\_\_\_ per cent less than their male counterparts at the age of 24.
6. In the UK in 2009, the gender pay gap meant women were paid, on average, \_\_\_\_ per cent less per hour than men.
7. Women-owned businesses accounted for \_\_\_\_ per cent of all businesses in America in 2007, and represented \_\_\_\_ per cent of all new start-ups.
8. In the UK in 2008, about \_\_\_\_ of all ethnic minority women were in employment, and \_\_\_\_ of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women, compared to 70 per cent of ethnic minority men and 73 per cent of white women.
9. In the UK in 2007, \_\_\_\_ per cent of migrant domestic workers' passports were withheld by their employers.
10. Homosexuality is illegal in \_\_\_\_ countries in the world.
11. In the UK in 2006, single women pensioners received an average income of £ \_\_\_\_ per week, compared with £85 per week for single men pensioners.
12. On average, \_\_\_\_ women in England and Wales are killed every week by a current or former male partner.





### Gender quiz – the answers

1. In the UK in 2009, **19.5** per cent of Members of Parliament (MPs), **14.7** per cent of the Cabinet, and **19.7** per cent of peers in the House of Lords were female.
2. In 2009, about **35** per cent of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) were women.
3. In 2009, Sweden had the strongest representation of women in parliament in Europe, at **47** per cent.
4. In 2008, Rwanda had the highest percentage of women in parliament internationally, at **56.3** per cent.
5. In the UK in 2008, female graduates earned, on average, **8.4** per cent less than their male counterparts at the age of 24. (This gender pay gap widens with age).
6. In the UK in 2009, the gender pay gap meant women were paid, on average, **22.6** per cent less per hour than men.
7. Women-owned businesses accounted for **28** per cent of all businesses in America in 2007, and represented **55** per cent of all new start-ups.
8. In the UK in 2008, only about **half** of all ethnic minority women were in employment, and **just a quarter** of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women, compared to 70 per cent of ethnic minority men and 73 per cent of white women.
9. In the UK in 2007, **32** per cent of migrant domestic workers' passports were withheld by their employers.
10. Homosexuality is illegal in **80** countries in the world. In Iran, Yemen, Nigeria, Mauritania and the Sudan it is punishable by death.
11. In the UK in 2006, single women pensioners received an average income of **£48** per week, compared with £85 per week for single men pensioners.
12. On average, **two** women in England and Wales are killed every week by a current or former male partner.

## Activity: Sex vs gender

*“The emotional, sexual, and psychological stereotyping of females begins when the doctor says, ‘It’s a girl’.”*

Shirley Chisholm, (1924-2005), the first African-American woman to win a seat in the United States Congress.

### Purpose:

This exercise can be used to clarify the difference between gender and sex.

It is taken from the toolkit ‘Into the Lion’s Den: a practical guide to including women in regeneration’, which can be downloaded from the GenderWorks website<sup>4</sup>.

### Resources:

The list of statements below, written on flip charts or copied onto A4 sheets if participants prefer to work in pairs or small groups. (Some of these statements can be changed or adapted to suit the local context).

### How to use:

Show the group the list of statements below. You could also add your own. Give them 30 minutes, and ask them to identify whether each statement is linked to gender or to sex. Then talk about their answers, using the following definitions:

**SEX** is the biological difference between men and women (what we are born with).

**GENDER** is the set of roles and responsibilities men and women have learned or end up playing in their family, community and in society at large (socially constructed and based on biology).

**Have a look at the statements below. In each case, try to identify whether the statement is linked to sex or gender.**

1. Women give birth to babies, men don’t.
2. Little girls are gentle, boys are tough.
3. Women form 70 per cent of administrative and secretarial, personal service and customer services occupations.
4. Women can breastfeed babies, men can bottle-feed babies.
5. Most building-site workers in the UK are men.
6. In Ancient Egypt, men stayed at home and did weaving. Women handled family business. Women inherited property and men did not.
7. Men’s voices break at puberty, women’s do not.
8. Good quality, affordable childcare helps women to balance work and family commitments.
9. According to UN statistics, women do 67 per cent of the world’s work, yet their earnings for it amount to only 10 per cent of the world’s income.

Can the group reach a common understanding of what ‘gender’ means to them?

### Answers

1. Sex 2. Gender 3. Gender 4. Sex 5. Gender 6. Gender 7. Sex 8. Gender 9. Gender

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from S. Williams, J. Seed, A. Mwau (1994) The Oxfam Gender Training Manual, Oxfam (UK and Ireland)

## Activity: Good, bad and missing

### Purpose:

This context-setting exercise helps participants explore women's representation in society: positive stereotypes, negative ones and those that are missing.

### Resources:

- Markers
- Flip chart paper split into three categories (see below)
- Post-it notes.

### How to use:

Split the group into smaller groups of four or five participants. Ask each group to think about the good, bad and missing representations and stereotypes of women in society. Write them on post-its and stick them in the appropriate column.

Suggest to the group that the good and bad stereotypes can overlap; for example, women may be seen as good at multi-tasking, but this can have a negative effect in that it can create pressure on women to take on more responsibilities and work.

Give the group 20-30 minutes for this exercise. After this time bring participants back together and

ask a member of each group to feed back their ideas and responses.

- What is the group's reaction to its responses? Did the responses support or contradict the idea that women have achieved equality?
- What was missing? For example, women in politics, women in local government, women in senior positions in business?
- Focus on groups who face discrimination for more than one reason: what about women from BME (Black and Minority Ethnic), LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender) or working-class communities? Class is often ignored but is an important factor in relation to inequality and discrimination.
- How could participants use what they have learned in this exercise, either as a women's group or as a public-sector body? What difference will it make to how they approach their work? For example, participants might realise that they had been unconsciously perpetuating a stereotype, or that a section of the community was missing from their staff or services, and put measures in place to address this.

Good	Bad	Missing



Credit: Kate Rowley

## Activity: Gender and poverty

### Purpose:

This activity helps participants think through how and why women may experience poverty at different stages of their lives.

It is based on a poverty timeline wallchart created by Engender, an organisation working on an anti-sexist agenda in Scotland and Europe to increase women's power and influence. The wallchart represents an accumulation of Engender's work with women's organisations – see [www.engender.org.uk](http://www.engender.org.uk) for more information.

### Resources:

- The wallchart included in this toolkit
- Post-it notes
- Markers.

### How to use:

The poverty timeline is split into different sections, representing the different stages of a woman's life, e.g. childhood, teenage years and so on. A number of themes run throughout, such as caring roles, disability, safety, race, health, finance, career, relationships and identity.

Split the group into smaller groups of four or five participants. Each group should look at one or two different sections of the timeline and discuss how and why a woman might experience poverty at that particular time in her life, considering the risks, vulnerabilities and stereotypes she might face. Write these on post-it notes.

After 30 minutes, bring the groups back together and ask them to share their ideas, placing their post-it notes on the appropriate section of the timeline to create a visual construction of how women may experience poverty at different stages of their lives.



## The 'Why women?' campaign

A lack of funding, coupled with a lack of understanding about why they need to exist, has led to women-only services coming under increasing pressure. Some women's organisations in the UK report that funders and decision makers are pressuring them to deliver services to men, viewing women-only services as irrelevant and unnecessary.

Competing priorities such as the community cohesion agenda have had a negative impact on many women's groups, especially those from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women's sector. Services are being closed, there has been a devaluation of women-specific projects and an increasing focus on commissioning services out. Invaluable work and often life-saving services are being threatened.

The Women's Resource Centre's 'Why Women?' campaign highlighted the importance of the women's sector and the many funding and cultural threats it faces. It calls on governments to put gender back on the agenda by:

- acknowledging the systematic disadvantage women face because of their gender, and
- publicly recognising the essential services and expertise the women's voluntary and community sector provides.

To find out more about the 'Why women?' campaign, visit the Women's Resource Centre website at [www.wrc.org.uk](http://www.wrc.org.uk)

The following activities can improve understanding about the context in which the women's sector operates, and why a strong women's sector is important.

### Activity: Why women?

#### Purpose:

This exercise can be used to highlight the importance of women-only services and advantages of a strong women's sector.

#### Resources:

A copy of the 20-minute 'Why women?' film, which can be requested by emailing [info@wrc.org.uk](mailto:info@wrc.org.uk) OR copies of the 'Why women?' report, which can be downloaded from the Women's Resource Centre's website (see above).

#### How to use:

Show the group the 'Why women?' DVD or give participants a copy of the report to read, then engage them in discussion around the challenges, threats and opportunities facing the women's sector.

#### Useful questions:

- Why do women and men need specific services and what might they include?
- What are the advantages of a strong women's sector, particularly in relation to minority women's groups?



## Activity: ‘Gender neutral’ vs gender specific

### Purpose:

This exercise can be used to help participants think about how an approach that does not recognise a difference between women and men impacts on the quality of service being offered.

### Resources:

None needed, though discussion may be recorded on flip chart paper.

### How to use:

Ask the group to discuss, either as a group or in pairs, the following scenario:

A local authority is designing a service for people who have experienced domestic violence. The authority’s definition of domestic violence is ‘gender neutral’: it does not recognise a difference between women and men. It has suggested that the service should be designed to be accessed equally by women and men, and that this will provide value for money, because only one service will be needed.

1. What are the implications of this?
2. Can you foresee any problems with taking an approach that does not recognise a difference between women and men?



### The case for gender-specific services: Public transport in Blantyre, Scotland<sup>5</sup>



Credit: Chris Worrall/Oxfam

**Yvonne Smith** lives in Blantyre in Scotland. After her dad suffered a stroke, Yvonne moved in with him and took on a full-time caring role. She has guardianship of her dad, as he rarely leaves the house, and so all aspects of his care – financial, residential, and medical – are Yvonne’s responsibility.

Local transport has a major impact on Yvonne’s life and her ability to manage time and money. Her caring responsibilities mean that she needs to make frequent, short trips around the area, which is not well served by the single bus route

that runs through Blantyre to Hamilton and Glasgow.

Yvonne doesn’t qualify for a concessionary bus pass as a carer, and as her dad is not well enough to use the bus, she ends up spending a large amount of money on taxis simply to do things such as the shopping and visiting the doctor.

Studies of transport use in the UK have consistently shown that women’s travel is more likely to be linked to caring and family responsibilities, which often entails irregular journeys that do not conform to the commuter-centred structure of most public transport systems.

Women are also more reliant overall on public transport and walking, generally travel shorter distances, and are less likely to have access to a private car than men.

These differences in need are not catered for by planning and transport systems that heavily favour car users and those working a rigid 9-5 day.

<sup>5</sup> This case study is an edited version of one recorded as part of Oxfam GB’s ReGender project



Credit: Ian MacNicol



# **Women's groups – the confidence to campaign**

**A practical guide to inspire women's  
groups and provide you with all the  
tools and information you need.**



# Real Women, Real Power

Campaigning can be challenging at times and very hard work, but if your efforts contribute to even a small change, it's an empowering and very rewarding experience.

During the course of the GenderWorks project, we came across some inspiring real-life stories of women who had successfully campaigned on issues that mattered to them. We've brought five of those stories together on a DVD, which is included in the resources pocket at the back of this toolkit.

The case studies featured are all very different, and, as you'll see from the information that follows, contain a wide range of ideas on how to go about lobbying to achieve your aims, whether it's at local or national level.

We hope that watching the 'Real Women, Real Power' DVD will inspire you to use this toolkit to plan your own campaign, and challenge poverty and inequality wherever you find them.



Credit: Michelle Dillon



## Dumfries and Galloway classroom assistants' campaign to save their jobs



Credit: Michelle Dillon

### Lead campaigner

**Elaine North**, a support for learning assistant in Dumfries and a steward with the UNISON union.

### Campaign aim

To stop Dumfries and Galloway Council making more than 70 classroom assistants redundant

### Background

Dumfries and Galloway is the third largest local authority region in Scotland. As a rural economy, it can throw up misleading statistics; for example, although the employment rate in the region is high at 82 per cent, this masks high levels of self-employment, seasonal employment and part-time employment in lower-wage jobs.

According to the 2001 Census, of the 52,333 men in the region, 45.8 per cent were working full time and 3.3 per cent were working part time. This contrasts strongly with the 55,058 women in the region, of whom only 24.3 per cent worked full time, while 22.7 per cent worked part time.

Classroom assistants in Dumfries and Galloway are predominantly women on low wages. They support children in school with all subjects across the curriculum. They also provide primary and personal care, which may include assistance with toileting or medication.

Dumfries and Galloway Council was using an outdated formula to calculate the number of classroom assistants needed within each school. This formula did not take into consideration the needs of individual schools and their pupils, but was based on pupil numbers alone.

*"I attended a Unison monthly meeting and unfortunately Marion Stewart, our secretary, gave us the news that Dumfries and Galloway Council were threatening to make 70 classroom assistants redundant..."*

*So that meant 70 women were going to lose their posts; actually no, it was 70 full-time-equivalent posts – some of them could have been part time, so you're looking at more than 70 people."*

### Strengths/opportunities

- The support of the union, UNISON.
- A belief in the need to challenge discriminatory practice and attitudes.
- This was an emotive issue – local communities felt strongly about the most needy children in the region having their support in school taken away.

### Challenges

- The formula used by the local authority to calculate the number of classroom assistants needed: the Council made its decision to cut jobs and used the guideline as if it were a rule.
- The geographical spread of the local authority: Dumfries and Galloway covers 2,380 square miles and has an estimated population of 148,030; that's around 60 people per square mile compared with the Scottish average of 168.
- Communication: given the rural nature of the region, telling union members about the problem and getting them involved was a challenge.
- The union's relationship with local councillors was not particularly good, and the Council was not open to discussing the issue.

### Campaign strategy

Campaigners used their strengths and opportunities to help overcome the challenges, taking a two-pronged approach to target both the Council and the community.

To let members know what was happening, Elaine and Unison branch secretary Marion Stewart, arranged mass meetings throughout the region, inviting all classroom assistants to attend.

People in each area were identified to act as stewards and assist in campaigning. The main group of 15 stewards met regularly and drew up the campaign. They decided to:

- Lobby councillors
- Send out flyers
- Use the media.

*"We got round the table and had meetings and we made decisions about how we were going to fight this..."*

*"These children are vulnerable and they're entitled to an education like everybody else... The kind of people that do this job are very caring; we know how important we are for these children, so it made us fight even more."*

### **The campaign**

The campaign ran from the end of October 2007 until the end of January 2008, and got a very good reception from the general public. The 'selling point' was the threat of withdrawal of adequate support in school from some of the region's most vulnerable children.

**Petitions** were taken to the high streets.

**Postcards** were produced to give to the public to send to their councillors.

**Advertisements** were placed in the local paper accompanied by the message, "If you support our campaign – contact these councillors..." (giving details).

*"We took our campaign to the streets throughout Dumfries and Galloway..."*

*"One of the things that surprised us was that people queued up to sign our petition. The public feeling was very strong, and they supported us and that was amazing."*

The campaign culminated in a petition with around 10,000 signatures being given to the Council, and over 2,000 postcards opposing any cuts in classroom assistant posts being sent directly to elected members.

This was a turning point, and provoked an immediate reaction from the Council. It withdrew the planned proposal for redundancies the next day, and removed the item from the Council agenda.

### **Moving forward**

Negotiations began with the Council, resulting in a protocol for a fair distribution of classroom assistants' hours, determined by needs and not by a formula.

When consulted, the Scottish Executive Minister for Education at the time clarified that the formula had only ever been intended to act as 'guidance' for councils, and was not cast in stone.

### **Change achieved**

As a result of the campaign, education officials within the local authority withdrew the planned proposal to cut classroom assistant posts and there were no redundancies.

Dumfries and Galloway Council now have a protocol that provides a fairer mechanism for the allocation of classroom assistant hours, and an annual meeting takes place between education officials and Unison, to discuss and review the service provided by classroom assistants.

Elaine and Marion won the STUC One Workplace Equality Award 2008. This award recognises the role of Scottish trade union members in challenging discriminatory practices and attitudes in the workplace.

Essentially the award was to a group of low-paid women workers who, with the support of their union, stood up for fairer treatment – and got it.

### **From strength to strength**

A second campaign in Dumfries and Galloway was undertaken on the issue of classroom assistants being discriminated against in terms of equal pay.

The Council said classroom assistants are 'not in same category as male manual workers (who get bonuses) because the two groups work in different sectors.'

It maintains that there are no directly comparable jobs held by men, and therefore that classroom assistants cannot say they are being discriminated against by being paid less.

325 cases went to the Equal Pay tribunal and won. The Council is currently appealing the decision.

### **For more information**

See UNISON's website – [www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk)



## Beechwood Women & Arts Group's community campaigns



Credit: Michelle Dillon

### Lead campaigners:

**Margo Kirkwood** (left) and **Steph Mayo**, members of the Beechwood Women & Arts Group.

### Campaigning aims

- To work with women in the local community to explore issues such as poverty, unemployment, access to services and violence against women.
- To use drama to publicly raise these issues with politicians, policy makers and others.

*"I think we pretty much got fed up with traditional methods of campaigning, and a lot of us felt pretty burnt out going to see councillors and politicians and just not getting anywhere – a gentle pat on the head."*

### Background

The Beechwood Women & Arts Group was established around 1994 in response to a lack of activities for women in Paisley in Scotland, an area still badly affected by deprivation despite attempts at regeneration.

The group's aim was to develop a way of campaigning and getting messages across through methods devised by the women themselves.

*"We play to people's strengths, and that works because people have built up a confidence in playing certain roles, and it's kind of giving people their space within the group."*

Beechwood Women & Arts Group produces pieces of drama and street theatre to highlight issues such as domestic abuse and mental health problems; promote breastfeeding; and encourage

participation in campaigning and community activism. Margo Kirkwood, along with Steph Mayo, who chairs the group, are keen to maintain an anti-poverty focus.

### Strengths/opportunities

- A shared commitment to address injustice and to make the connections between women's experiences of poverty locally, nationally and internationally.
- Having fun: the group believes it can achieve more with creativity and humour, and this also works well in reaching out to more people.
- A belief in using alternative means to raise and address the issues around women's poverty.

### Challenges

- Women's unequal position in society – the structures 'keeping women in their place'
- Restrictions on 'voice' stemming from the negative impact of poverty on health (physical, mental and emotional).
- Challenging the entrenched attitudes of people who refuse to take the issues on board.
- Resistance to raising the issues: negative media portrayals and limited and limiting attitudes ('Let's not wash our dirty laundry in public').

### Campaign strategy

The group decides together what issues it wants to raise through drama, and these are mostly drawn from personal experience but are linked to campaigns and awareness-raising events.

The group focuses on engaging local people in campaign issues, offering them an opportunity to think about how the issues impact on their lives.

*"We decided that we would have two avenues to work along, one of which was working on the ground, exploring issues with women in communities, and we would continue with the work kind of needling away at politicians and power holders."*

The Beechwood Women & Arts Group takes feedback on its drama pieces from the 'audience' and learns from this shared experience. In this way

it develops its campaigning messages and ensures they are relevant to those they represent.

### **The campaign**

The group's work can feed into a wide variety of campaigns. It is often commissioned to produce a piece of drama for a specific awareness-raising campaign, such as the global '16 Days of Action against Gender Violence' and the UK-wide Mental Health Awareness Week.

No issue is too small or taboo for the group to work on. Although it is sometimes commissioned to produce specific pieces of work, it does not pursue funding which might limit members' freedom and voice.

### **Change achieved**

Beechwood Women & Arts Group has played an important role in raising issues within a wide variety of settings: on the streets, in workplaces, at conferences and events. It feels there should be anti-poverty training for all, so that everyone can understand how poverty erodes you and prevents you being yourself.

*"The group has the space to campaign, to address the issues, to take it to the politicians, the power holders, and to say look, this isn't right; something needs to change. Bring together the personal and the political."*

But in addition to raising important issues, the success of the Beechwood group lies in its empowering effect on members, all of whom are given the chance to experience what it feels like to make a difference (see Margo's story below).

Connecting with other women is a great way to build the confidence, knowledge and skills required to challenge the status quo, and 'small wins' really do make a difference. In addition, the ability to see an issue as being of national, international and even global importance and to make links with other communities can be a very powerful thing, particularly in relation to poverty and the gendered nature of poverty.

### **From strength to strength**

Beechwood Women & Arts Group has recently been commissioned to produce a drama piece by the Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health (RAMH). RAMH is keen for it to focus on recovery, but the group is currently still conducting its

research and would like to consider the difficulties surrounding diagnosis and the challenges faced by women with mental health issues in simply getting through the day.

### **Empowering members: Margo's story**

Margo for one knows all too well the impact of poverty on health, well-being, participation and voice. She also knows how important it is to empower women and help them gain confidence, so that they feel able to get involved in campaigning on issues that matter to them, which are often related to personal experience.

Margo's community activism initially took off with her involvement in the project 'Communities against Poverty', which had contact with the newly formed Scottish Parliament.

It continued in 2000 with her involvement in the 'Improving Debt Recovery Working Group', a cross-party group of politicians, community activists and legal experts working informally to get a solution to the social problem of debt recovery.

Through the group, Margo met politicians and learned about political systems and structures. This helped her feel confident and strong enough to "stand her ground", and be able to focus on the important issues.

Margo also used to be part of a community-led project called 'Blackhall for All', which received funding to convert an empty shop premises and provide services such as internet access and youth activities. It also hosted surgeries run by other agencies providing support and advice on financial, health and job matters.

The project, which was used almost entirely by women, ran successfully for five years. It was forced to close when funding was withdrawn, but through her work with 'Blackhall for All', Margo learned about funding rules, how to argue a case for funding, meet the criteria and "tick the boxes".

Margo herself is still living in relative poverty; she understands only too well how poverty affects you psychologically and leaves you feeling worthless.

*"My experience of poverty is that I've always felt it was my fault, but once I became a bit more politically aware I recognised that no, actually, this is keeping me there... it was the poverty trap."*

Margo feels that through her experience of community development she has been empowered

to fight for what she needs to get out of poverty, and has been working towards a degree in Community Development at Glasgow University.

It's proving a hard-fought financial battle, but Margo believes that if she can manage it, obtaining

a degree will finally allow her to get a "quality" job, doing what she is good at.

**For more information**

Read Margo's story on the GenderWorks website – [www.oxfam.org.uk/genderworks](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/genderworks)



Credit: Michelle Dillon



## Object's 'Stripping the Illusion' campaign



Credit: Michelle Dillon

### Lead campaigner:

**Sandrine Levêque**, campaigns manager for Object.

### Campaign aim

'Stripping the Illusion's' specific aim was to end the licensing of strip clubs as cafés, but it also set out to show that the normalisation of lap dancing promotes sexist attitudes and inequality between women and men, which is detrimental to the whole of society.

*"Women obviously face a lot of battles today in terms of poverty, equal pay and violence, and the way that women are viewed in our society is an issue which relates to all of those things. You can't have an equal society and equal rights for women if it's completely acceptable and completely normal to treat women as sex objects."*

### Background

The Licensing Act 2003 regulates both the sale of alcoholic drinks and the licensing of public entertainment. This means that functions that were previously administered by the licensing justices and local authorities respectively are now entirely the responsibility of local authorities, and a single premises licence authorises the sale of alcohol and the provision of what the Act defines as 'regulated entertainment'.

Eaves Housing Association produced a report (Lilith Report on Lap Dancing and Striptease in the Borough of Camden, 2003) which outlined how this change in the licensing laws had acted to open the floodgates for the lap-dancing and strip-club

industry, while making it difficult for local authorities and local people to have a say in the licensing process.

In taking the lap-dancing licensing issue forward, Object's campaign aim was to have the strip clubs licensed for what they really are: venues that provide visual entertainment for sexual stimulation, or sex encounter establishments.

*"Lap-dancing clubs have the same licence as cafés, the implicit logic behind that being that they're just a bit of harmless fun; a throwaway activity that doesn't really impact on anyone."*

### Strengths/opportunities

- A belief in the need to challenge sexist attitudes and for someone to speak out on this issue, which no other lobbying groups were working on.
- The opportunity to use the legal hook of the lap dancing licensing issue as a way to raise the broader debate.
- Vision, drive and a "nothing to lose and everything to gain" approach.

### Challenges

- The campaign began with one part-time worker, few contacts, a basic lack of infrastructure and not enough activism.
- Object had to be as creative as possible with limited funds.
- The 'normalisation' of lap dancing that had already taken place meant it was difficult to get Object's message across and raise awareness that many people were unhappy about it.

### Campaign strategy

Object's director, Dr. Sasha Rakoff, raised funds for a single-issue campaign and with Sandrine planned how best to use every opportunity to help overcome the challenges. The key to the campaign was to make it a collective issue.

*"One of the things we're constantly told by new members, by people who join Object and who come across our campaigning, is 'Thank God I've found another voice – I thought I was the only one'."*

To create more activism, Object employed an 'Activist Organiser' for four hours a week. Having someone organise a monthly meeting made an enormous difference.



- **Bringing potential activists together**

Meetings were organised to bring women together to discuss the issues and plan how to take the campaign forward. To begin with these were London-based, but expanded to include regional meetings and internet groups.

- **Providing information**

Object produced resources such as newsletters and political briefings to keep people informed.

- **Lobbying decision makers**

These included Members of Parliament, peers and councillors, as well as media regulators.

- **Developing partnerships**

Object works closely with grassroots organisations across the UK to create strength in numbers.

## The campaign

**Days of Action** were organised to take the campaign to the streets.

**Petitions** were taken to the high streets.

**Postcards** and **flyers** were produced to raise awareness of the issue and provide information on how to go about lobbying.

Good **media coverage** was achieved through direct action.

This is how events unfolded:

### April 2008:

- Launch of 'Stripping the Illusion' campaign and Object's report 'A Growing Tide: Local authorities restricted by inadequate licensing laws for lap-dancing clubs'. Both reported by BBC's 'Newsnight' programme.
- 'Stunt a Month' direct actions begin.

### May 2008:

- Direct action outside City Hall, London to call on new Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, to take action on the issue.

### June 2008:

- Local Government Association adds support to campaign.
- 10-Minute Rule Bill calling for licensing reforms unanimously passed.
- The Department for Culture, Media and Sport launches consultation with local authorities on licensing reforms (75 per cent respond asking for extra controls).

### July 2008:

- Object organises national Days of Action - activists countrywide take to their high streets to petition
- Object and Fawcett Society join lobbying forces
- Conservatives launch their own consultation with local authorities on licensing reforms

### August 2008:

- Letter from local councillors is published in The Times newspaper, calling for licensing laws to change.

### September 2008:

- Object teams up with Birmingham Feminists to protest outside Conservative Party Conference, following news that a £10 lap-dancing voucher was given to every conference delegate.
- Home Secretary Jacqui Smith announces that the government will act to give local communities a better say in licensing.

### October 2008:

- Channel 4's 'Dispatches' programme investigates lap dancing.
- 'Stripping the Illusion' awards staged outside Lap Dancing Association awards.

### November 2008:

- Object/Fawcett rally in Parliament attracts over 150 attendees.
- Conservatives call for lap-dancing clubs to be licensed as Sex Encounter Establishments.
- Object testifies to Culture, Media and Sport committee alongside a former lap-dancing performer.
- Object hands in a petition of nearly 10,000 signatures to 10 Downing St.

### December 2008:

- Government announces lap-dancing licensing reforms in Queen's Speech.

### January 2009:

- Government adopts the proposals from Object and the Fawcett Society and introduces measures in the Home Office Policing and Crime Bill to licence lap-dancing clubs under a new category of 'Sex Encounter Venue'.

## **Change achieved**

- Changing the licensing laws allows local authorities to apply crucial controls and bring greater transparency to the industry, protecting both women who work in lap-dancing clubs and women who live or work near them, and giving local communities back their say in licensing processes.
- The issue was raised among both local and national government officials, and there was a cross-party recognition that lap-dancing clubs are not ordinary leisure venues.
- Public awareness of the issues was raised thanks to the extensive media coverage and grassroots campaigning.
- The issue was recognised as a form of Violence Against Women (VAW), and included in the national VAW strategy under prostitution reforms.

## **From strength to strength**

The success of the 'Stripping the Illusion' campaign has allowed Object to start working on other, related issues. The group now has lots of activists involved, has a higher media profile and an established name with other women's organisations. It has formed a partnership with Eaves, the London-based charity that provides housing and support to vulnerable women, to campaign on the issue of prostitution.

*"It does feel like there is more of a space now to be talking about the sex object culture and the objectification of women – a much bigger space for women than there was two years ago."*

## **For more information**

See Object's website – [www.object.org.uk](http://www.object.org.uk)



Credit: Michelle Dillon



## Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) Network and the 'Behind the Façade' exhibition



Credit: Michelle Dillon

### Lead campaigners

**Ursula Kolar, Artist (left) and Regina Webhofer, Project Coordinator, WAVE.**

### Campaign aim

'Behind the Façade' is an awareness-raising exhibition that is part of a broader national campaign to end domestic violence in Austria. The exhibition is linked to the Council of Europe's Campaign to Combat Violence Against Women.

### Background

WAVE is a European network of non-governmental women's organisations working to combat violence against women and children. WAVE also works to make the links between violence against women and poverty, and show domestic violence as an issue of social inclusion and social protection.

Violence against women has long been a taboo subject in Austria. It was only after the first women's shelter was opened, in Vienna in 1978, that the issue began to be recognised by policy makers and the wider public. Changes were introduced to criminal law in 1989, making rape and sexual assault in marriage punishable, and in the late 1990s attempts were made to strengthen the rights of victims.

*"'Privacy is Public' was the slogan the women activists had, and I think that this work really depicts that in a precise way."*

The estimated number of unreported cases of violence within the domestic sphere remains extremely high, but it is impossible to be precise about the extent of the issue because limited research has been undertaken.

Despite this, in 2007 the Austrian Women's Shelter Network estimated that one in five women in Austria has experienced violence from a close male relative. In the same year, 3,190 women and children sought refuge in one of Austria's 26 women's shelters.

The original concept for the 'Behind the Façade' exhibition as a campaigning tool came from the manager of the Violence Against Women (VAW) Intervention Centre in Upper Austria. Funding for the exhibition's development was provided by the Ministry of the Interior in 2006.

*"The exhibition 'Behind the Façade' is a walk-through exhibition built like a flat. It consists of a kitchen, bedroom, kid's room and a living room and two information tables."*

### Strengths/opportunities

- The commitment by all involved to break the taboo surrounding violence against women and make the link between domestic violence and poverty.
- By providing funding and support for the exhibition, the Austrian government was sending a clear message that it was concerned about domestic violence.
- The exhibition provided a compelling way to raise the issue of domestic violence with a range of audiences, including young people.

### Challenges

- The cultural acceptance that violence against women is somehow inevitable, personal and private, and the need for a massive cultural shift to combat this.
- Violence as a violation of women's human rights is intrinsically linked to the inequality of women in society.
- The social system that perpetuates men's expectation of entitlement and privilege is so deeply entrenched that women's inequality becomes invisible. This invisibility and the silencing of debate about women's inequality are the biggest barriers to ending violence against women.

## Campaign strategy

Campaigners used their skills and knowledge to create an innovative and exciting exhibition in order to get their message across. They involved women whose voices they wanted to be heard, and worked to develop the commitment and support of both local and national government.

*"It very often starts that women think 'It's only one thing that's happened one time, and that's kind of an accident'. That gives the audience or the visitors a good impression of how the dynamic of violence actually starts."*

## Ursula's role

As an artist, Ursula was invited to create the exhibition.

- A working group was formed, involving the nine Violence Against Women Intervention Centres across Austria.
- Women who had experienced domestic violence were consulted on what they felt should be included in the exhibition.
- Ursula worked closely with the anti-violence centre for women in Upper Austria, interviewing eight women for the audio links that are used in each of the rooms of the flat. These women speak very powerfully from their own experiences.

*"In the bedroom you not only hear the voice of the woman but also of the perpetrator. In one pillow you can hear the story of the woman and on the other side you can hear a man's voice shouting at the woman. That creates a very, very weird atmosphere. Extremely terrible, I can't hear it any more..."*

## Regina's role

Regina was responsible for organising to have the 'Behind the Façade' exhibition shown in Vienna on two occasions, targeting an audience of young people as an educational initiative.

- In March 2007 the exhibition was jointly opened by the Federal Chancellor, the Minister of the Interior and the Minister for Women's Affairs
- The second run of the exhibition in Vienna took place in November-December 2008 during the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence
- Press conferences were organised to gain media interest

- Shelter and/or helpline workers provided an introduction to the topic, and then walked through the exhibition with the young people viewing it.
- Reports were produced which incorporated questionnaires for completion by both the young people and educational staff. This provided valuable feedback in documenting the impact of the exhibition.

*"In the kids' room, there are these drawings and stories that the kids told of how it was for them, how they had been affected when their mother was abused and was beaten. It really hurts, the stories of the kids."*

## The campaign

'Behind the Façade' is a touring exhibition that has been shown 21 times since March 2007, with each exhibition running for approximately two weeks.

*"On average there are 350 people at one exhibition, so you can say that the exhibition has been seen by about 7,500 people."*

It has received a great reception as a campaigning tool to raise awareness of domestic violence issues, and has been very effective in highlighting the importance of support services and appropriate protective legislation, as well as preventative measures.

*"Women survivors of violence are often traumatised so it is difficult for them to have a voice, and you found a great concept in recording a woman so she doesn't have to repeat it again and again... So that's why I think it's very, very touching and why it has such a big impact on the visitors."*

Information is provided on the wall of the 'flat' about the law in Austria that protects women from violence and abuse. It explains how the law works and how to access support and protection.

## Change achieved

- 'Behind the Façade' provided a clear signal for the general public that the Austrian government attaches great importance to the issue of violence against women.
- The exhibition addressed groups confronted with domestic violence as part of their occupations, and numerous school classes attended the guided tours. Preparation and follow-up sessions were also provided for them.

- A panel discussion on 'Providing protection against violence for migrant women' was held in the course of the exhibition.
- 'Behind the Façade' featured in the "Comments by the Republic of Austria on the Recommendations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)" on August 6, 2007.
- Completed questionnaires have provided important information about public understanding – or the lack of it – of the issues surrounding domestic violence.
- Every school in Austria has been sent information about the exhibition and the issues it covers, and invited to attend a showing.

### From strength to strength

The exhibition is currently touring five towns in Upper Austria. Violence Protection Centres continue to collect visitor numbers and to record comments and reactions.

### For more information

See WAVE's website – [www.wave-network.org](http://www.wave-network.org)

There is also an exhibition website (in German) – [www.hinter-der-fassade.at](http://www.hinter-der-fassade.at)



## Southall Black Sisters' campaign to avoid closure



Credit: Michelle Dillon

### Lead campaigner

**Pragna Patel**, Chair of Southall Black Sisters (SBS).

### Campaign aim

The campaign aim was initially to save the SBS service from closure due to a withdrawal of funding, but more broadly was about addressing issues of equality and cohesion, and the need for 'single identity' groups, which support a particular community based on ethnic, religious or cultural identity.

The move by Ealing Council to cease funding SBS's service came after the Independent Commission on Integration and Cohesion recommended in 2007 that: "the presumption should be against Single

Group Funding unless there is a clear reason for capacity building within a group or community", saying the issue had the "potential to increase insularity and a sense of separation".

In fact the services provided by SBS to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women are 'positive action' in line with the Race Equality Duty, and provide the necessary space for these women to have their needs addressed.

### Background

SBS is a not-for-profit organisation that was established in 1979 to meet the needs of black (Asian and African-Caribbean) women. Its aims are to highlight and challenge violence against women; empower them to gain more control over their lives; live without fear of violence; and assert their human rights to justice, equality and freedom.

*"Addressing poverty is also addressing violence against women, because you are having to address issues of access to education, access to careers, addressing the kind of racial or other discrimination that prevents women from achieving their potential, whether it's in the workplace or within the family. These things are clearly connected... You can't compartmentalise."*

SBS manages a resource centre in West London that provides a comprehensive service to women experiencing violence and abuse. It offers specialist advice, information, casework, advocacy

and counselling, and self-help support services in several community languages.

Since 1984, SBS had been partly funded by Ealing Borough Council, but on 18 September 2007 the council decided that in future it would only fund borough-wide services provided to all individuals experiencing domestic violence, irrespective of gender, race, sexual orientation, faith, age or disability.

SBS expressed concerns to the council that this would have a disproportionately adverse impact on BME women, and pointed out that no race equality impact assessment had been carried out in relation to the decision. An equality impact assessment is a way of examining whether a policy or procedure affects a certain section of the community differently (see 'Impact assessments', page 99).

Under the Race Relations Act, public authorities have a duty to set out their arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies on the promotion of race equality.

The council then withdrew its 18 September decision in order to undertake a "draft equality impact assessment." The draft impact assessment conducted by the council indicated that the impact on BME women would be monitored when the new arrangements were in place. A full equality impact assessment was not completed.

On 26 February 2008, the council confirmed its earlier decision to only fund a single, borough-wide service provider. Following initial negotiations, SBS decided to apply to judicially review this decision. A Judicial Review is a type of court proceeding in which a judge reviews the lawfulness of a decision or action made by a public body.

*"Ealing Council were saying to us that we don't need black and minority (service) groups to exist any more, because their existence somehow causes segregation in society."*

### Strengths/opportunities

- SBS knew that the justification Ealing Council was using for its decision was wrong; there was a principle involved.
- The organisation received strong support from individuals, groups and people in the public eye.
- SBS had a strong sense of responsibility; it wanted to repay the trust placed in it by its users,

and was aware that the issues involved in its campaign had implications for other groups.

- SBS has a high profile, making it easier to get the attention of the media.

### Challenges

- The continuing existence of racism.
- Councillors weren't really interested in issues of violence against women and refused to engage in negotiation with SBS to find an alternative resolution.
- Lack of time and resources – for liaising with lawyers, contacting the media, lobbying, getting women together, leafleting and so on, all of which distracts from service provision.
- The need to continue negotiations and use tools of persuasion while also considering a legal challenge (there is a time limit for a Judicial Review).
- In the current culture of contract commissioning, seeking support from other organisations providing services for women can be difficult.

### Campaign strategy

SBS's first reaction to Ealing Council's decision to fund only a generic service was that the Council hadn't thought the decision through in terms of its impact on a significant group of vulnerable women.

Its initial impulse was to get on the phone and **start lobbying**, and speak to the leader of the Council to convince him of the need for SBS. SBS also started thinking about **other ways of raising funds** and decided to find out what the **legal options** were in terms of challenging the decision.

SBS kept hoping that its 'soft negotiations' with Ealing Council would bear fruit, but as the legal clock was ticking and it had a three-month window in which to apply for a Judicial Review, it was eventually forced to issue notice of legal proceedings, angering the Council leader.

By going ahead with the legal proceedings, SBS was taking a huge risk; if it lost its case, it might never get funding again, from the Council or anyone else.

*"We decided to take the Council to court because we felt that they were actually breaking the law in terms of the Race Relations Act."*

Once the situation had been clarified, it was critical

to let service users know what was happening.

SBS has always placed a strong emphasis on the direct voices of women, and 50 of its service users wrote to the leader of Ealing Council to try to change his mind. In a Council meeting, the leader acknowledged the letters he had received and the impact they had had.

*“Most of them talked about Southall Black Sisters as home, and I think that was something that’s so significant. They (the letters) speak volumes about the kind of isolation that they face, the sheer need for support, somewhere where they feel protected as well, and not judged, not blamed.”*

It was SBS service users who were the applicants for the Judicial Review. Their involvement in the campaign helped them to realise that they could make a difference, enabling them to make the shift from being passive victims to becoming active agents.

The campaign received tremendous support from individuals, organisations and even celebrities.

- Supporters were kept informed of the campaign through SBS’s **website** and **letters**.
- **Template letters** were produced to send to the leader of Ealing Council to raise concerns over the decision to withdraw funding to SBS.
- Some women set up a campaign on **Facebook**, the social networking website.
- SBS used its high profile to attract **media attention**.

## The campaign

The campaign ran for one year, from July 2007 until the case reached the High Court in July 2008. It was well publicised and supported in the lead up to the Judicial Review hearing, and the aim was to have a strong presence at the court so the Judge could see the public concern and would realise the need to be accountable. The courtroom was crowded out and campaigners also demonstrated outside.

On 18 July, the second day of the hearing, Ealing Council withdrew its case. While this may have been a ‘face-saving’ move, SBS asked for a judgement, which it saw as the only way to set some sort of precedent and possibly prevent similar actions by other local authorities.

In response, the Judge reiterated some important principles about equality which have wider ramifications for all those struggling to maintain funding for specialist services and fighting for equality in general.

## Change achieved

- SBS won the case – Ealing Council withdrew on day two of the hearing.
- The Judge gave some strong guidance, reiterating important principles about equality in a clear and helpful way.
- In his written judgement, the Judge confirmed that Ealing Council was “not entitled to formulate policy before any equality impact assessment.” This finding has clear implications for other public authorities that do not undertake equality impact assessments.
- The SBS case is cited by other organisations that have been empowered by its campaign.
- SBS is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year!

## From strength to strength

The SBS case demonstrated that public bodies can be held to account, and the guidance now available should enable all specialist service providers and grassroots groups to fight for their right to exist.

In 2009, the government scrapped its plans to advise local councils not to fund ‘single identity’ groups, saying it had concluded that guidelines were not the way forward.

## For more information

See the SBS website – [www.southallblacksisters.org.uk](http://www.southallblacksisters.org.uk)

# Top tips for successful campaigning

These are the key messages from the five groups that feature in the DVD 'Real Women, Real Power'. We've also put them on a handy set of cards at the back of this toolkit, so wherever you go, you'll never be short of inspiration!

## People power

- Have someone co-ordinating the activism to bring people together.
- Involve all interested and supportive groups and individuals to gain voice and add strength to the campaign message.
- Be aware of your power – 'people power' really can make a difference.
- Speak to the people you are campaigning on behalf of and make sure you give an honest account of their experiences.

*"They didn't just write the letters, they got involved in the campaign, in terms of coming to demonstrations that we organised, and so on. That transforms them from being passive victims to active agents of change."*

## Build support

- Build a coalition of support – we are stronger together!
- Forge effective alliances and team up to campaign (for example, as Object did with the Fawcett Society).
- Link up with sympathetic politicians and decision makers on the 'big picture' issues.
- Make the decision makers sit up and listen and see that the issue is in the public interest.

*"We realised that there were a lot of different groups that had a reason to be interested in this issue. Women's groups, equality groups, human rights organisations, local residents groups and community forums..."*



Credit: Anji Capes

## Widen impact

- For example, the campaign may not simply be about saving jobs; it could have the potential to have a much larger impact on whole communities.
- Recognise where there are wider principles at stake and lever for change on these where possible.

(By the time SBS got to court, its campaign was no longer about funding but about the principles of equality).



## Be strategic

- Identify your strengths and opportunities and think of ways to use these to overcome the challenges you face.
- Decide on the target group(s) you want to reach and consider how you communicate with them. Develop an information database or mailing list'.
- Respond quickly and try to keep up a fast pace to your campaigning; politicians, the media and people generally can rapidly lose interest.
- Consider your options carefully; for example, negotiation versus a more confrontational approach, such as legal action.
- Monitor and review the progress of the campaign, collecting feedback.

## Use the media

- Forge relationships with the media – recognise that this is important in terms of influencing politicians. Be very strong with journalists.

(For example, Object would not let its campaign be used as an excuse for more images of lap dancers to appear in the media.)

- Use the media in a variety of ways – for example, write blogs for websites and letters to newspapers; aim for both television and radio coverage; target local and national media as appropriate.
- Get the message out to the general public, build on existing foundations and challenge old myths.
- Be creative and be visible – the media like strong visuals.

*"We knew that if we were going to stand any chance of being heard, and having... any victory, we should be visible – both inside and outside the court."*

## Get the message across

- Make decisions about how best to approach the issue in order to get the message across.
- Use humour where possible to make the campaign more accessible, to keep spirits up and to attract public attention.
- Be creative and have fun.

## Stand firm, stay focused

*"So I'm standing there with this great big box and I said to the Councillor, 'I'd like to hand over six and a half thousand signatures of my petition'. And this man looked at me and he said it was worthless; he said he was going to accept it but it wasn't worth anything. I thought, how can this man stand there and tell me the voice of Dumfries and Galloway is worthless?"*

- Have the courage of your convictions, and don't be put down by others who seem to have more power and control.
- Be clear about the desired outcome of your campaign.
- Remain consistent in your focus and your message(s).
- Don't be tempted to take on other people's opinions or arguments which move you away from your goal.

**Above all, never give up!**

# Self-analysis

Exercises to help you think reflectively about your group and the services it provides, and consider how you can best achieve change

The process of looking inward as an organisation is an important step in preparing for lobbying and campaigning, as being able to communicate the work of your organisation and the impact your services have is essential.

It's also very important to step back from the demands of service delivery at times in order to think about the role your group or organisation plays, and the need for, and impact of, the services you provide.

This section features a number of exercises to help you think about:

- Where your group is and
- What you can do to achieve change

The following activities can be used to help you think about the role and impact of your organisation, and plan for lobbying work.

## Where is your group?

Activity 1: Timeline.

Activity 2: Assets – what are we good at?

Activity 3: Sources of power.

Activity 4: Power and influence.

Activity 5: What do we look like to others?

## Achieving change

Activity 1: At the end of the rainbow.

Activity 2: One step at a time.

The examples given are all taken from Oxfam GB's work with **Tea in the Pot**, a women's drop-in centre in Glasgow, Scotland, which supports women to feel more confident and take steps towards making a difference in their community.



Credit: Ian MacNicol

## Where is your group? Activity 1: Timeline

### Purpose:

- To identify and chart key moments in a group's history, including highs and lows.
- To increase awareness of the range of factors that shape an organisation, including the motivation of members, practical circumstances and so on.
- To enhance the ability of all members to communicate the work of the group and the impact its services have.

### Resources:

- Pieces of flip chart paper stuck together horizontally.
- Markers.
- Post-it notes.

### How to use:

- Discuss as a group what you want to take as a starting point; for example, it could be the year your organisation was formed, or before. Once this has been decided, mark it at the beginning of the timeline and divide the rest into the years since.

- Give each person a few post-it notes and ask them to write down key moments they remember from their experience of the organisation.
- Get members to take it in turns to place their post-it notes on the timeline, talking through what they have written on each one.
- Encourage discussion of shared experiences, add new ideas as they emerge and try to draw out themes, developing a comprehensive picture of the events and factors that have contributed to the group's development.

### Example: Tea in the Pot's timeline

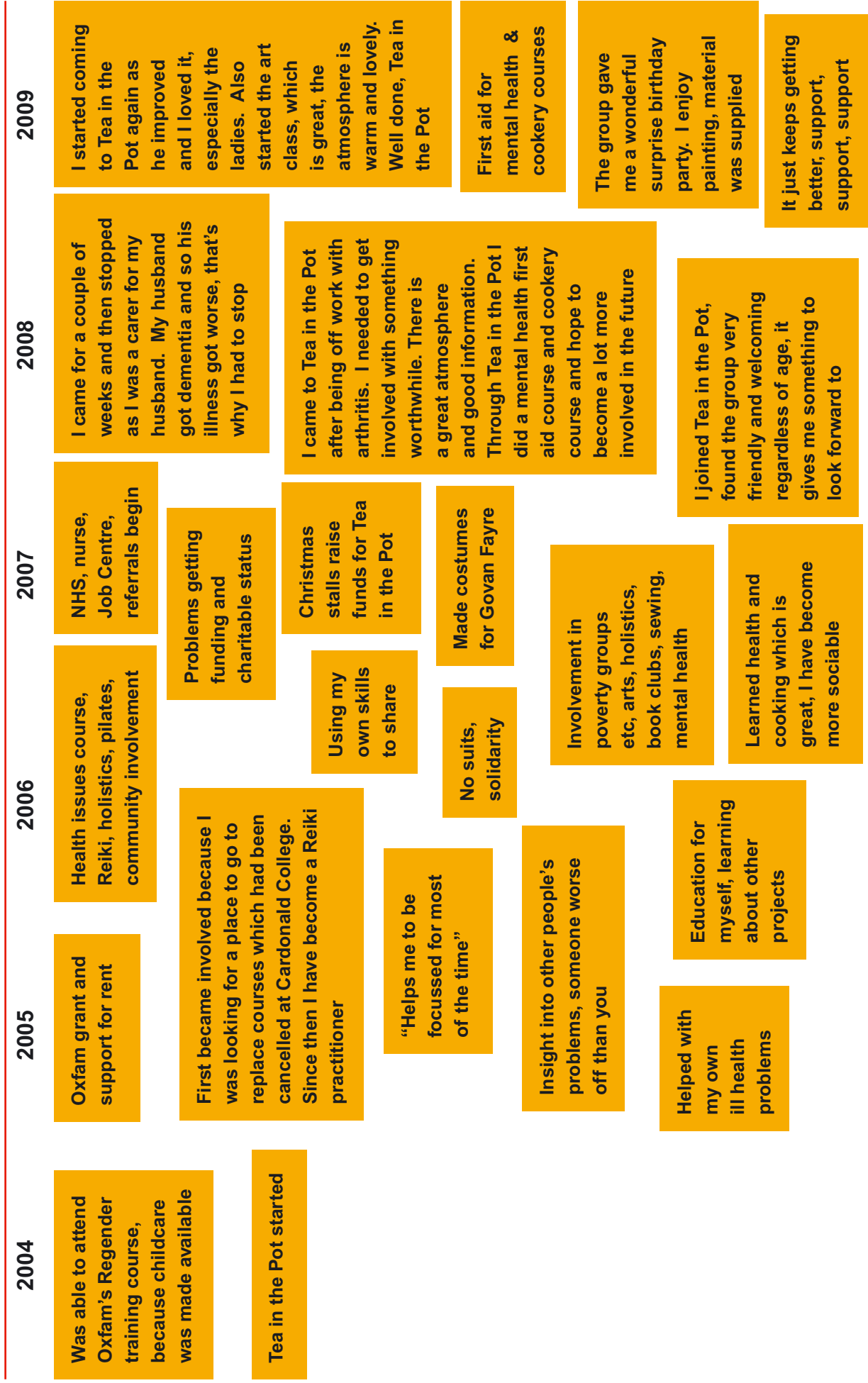
When women involved in the Tea in the Pot drop-in centre came together for a 'Vision Day', they started by looking back at how the drop-in service had developed, producing the timeline on the next page.

The result is a combination of group history and personal stories that provide a valuable insight into what users get out of the centre and why the services it offers are so important.



Credit: Chris Worrall

# Tea in the Pot timeline





## Where is your group?

### Activity 2: Assets – what are we good at?

#### Purpose:

- To help members reflect on what makes their group unique.
- To identify the assets a group has, appreciating that these exist in many shapes and forms.
- To develop a consensus about what an organisation is good at, and why it provides particular services.
- To reinforce, or clarify, the objectives of an organisation.

#### Resources:

- Flip chart sheets.
- Markers.

#### How to use:

- Divide the group into smaller groups of three or four participants.
- Ask each group to think about the ways in which your organisation helps women, and in particular what is special about the services you provide. Remind participants that anything is valid, and often it is the unseen details that make a difference. Give each group one of the following questions to answer, and ask them to record their responses on a flip chart:

#### How does our organisation help women?

#### What is it about our organisation that is special?

#### Why do people come to us rather than using another service?

- As a whole group, bring the discussion together, recording the main points and asking participants to give examples of things they have listed; for example, what services does your group provide that are not available elsewhere in the community?
- Draw out the assets the group has, such as local knowledge, a safe and supportive space, varied life experiences and so on.

#### Example: Tea in the Pot assesses its assets

When the members of Tea in the Pot did this exercise, they came up with the following responses:

##### 1. How does our group help women?

Friendly, welcoming place to come to.

Safe and supportive environment.

Confidential.

Less formal: location at back of the centre can provide opportunities for women to drop in without 'advertising' that they are here.

Practical assistance in raising awareness and supporting education.

Feel confident, relaxed and comfortable.

Can vent frustrations.

Given a voice.

Somewhere to go.

Free tea and biscuits!

Feedback for and from others.

Information.

Learn skills at own pace.

##### 2. What is it about our group that is special?

Warm, women working for women.

No agenda, hidden or otherwise.

Listen to members.

Word of mouth referrals.

Medical skills and improving health.

Trust.

Campaigns – public toilets and NHS 24.

Just ordinary women.

Confidence to use own skills.

Varied life experiences.

Everyone is the same – everyone has been there.

Feel free to talk, non-judgemental.

**3. Why do women come to us rather than using another service?**

Accessible.

Good reputation.

Like-minded women you can rely on.

Not official.

Can be their first steps, then they can move on.

No waiting time, no jargon.

Use our own language.

Doing this activity highlighted a number of themes for the group. Members realised how important the centre's physical location was as a safe space for women, and decided they wanted to retain this rather than seek larger premises.

The process also reinforced that it was the volunteers' local knowledge and skills in engaging with women that had built up trust in the group, leading to referrals from other organisations.

The group decided to try and secure funding from a variety of smaller and 'in-kind' pockets of funding, which would allow the committee and volunteers to retain autonomy over their organisation and the unique way in which they provide services.



Credit: Ian MacNicol

## Where is your group? Activity 3: Sources of power

This activity has been adapted from one in the toolkit 'Into the Lion's Den: a practical guide to including women in regeneration', which can be downloaded from the GenderWorks website<sup>6</sup>.

### Purpose:

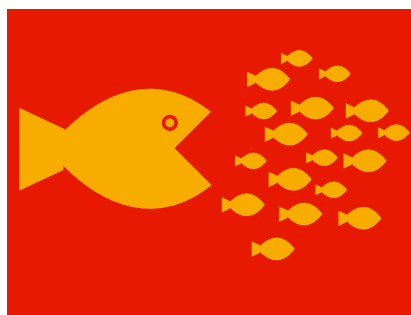
- To raise awareness about different sources of power, both negative and positive, which women can access.
- To raise awareness of how power is exerted over people, and explore the ways in which people can access power themselves.

### Resources:

- The diagrams below
- Flip charts
- Markers.

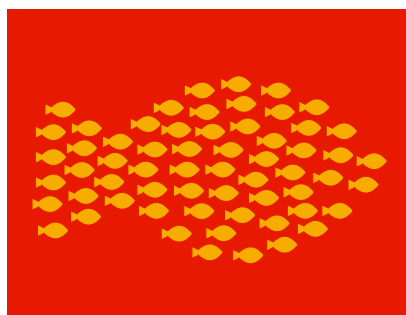
### How to use:

- In small groups, ask women to look at the diagrams below and discuss what the three concepts of 'Power over', 'Power with', and 'Power within' mean to them in their lives.
- Ask women to think about and describe situations in which they have felt powerful, or powerless, and reflect on the language they use to describe experiences of power. Highlight individual stories that illustrate that people are not completely powerless; they may have power through organising, working together or doing what is ethical.



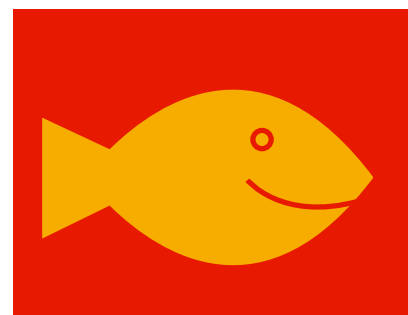
#### Power over

Power over has many negative connotations, such as force, coercion and discrimination. Having power means taking it from someone else, and then using it to dominate and prevent others from gaining it. Those who have control of resources and decision-making could have power over those without. If people are denied access to important resources such as healthcare, jobs, training or other services, power over perpetuates inequality, injustice and poverty.



#### Power with

This has to do with finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength. Power with is based on mutual support, collaboration and solidarity across individual talents and knowledge. It can help build bridges across different interests to promote more equal relations. Groups can seek allies and build coalitions drawing on the notion of power with.



#### Power within

Power within has to do with a person's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge: it includes the ability to recognise individual differences while respecting others. Many grassroots organisations use story telling and reflection to help individuals acknowledge their self-worth and recognise their power within.

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from V Miller & L VeneKlasen (2002) 'A New Weave of Power, People and Politics – The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation, Oklahoma City: World Neighbors (pg 45).  
Diagrams originally by Ken Sprague.

# Where is your group?

## Activity 4: Power and influence

This activity has been adapted from one in the toolkit 'Into the Lion's Den: a practical guide to including women in regeneration', which can be downloaded from the GenderWorks website.

### Purpose:

- To identify external bodies that have the resources and power to set local agendas and make decisions.
- To demonstrate that small organisations can engage with local authorities.
- To help organisations become aware of how visible they are to other organisations.
- To help groups identify which external bodies are allies and which they could or should engage with in advocacy work.

### Resources:

- Flip chart
- Post-it notes.

### How to use:

- As a group, write down on post-it notes the names of government bodies, decision-making organisations and local service providers that have the resources and power to set local agendas and make decisions.

Make a note of other voluntary-sector organisations that influence or are connected to the work of your organisation.

- Arrange the organisations roughly in order of power, from 'high power' at the top to 'low power' at the bottom. (It may be worth referring to or reminding participants of the previous session, which looks at forms of power.)
- Shorten the list to the 10 bodies most relevant to your group's work.
- On a flip chart, answer the following questions for each body:

Do they know we exist? Are they an ally?

Do we provide a service for them? What?

Do we currently engage with them? How?

Should we be trying to engage with them? Why?

(See the example table below.)

- By the end of the exercise, the group should be able to prioritise which external bodies or public figures they wish to engage with.
- Lead the group onto a more focused discussion about the ways in which they can contact certain groups, or begin to develop more strategic relationships. Although small organisations often approach local authorities in relation to their needs (for example, funding), they can also engage with them from other starting points; for example, by making them aware of the duty on local authorities to consult with small organisations.

### Example:

The power and influence chart below provides examples of the kind of entries you might come up with.

External body	Do they know we exist? Are they an ally?	Do we provide a service for them? What?	Do we currently engage with them? How?	Should we be attempting to engage with them? Why?
Housing association	Yes.	Yes: we talk to clients about benefits.	Not really, but they do send people to us for advice.	Yes: we are providing a service for them, so we may be able to influence them.
Local MP	Yes, but we are not allies.	Not directly, but we do tell people how to contact their MP.	No, not really (but we did invite him to the summer fair!)	Yes, because we run a service in his constituency.





Credit: Chris Worrall

## Where is your group? Activity 5: What do we look like to others?

### Purpose:

- To help women's groups prepare for influencing and campaigning work.
- To help women's groups think about how they record their work and present themselves to others; for example, when accessing funding or engaging with public bodies.
- To identify gaps in a group's resources, or develop a series of action points; for example, an organisation should ensure it has a good record of its work before approaching a local authority to ask for financial assistance to deliver services.

### Resources:

- Copies of the questions below
- Pens.

### How to use:

- Divide the group into smaller groups of four/ five participants, and give them different groups of questions to discuss. They may want to give a rating for how their organisation performs in relation to each section; for example, 'good', 'fair', 'poor' and so on.

- Encourage participants to explain what they have written; for example, the organisation may have a board of trustees, but is it active? Does it steer and support the work of the organisation?
- Remember, you don't need to be able to tick all of these questions (or even any of them!) to start campaigning; they are just to help you think about things that might help...



If your group wishes to carry out this type of exercise in a more structured way, formal checklists are available that cover issues such as charitable status, end-of-year accounts, holding Annual General Meetings and so on.

A useful first reference point is the website that acts as a focal point for community and voluntary action in your region; for example, in England, see NAVCA's website ([www.navca.org.uk](http://www.navca.org.uk)); in Scotland, check out the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations site ([www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)); and if you're based in Wales, see WCVA's website ([www.wcva.org.uk](http://www.wcva.org.uk)).



Credit: Ian MacNicol

## Some questions to think about:

### Purpose / Mission statement

- Does our group have a clear purpose and mission statement?
- How do we communicate our mission statement?

### Management

- How is the work of our organisation directed? For example, do we have a steering group or board of trustees?
- How often does our board of trustees meet and how do we communicate with them?

### Finances

- Do we keep a clear record of our income and expenditure?
- Do we have timely and clear communications with organisations or individuals that support our work financially?
- How we develop relationships with potential donors?

### Record keeping

- Does our organisation provide a service to the community? How do we know?
- How do we record the services we provide, and the impact they make?
- Do we collect and keep data on the services we provide? For example, how many people access the service and how do they benefit?
- Do we have any case studies or records of how our work has impacted on peoples' lives?

### Communications

- How do we communicate with others about the work of our organisation?
- Do we send out regular emails or newsletters, or place leaflets in key public places? Is our website up to date and informative?

### Relationships and accountability

- Do we build good relationships with service users? How does this happen?
- Do some service users start volunteering or contribute in other ways?
- How do people find out about our organisation/services?

### Networking

- Do we have links with organisations doing similar work?
- Are we networked within the voluntary sector and among relevant public bodies?

### Engagement and influencing

- Is our organisation represented on relevant committees and forums at local and regional levels?
- Do we feel we have the resources, people and commitment to engage in influencing and campaigning work?



Credit: Chris Worrall

## Achieving change

### Activity 1: At the end of the rainbow

This activity has been adapted from one in the toolkit 'Into the Lion's Den: a practical guide to including women in regeneration', which can be downloaded from the GenderWorks website.

#### Purpose:

To help a group develop a clear vision of the issues it wants to address through campaigning and influencing work over a period of one or two years.

#### Resources:

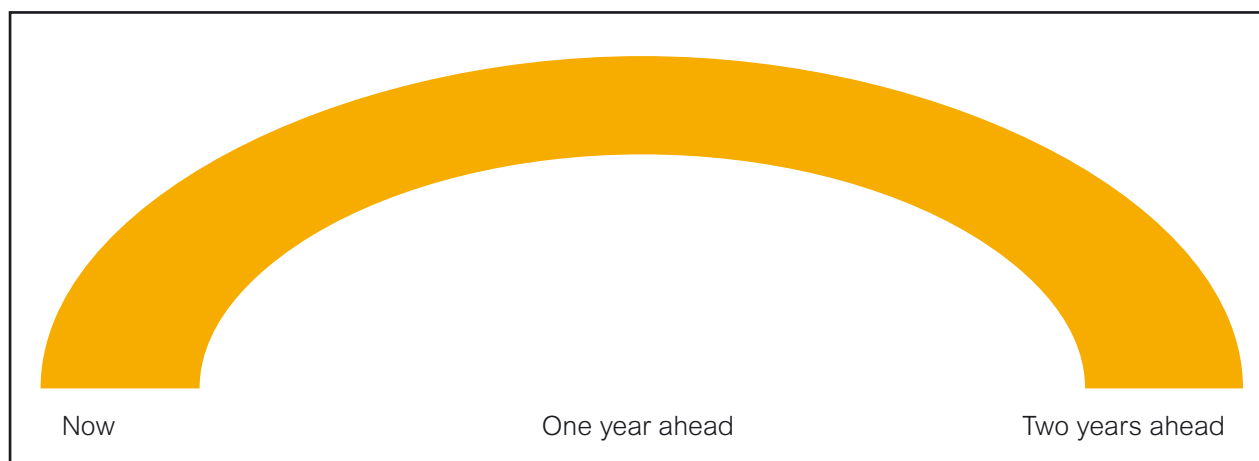
- Flip charts
- Marker pens
- Post-it notes
- Flip chart sheets joined together with a large rainbow drawn across, as in the diagram below.

#### How to use:

- Ask participants to think of a situation or issue they would like to influence, and to write it on a post-it note. It might be a general issue, or

participants might refer to a local event or policy that has affected them.

- As a group, share the issues highlighted and cluster similar issues together into themes. Some participants may come up with issues that are of particular interest to them as individuals, as well as more general themes that are shared with the rest of the group. This process needs to be facilitated carefully, to ensure the rainbow contains issues that are of collective interest.
- Finally, place the post-it notes on the rainbow in the following groups:
  - Now: Issues which are already being, or are in the process of being, addressed.
  - Soon/one year ahead: Issues the group would like to influence or campaign on, and can do so with little outside support.
  - Later/two years ahead: Issues which are of concern, but require long-term action and/or significant outside assistance.



## **Achieving change** **Activity 2: One step at a time**

### **Purpose:**

- To help groups plan effectively to reach organisational goals or carry out campaigning and influencing work.
- To break down longer-term goals into step-by-step processes, and highlight how different steps link with other parts of a group's work.

### **Resources:**

- Markers
- Flip chart
- Card/flip chart paper cut into circles ('stepping stones').

### **How to use:**

- Ask participants to select a long-term goal or campaigning issue they would like their group to address, and write it on a piece of card. Make sure this card is easily identifiable as the intended end result; for example, by circling it or using a particular colour of card.
- As a group, discuss the things that need to happen in order to reach this goal. For example, the group may need to form a relationship with the local authority in order to lobby; seek some external expertise; improve record-keeping systems; carry out some basic research; or make contact with a group with more campaigning experience.
- Write each idea on a separate piece of card, or 'stepping stone'.
- Spread all the pieces of card out and then

arrange them logically, taking the group's current situation as the starting point. As the activity progresses, it may become apparent that reaching the end goal is not a linear process. The exercise may also highlight new interim goals.

- The end result should provide a sort of 'route-map' for the group to follow in order to achieve its goals and campaign aims, which can then be incorporated into a time-bound action plan.

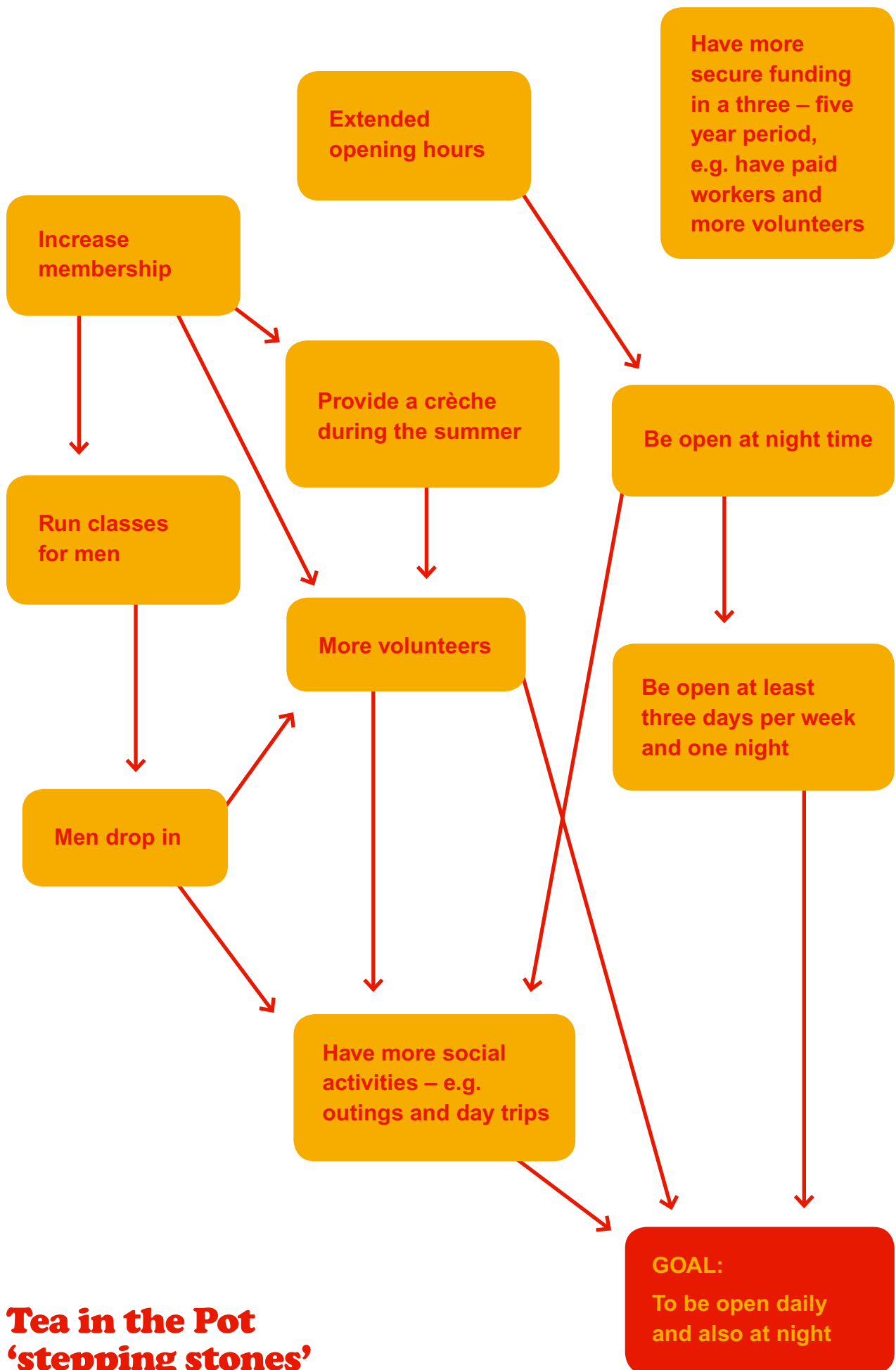
### **Example: Tea in the Pot plots a route to its goal**

When the Tea in the Pot women's drop-in centre did this activity, it set itself the goal of opening daily and also in the evenings, so that more people could access its services. It wanted to be accessible to teenagers and young women, for example, as well as to men.

The diagram opposite illustrates the different steps plotted by the group that would lead to this goal.

The centre set itself interim goals of starting to open in the evenings, and to gradually increase the number of days it was open. The group recognised that it would need more volunteers to run the service, and thought that providing classes might be a way to increase its membership and attract new volunteers.

It also realised that social interaction was an asset that served to strengthen the identity of the volunteer base: through their involvement with the group, volunteers provide services but also have fun, socialising and enjoying each other's company.



**Tea in the Pot  
'stepping stones'**

# Lobbying letters

Writing lobbying letters is a quick, easy and cost-effective way to campaign.

You could write a personal letter to your MP or local councillor, asking them to take a specific action, or to your local or national newspaper to raise awareness of an issue.

You could also draw up a standard or template letter and encourage as many other people or groups as possible to send it, in order to demonstrate the public concern that surrounds an issue.

There are a number of guides available to help you decide who to write to, and what to say. For example:

- The **Fawcett Society's guide to writing letters** (see [www.fawcettsociety.org.uk](http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk)) covers everything you need to think about when writing to local newspapers or companies, MPs or local councillors, and includes a section on mass letter-writing campaigns.

There are separate guides to help you lobby your MP (including finding out who they are and how to contact them) and your local government, covering how councils are structured and how to get hold of their agendas.

- The **International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) website** ([www.icbl.org](http://www.icbl.org)) features a comprehensive guide to writing a lobbying letter, which covers: why to write one, who to target, how to write effectively and what kind of letter.

The following tips on what a typical letter should include has been adapted from ICBL's guide:

- Your address (right-hand side).
- The official's salutation (e.g. 'Right Honourable'), title (e.g. 'Prime Minister'), name and address (left-hand side).

- The date in full (left-hand side).
- The name of the official and correct salutation/greeting (e.g. 'Dear').
- First paragraph: why are you writing? (for example, in response to a public statement or to follow up a previous request.) Say whether you are writing on behalf of others or an organisation, or in your personal capacity, and what has prompted you to do so.
- Second and third paragraphs/body of the letter: develop your argument, backing it up with facts, figures, specific cases, quotes and relevant legislation.
- Final paragraph: what action would you like the official to take? (For example, send you information, grant you a meeting).
- Closure (e.g. 'Yours sincerely' or 'Yours faithfully').
- Your signature, name and if appropriate, your title and organisation.
- Copies: state who has received a copy of this letter.

On the following pages are a number of letters that have been used in different campaigns and can be adapted to suit your needs.





## A personal letter to a local newspaper

This is a template letter drawn up by Object ([www.object.org.uk](http://www.object.org.uk)) and the Fawcett Society ([www.fawcettsociety.org.uk](http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk)) to be sent to a local newspaper to call for tighter regulation of lap dancing.

<YOUR ADDRESS>

< NAME & ADDRESS OF EDITOR >

< DATE >

Dear Editor,

Residents in <YOUR TOWN/CITY> don't currently have a say in whether lap-dancing clubs can open in our area. They are licensed in exactly the same way as cafes and pubs, despite being part of the sex industry. This has been highlighted in a national campaign run by the Fawcett Society and Object.

The Government has pledged to tackle the problem, but their proposals don't go far enough. The reforms contained in the Home Office's Policing and Crime Bill, currently being debated by MPs, exempt venues providing lap dancing less than once a month. The reforms will also be voluntary – local authorities won't have to adopt them. The result? Ordinary pubs and clubs holding 'strip nights' will become more common, lap dancing agencies catering for this sub-market will prosper, and residents will face a postcode lottery over whether they do actually get a greater say in the licensing process.

<YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY> should urge the Government to make licensing reforms universal and applicable to all venues, however frequently they host lap dancing. I also urge <NAME OF NEWSPAPER> and your readers to add their voices by signing a petition to the Government at <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/lapdance-reforms/>

Our community should be guaranteed a greater say.

Yours sincerely,

<YOUR NAME

YOUR ADDRESS>



## Letters to politicians

Template email drawn up by GenderWorks partners for women's organisations to send to national contact points for social inclusion issues, asking to be involved in the process of drawing up a National Action Plan (see page 91).

<YOUR ADDRESS>

< NAME & ADDRESS OF EDITOR >

<DATE>

Dear <INSERT NAME OF YOUR NATIONAL CONTACT POINT – SEE [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/spsi/contacts\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/contacts_en.htm)>

The European Commission (EC) foresees the involvement of stakeholders and relevant non-governmental organisations in the process of drafting the National Action Plans on Social Inclusion (NAPs), and our organisation is very keen to contribute.

The EC has published a gender mainstreaming handbook for guidance when drafting the NAPs, and in its joint report on the action plans for 2006 said that there is still “considerable room for ensuring that policy measures are better informed by gender considerations”.

As an organisation that works on issues of gender and poverty, we feel we could make a valuable contribution to the NAP process. Please let us know how we can best give you our feedback and be involved in producing the NAP for 2010.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

<INSERT YOUR NAME AND ORGANISATION>

Template letter drawn up by the European Women's Lobby ([www.womenlobby.org](http://www.womenlobby.org)) to be sent to the leaders of political parties to lobby for a woman president of the European Parliament and 50 per cent women as (vice) chairs of European Parliament committees. (This letter was written shortly after the June 2009 elections.)

<DATE AND PLACE>

To: \_\_\_\_\_, Head of <NAME OF POLITICAL PARTY>

Dear <MADAM OR SIR>

**Re: European election results, next President as well as Chairs and Vice-chairs of Committees of the new European Parliament**

I am writing on behalf of <ADD NAME OF ORGANISATION> in support of the European Women's Lobby (EWL) 50/50 Campaign for Democracy (<http://www.5050democracy.eu/>) in relation to negotiations between political parties regarding the next European Parliament President as well as Chairs and Vice-chairs of Committees of the new European Parliament.

According to preliminary figures the recent European elections have resulted in a slight progress in the representation of women in the European Parliament (EP), which now reaches about 35% (compared to about 30% at the beginning of the 1999-2004 term) but still doesn't attain parity or even the 40% of women threshold agreed by Member States of the Council of Europe.

You now have, as a political party leader, an excellent opportunity and indeed responsibility to show renewed commitment to ensuring the equal representation of women and men within the governing structure of the EP, and in particular in the negotiations regarding the appointment of the next President of the European Parliament, Chairs and Vice-chairs of the Parliament's committees as well as other posts (EP Bureau, Quaestors, Vice chairs).

A number of criteria have been mentioned in the discussions regarding the next European Parliament President (such as nationality, political affiliation and even country size). Regrettably, gender is mostly lacking from these considerations, while gender equality is a fundamental value and mission of the EU. I would hence like to remind you of the importance of considering gender as a legitimate and important criterion when selecting the next President, whom we hope to be a woman.

Furthermore, during the 2004-2009 term only about 25% of the Chairs and Vice-chairs of the European Parliament committees were women. This number needs to be significantly improved in order for the EP to be able to call itself truly inclusive of the European population in the way it functions and make decisions that concern all.

I look forward to hearing from you on this topic and in the meantime, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

<SIGNATURE>

<TITLE, ORGANISATION>



# Letters to local authorities about the Gender Equality Duty

Template letter to a local authority in England or Scotland requesting information on what steps have been taken to implement the Gender Equality Duty.

<YOUR NAME>

<YOUR ORGANISATION>

<YOUR ADDRESS>

<NAME OF GENDER EQUALITY OFFICER>

<NAME OF LOCAL AUTHORITY>

<ADDRESS OF LOCAL AUTHORITY>

<DATE>

Dear <INSERT NAME OF GENDER EQUALITY OFFICER>

The Gender Equality Duty came into force on 6 April 2007, and places a legal requirement on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

The duty applies to all functions of public bodies including: policymaking, service provision, employment matters, statutory discretion and decision-making.

I am writing as a representative of <INSERT NAME OF YOUR ORGANISATION> to request further information on:

- How your organisation has gathered and used information on how your policies and practices affect gender equality in the delivery of services.
- How your organisation has gone about consulting with stakeholders to take account of relevant information in order to determine gender equality objectives.
- The impact assessment carried out to determine how proposed policies and practices will impact on gender equality.

You will notice that the requests above are consistent with the specific duties of the legislation.

I look forward to your prompt response.

Yours faithfully,

<YOUR NAME>

<YOUR ORGANISATION>

## Template letter to a local authority in Wales requesting information on what steps have been taken to implement the Gender Equality Duty.

<YOUR NAME>

<YOUR ORGANISATION>

<YOUR ADDRESS>

<NAME OF GENDER EQUALITY OFFICER>

<NAME OF LOCAL AUTHORITY>

<ADDRESS OF LOCAL AUTHORITY>

<DATE>

Dear <INSERT NAME OF GENDER EQUALITY OFFICER>

The Gender Equality Duty came into force on 6 April 2007, and places a legal requirement on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

The duty applies to all functions of public bodies including: policymaking, service provision, employment matters, statutory discretion and decision-making.

I am writing as a representative of <YOUR ORGANISATION> to request further information on what action your organisation has taken to implement the requirements of the duty.

I would be particularly interested in information on how your organisation consults with stakeholders and service users in order to determine gender equality objectives, and how you go about assessing how proposed policies and practices will impact on gender equality.

I look forward to your prompt response.

Yours faithfully,

<YOUR NAME>

<YOUR ORGANISATION.>

# Language, terminology and human rights

***“I feel much more empowered to change my language from needs to rights, and that we have a right to use the human rights act” – participant in the GenderWorks’ project’s ‘Making the Gender Duty Work’ training session***

Language and terminology are important. Understanding the best ways to use language when communicating with funders and policy makers can help women’s groups argue their cases more effectively.

Using human rights language and a human rights based approach to talk about inequality, poverty and disadvantage is much more powerful than talking about needs.

Talking about rights is also a much more powerful way of articulating and justifying the essential services provided by the women’s sector.

## **RIGHTS vs NEEDS: A distinction<sup>7</sup>**

- A right “is something to which one is entitled solely by virtue of being a person... enables a person to live with dignity... can be enforced... and entails government obligation”.
- A need “is an aspiration that can be quite legitimate but not necessarily associated with an obligation by government to cater to it. The satisfaction of a need cannot be enforced. Human rights make the difference between being and just merely existing”.

## **Human rights**

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world.

Ideas about human rights have evolved over many centuries. But they achieved strong international support following the Holocaust and Second World War. To protect future generations from a repeat of these horrors, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

In the UK, the Human Rights Act 1998 has made these rights part of our domestic law, and there are now courts which can hear human rights cases.

Rosa Parks, the catalyst for the civil rights

movement in the United States, had actually been on human rights training prior to her individual protest, when she refused to stand up to allow a white person to take her seat on a bus.

*“I was just trying to let them know how I felt about being treated as a human being.”*

## **Core human rights principles and beliefs**

**As set out by the British Institute of Human Rights ([www.bih.org.uk](http://www.bih.org.uk))**

There are core principles upon which human rights are based:

**Fairness** – the right to a fair trial.

**Respect** – respect for family life.

**Equality** – freedom from discrimination.

**Dignity** – freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment.

**Autonomy** – respect for private life.

Central human rights beliefs:

- As human beings we are all born with human rights.
- The whole of society will be stronger if we are empowered to realise our own human rights and able to defend those of others.
- Human rights are a set of important principles that can be used in practical ways to create a fairer, more decent society.
- The value of human rights for individuals and society will only be fully realised if they are embraced as a full set of interdependent rights, spanning civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

GenderWorks worked with women’s organisations in the UK to support their understanding of these rights and demonstrate their day-to-day relevance,

<sup>7</sup> From the United Nations Development Programme poverty practice note.

particularly around their ability to take part in decisions made by public authorities.

### Links between human rights and poverty

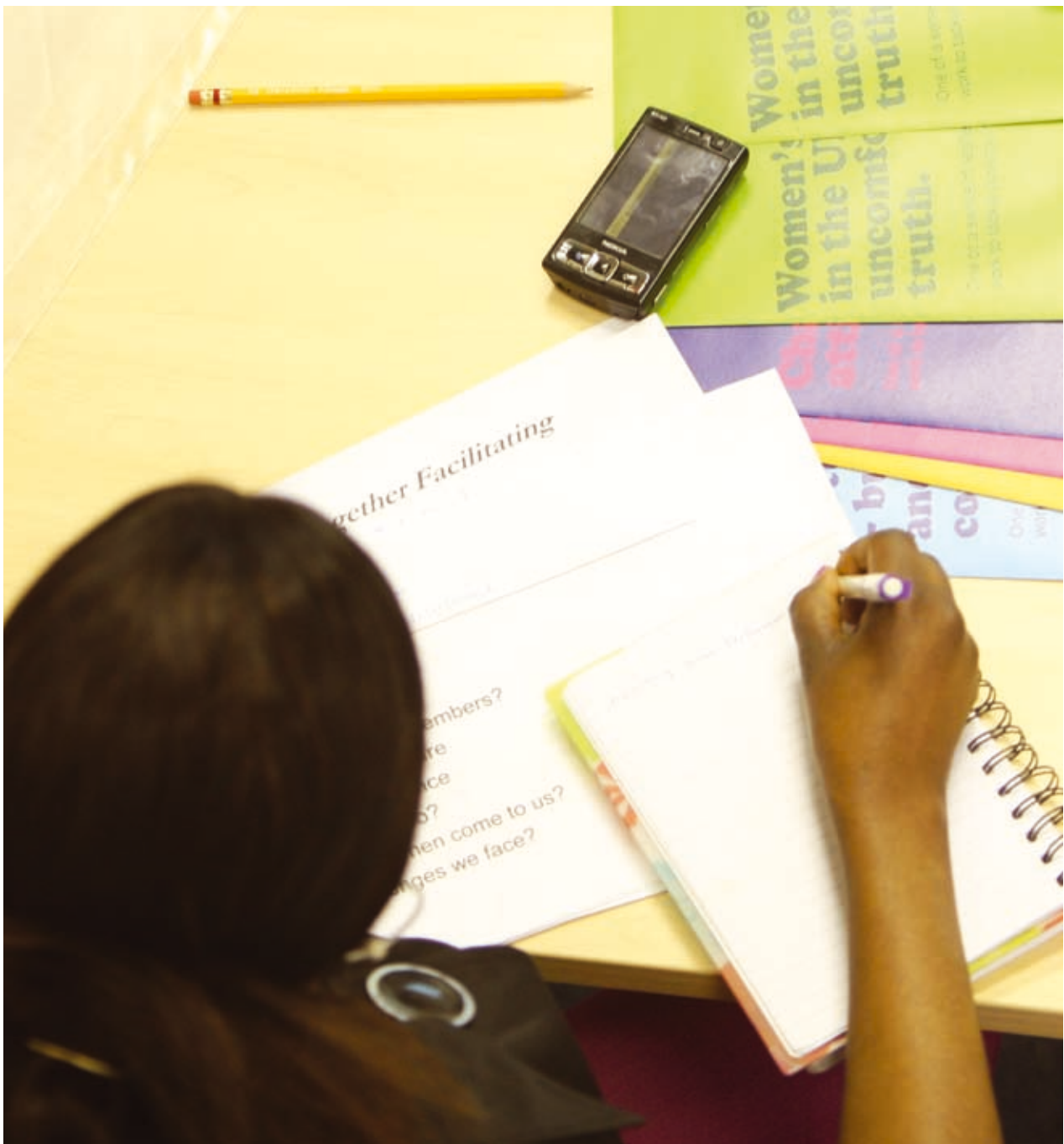
As set out by the British Institute of Human Rights ([www.bih.org.uk](http://www.bih.org.uk))

- Poverty can be seen as a lack of enjoyment of human rights.
- Poverty can be both a cause and a consequence of human rights abuses.

- Economic, social and cultural rights define the minimum acceptable standards of living, including housing, nutrition, clothing and access to healthcare.



For more information, see the British Institute of Human Rights website ([www.bih.org.uk](http://www.bih.org.uk)). Read 'Poverty, inequality and human rights', a Joseph Rowntree Foundation publication available on its website ([www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)).





## Case study: Seven Towers and the right to adequate housing



Credit: PPR Project

This case study is adapted from the **Participation and the Practice of Rights Project** website ([www.pprproject.org](http://www.pprproject.org)).

The **Seven Towers** is a housing development in the New Lodge area of north Belfast that consists of approximately 380 flats in high-rise blocks.

There are numerous and significant housing issues for residents which affect their enjoyment of the **right to adequate housing**, ranging from maintenance work and sewage problems to the unsuitability of high-rise living for some families and individuals.

Following a series of meetings with the Participation and the Practice of Rights Project (PPR Project), Seven Towers residents began to devise locally monitored human rights indicators which could measure change, or otherwise, over a defined period.

These indicators were based on issues that had been identified by the residents as possible violations of their right to adequate housing. They included:

- accumulation of pigeon waste in communal areas,
- sewage ingress and drainage problems,
- dampness and mould,
- ongoing housing of families with young children in the Towers,
- response of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to reported problems and complaints, and
- the participation of residents in decisions which affect their housing conditions.

The residents then set locally defined human rights indicators and benchmarks around their selected issues, which could be measured by residents across a 12-month period to establish whether or not the government was progressing their right to housing.

This approach provided the opportunity for residents to articulate in an extremely tangible, and measurable, fashion what the 'right to adequate housing' meant to them and how the relevant statutory agencies could act positively to fulfil these rights – **as they are obliged to do**.

On 13 June 2007, residents held an Evidence Hearing on the Right to Housing with a panel of international housing rights experts to present housing rights violations in the Seven Towers following their research. The testimonies were supplemented by evidence from other housing and human rights organisations, academics and lawyers.

Following the Evidence Hearing, the residents were visited by the Minister for Social Development with responsibility for housing, who committed her department to working with the residents to ensure that the human rights indicators and benchmarks were met over the coming 12 months.

To this end, she pledged to appoint an official from her office to work with and receive reports from the Seven Towers Monitoring Group, a group who were appointed to monitor progress or otherwise on the human rights indicators.



Read the PPR Project's report on its website, [www.pprproject.org](http://www.pprproject.org)

You can also watch videos about the project at: [www.youtube.com/user/PPRProject](https://www.youtube.com/user/PPRProject)



## Activity: Exploring human rights terms

### Purpose:

- To enable participants to explore human rights terminology.
- To help women use human rights language and arguments in their campaigning.

### Resources:

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Cards with human rights principles on them: Equality, Dignity, Respect, Fairness, Autonomy.

### How to use:

Split the group into smaller groups, giving each one a human rights term card.

Ask the groups to think about

- What the terms on the cards mean to them personally.
- What the terms mean for women's equality.

Ask them to give practical examples, recording their thoughts on a flip chart.

After 10-15 minutes, get the group back together and ask participants to feed back their thoughts.

## Activity: From needs to rights

This activity has been adapted from one used in training sessions by the **British Institute of Human Rights** ([www.bihar.org.uk](http://www.bihar.org.uk)).

### Purpose:

- To enable participants to think about shifting from talking about 'needs' to talking about 'rights'

### Resources:

- Flip chart
- Markers.

### How to use:

Split the group into smaller groups. Ask them to think about and discuss the way your group presents the issues of the people you work with or for.

- Do you focus on 'needs'?
- If you focused on 'rights' instead of needs, what would be the difference for
  - your organisation?
  - the people themselves?

Ask them to give practical examples, recording their thoughts on a flip chart.

After 10-15 minutes, get the group back together and ask participants to feed back their thoughts.

# If you've got a minute...

**Practical suggestions about what you and your group can do in a minute, an hour, a morning or a day.**

## **If you're on your own and you've got....**

### **...a minute**

Download one of the lobbying kits from our list of 'Useful reading' and print it out to read later.

### **...10 minutes**

See if you can find your local authority's Gender Equality Scheme on its website. If you can't, make a note of who to contact about it later.

### **...half an hour**

Use a template letter to write to your local newspaper, asking the council to take action on the issue you are campaigning about.

### **...an hour**

Set up an online social networking group to create a community of people interested in the issue you want to campaign on. Social networking websites include Bebo ([www.bebo.com](http://www.bebo.com)), FaceBook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)), MySpace ([www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)).

### **...half a day**

See if you can come up with some content for a newsletter that explains why you are campaigning on your chosen issue, what events you've got planned and what you would like readers to do to support the campaign.

### **...a day**

If you have some leaflets or flyers that explain what you are campaigning on and why, take them to all the key public places where you think potential supporters might read them and ask if they can be displayed somewhere.

## **If you're with other members of your group and you've got...**

### **...a minute**

Hand round the list of useful things to read (opposite), and ask each member to choose one resource to read and feed back the following week.

### **...10 minutes**

Have an ideas session to come up with a list of organisations or networks you could form alliances with to campaign on your chosen issue.

### **...half an hour**

Research a local venue where you can hold a meeting and book a slot at a convenient time so that you can bring supporters of your campaign together and plan how to take it forward.

### **...an hour**

Come up with some content for a postcard or flyer to raise awareness of the issue you are campaigning on, and research printing costs.

### **...half a day**

Find the contact details for journalists on local newspapers, websites and radio stations and phone each of them, telling them about your campaign and asking them to cover it as a matter of local interest.

### **...a day**

Draw up a petition on the issue you are campaigning about, take it to your local high street and ask people to show their support by signing it.

# Useful reading

**A selection of training packs and lobbying kits to help you achieve change.**

## **Engendering Change – ‘Making a Difference’ Training Pack**

*(Fran Loots and Jeanette Timmins, 2002)*

This pack is for those who want to work with others to get their voices heard. It is aimed at people with existing group-work skills and preferably some experience of training. It is anticipated that you will have some knowledge of political processes and know how to research information when up-to-date facts are required.

You can either follow it as it is laid out, in which case it should be self-contained, or dip into it, in which case you need to think through the purpose of an exercise, what you are trying to achieve and so on.

### **Aim:**

The aim of the training is to provide women with the tools to help their organisations get their voices heard by decision makers.

### **Objectives:**

By the end of the course participants should have:

- An understanding of decision-making processes.
- An understanding of some of the barriers to equality.
- Skills to put together and make their case effectively.
- Lobbying and campaigning skills.
- Skills to help them think strategically and build alliances.
- Confidence to take their case forward.

### **Who is the course aimed at?**

This course is intended for women who are active in the voluntary sector in either a paid or unpaid capacity. It is intended for women who have:

- Some experience of campaigning and trying to make their case.
- Taken part in some basic confidence-building/assertiveness training.

- An issue they want to do something about.
- A focus on women experiencing isolation.

For a copy of this lobbying kit, contact Engender ([www.engender.org.uk](http://www.engender.org.uk))

## **Women's Lobby Kit – Women Influencing South Lanarkshire Council**

*(Produced by Jeanette Timmins for Engender – The Women's Information, Research and Networking Organisation in Scotland, 2007).*

A practical 'how to' guide for women in South Lanarkshire to develop effective lobbying skills.

“Local government is an integral part of the national structures of governance and the level of government closest to the citizens. Therefore it is in the best position both to involve women in the making of decisions concerning their living conditions and to make use of their knowledge and capabilities in the promotion of sustainable development.” (IULA Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government, 1998).

This practical guide outlines the different ways to make your views known to your local council (the principles are not limited to communicating with South Lanarkshire and can be applied to any local authority).

For a copy of this lobbying kit, contact Engender ([www.engender.org.uk](http://www.engender.org.uk))

## **European Women's Lobby – Lobbying Kit ‘No Modern European Democracy without Gender Equality’, 2008**

This lobbying kit will give you the tools and arguments to call for more women to be appointed to decision-making positions and for women's views to be represented in European debates and policies.

In the first section you'll find an action kit, which includes steps you can take with EWL to improve the presence of women in European decision-making. The second section provides in-depth

information and clarifies certain myths in relation to parity democracy and quotas.

The kit aims at helping women's non-governmental organisations and other interested actors to put pressure on political parties and decision makers to introduce measures to advance parity. The kit is available in English and French.

This lobbying kit can be downloaded from the EWL website, [www.womenlobby.org](http://www.womenlobby.org)

### **Fawcett Society – Lobbying guides**

A series of guides full of practical tips for lobbying and raising the profile of your campaign, including:

- Lobbying local government.
- Lobbying your MP.
- Writing letters.
- Using the media.
- Women's votes – myths and reality.
- Gender and political participation.

These guides can be accessed from the Fawcett Society website, [www.fawcettsociety.org.uk](http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk)

### **Oxfam – ‘Into the lion’s den: a practical guide to including women in regeneration’**

This guide aims to develop the capacity of community-based groups in regeneration areas by providing the tools and techniques for them to hold decision makers to account. It follows the examples of three local women's groups who worked to ensure that they were involved in local regeneration initiatives. Throughout the guide, there are illustrated practical examples of tools that were used with the ReGender pilot groups.

This action pack can be downloaded from Object's website: [www.object.org.uk](http://www.object.org.uk) 'Into the lion's den' can be downloaded from the Resources page on the GenderWorks website, [www.oxfam.org.uk/genderworks](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/genderworks)

### **Object – ‘Feminist Fridays’ Action Pack**

'Feminist Fridays' consist of groups around the country coordinating actions to challenge misogynistic lads' mags being sold as part of the mainstream media. They are a fun way to take a stand against 'sex object culture' and to spread grassroots feminist activism.

This pack is designed to support and inspire groups and individuals to take action.

It includes:

- Examples and ideas for Feminist Friday actions.
- Legality of actions.
- 'Protester pointers'.
- Feminist Fridays 'Comebacks'.
- Leaflet on lads' mags (for activists to print and make copies).
- A petition calling for lads' mags to be recognised and regulated as porn (for activists to print and make copies).

This action pack can be downloaded from Object's website: [www.object.org.uk](http://www.object.org.uk)

### **Save the Children – ‘How to campaign, a beginner’s guide’**

This short guide aims to give you a brief overview of campaigning – what it's all about, some handy techniques and tactics, and an insight into how Save the Children runs its own campaigns.

For a copy of this guide contact Save the Children at [www.savethechildren.org.uk](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk) or call 020 7012 6400

### **European Network Against Racism (ENAR) – Toolkit No.1: ‘Successful campaigning’**

This toolkit offers a basic overview of useful campaigning tips and advice for people with little or no experience of campaigning activities. Conceived as a capacity-building and empowerment tool, it presents the basics of good campaigning: what is campaigning? How do you undertake effective campaigning? Why collect information? How do you set objectives? How do you choose a methodology?

This toolkit can be downloaded from the Campaigns section of the ENAR website, [www.enar-eu.org](http://www.enar-eu.org)

### **National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) – “Tips on good practice in campaigning”**

*(Jim Coe and Tess Kingham)*

This report is a straightforward and practical guide aimed at anyone using their skills, judgement

and energy to influence others in order to deliver positive social change (or in some cases to defend the status quo from attack). This very much includes people who may not consider themselves to be 'campaigners' but who are nevertheless involved in efforts to influence certain decision makers.

For a copy of this report, contact NCVO at [www.ncvo-vol.org](http://www.ncvo-vol.org)

### **National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) – 'Campaigning Effectiveness – Influencing the European Union'**

Lobbying at the EU level can mean that you are campaigning right at the source of decision making, as often legislation begins in the EU before it is passed as law in member countries.

By linking up with campaigners and decision makers, NCVO has developed a central resource to help demystify the EU. Work your way through the resources:

- Starting out - introducing the EU institutions and bodies.
- What can be achieved – inspiration and ideas from campaigners (case studies).
- How to influence – tips from campaigners and decision makers.
- Further resources - signposts to more information.

The resources can be accessed via the campaigning section of the NCVO website, [www.ncvo-vol.org](http://www.ncvo-vol.org)

### **People and Planet – 'Key campaign skills'**

People and Planet, a UK student organisation which campaigns on the grassroots level on social justice and environmental issues, has an immense amount of good resources about building a campaign.

'Key campaign skills' can be found in the **Universities** section on the People and Planet website, [peopleandplanet.org](http://peopleandplanet.org)

### **Community Development Exchange (CDX) - 'The Axis of Influence'**

The Axis of Influence is a discussion-based tool

for community groups and networks to assess and improve the influence they have on agencies and partnerships. It is appropriate for small, large, newly-formed and well-established networks, as well as those with paid or unpaid members.

'The Axis of Influence' can be downloaded from the Resources section of the CDX website, [www.cdx.org.uk](http://www.cdx.org.uk)

### **NAVCA – 'Challenging a funding cut: A guide for local voluntary organisations and community groups'**

"Though primarily written to help inform a campaigning strategy in response to a funding cut, it should be noted that the most resilient voluntary organisations are the ones that campaign all year round, actively network, build and maintain personal relationships with key statutory partners and keep in close touch with their member organisations and service users."

This paper provides information under two broad headings: 'Challenging the decision' and 'Campaigning to change the decision'. 'Challenging the decision' is actually about challenging the decision-making process as opposed to the decision itself. 'Campaigning to change the decision' is about identifying and influencing the decision makers to re-consider their decision to cut funding.

The paper can be downloaded from the Resources section of the NAVCA website: [www.navca.org.uk](http://www.navca.org.uk)

### **Titus Alexander – 'Campaigning is OK! They may not always like it, but it gets things done'**

A guide to support for community action and advocacy that is full of activities and features an invaluable list of resources. 'Campaigning is OK!' can be downloaded from the Novas Scarman website, [www.novasscarman.org](http://www.novasscarman.org)

### **Women's Budget Group – "Engaging and empowering women in poverty"**

A report on the 'Voices of Experience' project to empower women in poverty to take part in the policymaking process.

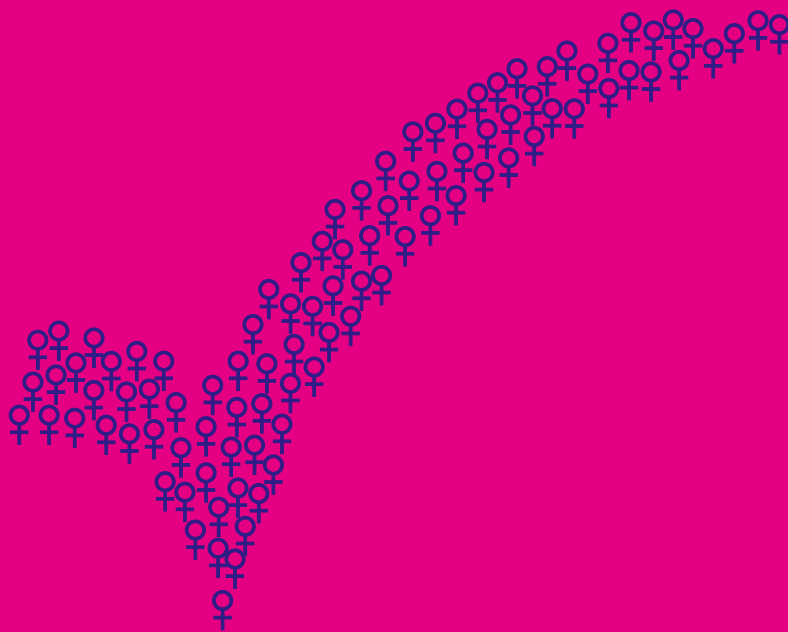
You can read the report in the publications section of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation website, [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)



Credit: Ian MacNicol

# **Public bodies – meeting equalities obligations**

**A practical guide for public bodies  
to help you comply with equalities  
legislation and tackle poverty among  
women more effectively.**



# A guide to gender mainstreaming

This section of the toolkit is adapted from the GenderWorks project's 'Policy into Practice' training course and mentoring programme, and has been reproduced with the permission of Adele Baumgardt, consultant trainer.

In order to deliver effective, targeted services that are shaped around the needs of women and men, policy makers need to integrate a **gender perspective** into their everyday work from the start.

Incorporating a gender perspective into policies means thinking about users not as a homogeneous group, but as distinct groups with differing needs, characteristics and behaviours, who might need different approaches if equality of opportunity is to be achieved for all.

Using a gender perspective also enables early action to be taken to correct any negative impacts on one group or another.

Gender mainstreaming is a set of tools that support the integration of gender at every step into policy, services and budgets. It is a strategy that aims to frame the delivery of services and the policies that govern them in a way that reflects the everyday reality of both women's and men's lives.

## The idea of gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming as a concept was introduced into our language during the United Nations (UN) Third World Conference on Women, in Nairobi in 1985. The concept was developed further at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing in 1995, which called for the international promotion of a policy of gender mainstreaming.

This was to be achieved by incorporating a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, a **gender analysis** is made of the potential, differing effects on women and men.

Although no guidelines were drawn up explaining how these analyses were to be carried out, many countries – including the UK – took on board a national plan for gender mainstreaming.



Credit: Ian MacNicol



## Explaining gender analysis

Gender analysis examines the roles and responsibilities of women and men and explores the relationships between them, known as gender relations. It then asks the questions: Who has

power? Who holds resources? Who benefits?

The best way to explain why we need gender analyses is to give an example.



### Gender analysis case study: How spending on sports programmes in Wales meets men's needs more than women's

Spending on sports programmes tends to be 'gender blind'; that is, it disproportionately favours one gender, but does not recognise or adjust for this, and is therefore gender imbalanced.

Gender budget analysis research by the Equal Opportunities Commission (now the Equalities and Human Rights Commission) and the Sports Council for Wales found that spending on sports in Wales tends to be gender blind and favour men.

For example, activities with high levels of female participation, such as aerobics classes, tended to be more dependent on self-funding and often required an attendance fee to cover costs. However, football, which is much more popular with men, was subsidised by the public purse, with no attendance fee required.

This demonstrates the need for a gender analysis of policy and expenditure in order to ensure that both women and men benefit from public spending.

## Defining gender mainstreaming

Lack of clarity around the term 'gender mainstreaming' led the European Union (EU) to produce a conceptual framework for gender mainstreaming as a strategy for the promotion of equality between women and men. This description is based on the EU's work.

You can download the European Commission's 'Manual for gender mainstreaming' from the website of the EC's Directorate-General on Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (<http://ec.europa.eu/social>).

In simple terms, the word 'mainstream' encompasses the normal ideas, attitudes or activities of society. Gender mainstreaming is a situation when those ideas, attitudes or activities routinely incorporate a gender perspective, so that it becomes a normal feature of mainstream thinking.

For policy makers, mainstreaming gender into policies implies that they systematically identify the consequences of a proposed policy on different groups of women and men as a matter of course, and address any negative outcomes as the policy is developed.

This includes taking into account the complex relationships between women and men; understanding the different circumstances in which they operate; and valuing their difference and diversity.

It is also important to remember that gender mainstreaming will complement gender equality policies, forming a twin-track strategy.

Whereas gender equality policies are specifically developed to address a problem resulting from a gender inequality or historical imbalance (for example, anti-discrimination legislation such as the Sex Discrimination Act), gender mainstreaming is a positive strategy for achieving gender equality.

A gender mainstreaming strategy introduces a gender perspective into a given policy field even though there may not be an obvious inequality. It helps policymakers explore how policy objectives affect different sections of the community, how policies are accessed and by who, and whether policies are delivering results for the intended audience.

## The business case for gender mainstreaming

The business case for implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy is based on user or customer satisfaction, and a more effective use of resources.

In order to deliver results, policy makers must understand their 'customers', with user satisfaction being a key measure of how the services they deliver are performing. However, the customer base for a public body is diverse: women and girls comprise 51 per cent of the population and men and boys 49 per cent, and within this division are many different segments, including minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities and people of different ages, religions and sexualities.

Gender mainstreaming tools such as **gender**

**analysis** and **gender impact assessments** (see next section) help decision makers think about the different effects their policies have on women and men. They also enable public bodies to picture the effects of a given policy more accurately, and to compare and assess the current situation and trends with the expected results of a proposed policy.

This greater understanding of how policies and services work in practice enables decision makers to deliver more effective programmes, which result in higher levels of customer or user satisfaction. It also means resources can be targeted and therefore used more effectively, with less wastage and fewer unintended effects.

## Gender in a recession

During a financial downturn, public bodies under pressure to make budget cuts and redundancies may be tempted to see gender equality as a luxury. However, the need for greater efficiency makes the case for gender mainstreaming more compelling, rather than less, as it enables the resources available to be targeted and therefore used more effectively.

In 2009, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) expressed its concern that some financial decisions made by public authorities might have a disproportionate effect on certain groups of people, and might be contrary to statutory equalities obligations.

Its concerns were substantiated, it said, by press reports suggesting, for example, that women were more likely to be affected by redundancies than men, as companies revised their maternity and flexible working practices in an attempt to save money.

While acknowledging the difficult economic environment in which public authorities were operating, the Commission emphasised the mandatory nature of the equality duties, and the importance of public authorities meeting their duties when making significant decisions.

# How to gender mainstream

The efficient integration of a gender perspective into every stage of the policy process requires careful planning, and its success can be affected by a number of different factors.

First, remember that gender mainstreaming in this sense involves a number of interventions or actions that form part of a strategic plan and systematic approach to the achievement of gender equality.

Developing and delivering a strategy for mainstreaming gender equality takes time; however, government departments already have many of the building blocks in place, and a number of policy makers will already be incorporating a

gender perspective into their policies, unaware of the phrase 'gender mainstreaming'.

All that may be required is an environment in which gender mainstreaming can develop and succeed. The following list highlights some of the activities that provide such an environment and give policy makers the support they need to integrate a gender perspective into their work.



Credit: Ian MacNicol

# Supporting a gender mainstreaming strategy

## 1. Sponsorship

It helps if you have a sponsor or champion who will:

- drive the gender mainstreaming strategy
- allocate resources to develop knowledge of gender issues
- develop and implement policies containing a gender perspective.

## 2. Awareness raising

Knowledge of social structures and gendered patterns of behaviour will be needed, and where there are specific gender roles, such as the division of labour in the household, an understanding of the implications this will have for the successful delivery of proposed policies is essential.

## 3. Training on gender equality issues

Training is essential, and may need to be provided by specialists in the academic and voluntary sectors, as well as internal tuition providers.

Work on the assumption that one-off generic training to develop gender awareness and related skills will not turn policy makers into gender experts. Acquiring effective skills requires long-term training, and it might be more effective to use gender experts to work alongside policy makers and to tailor training to the policy being developed. However, generic gender training can be used as a broader strategy for promoting gender equitable practice.

## 4. Gender expertise

The degree of knowledge within a department or unit will determine the need for internal or external expertise to support policy development, awareness raising and training. Experts can be found in academic institutions, the voluntary sectors, and central and local government.

## 5. Research

Research will be needed on the current situation of women and men, on current gender relations and on imbalances between the sexes in all policy fields; this is known as **gender analysis** (see the section 'A guide to gender mainstreaming'). In addition, research will help to evaluate the effect of previous policies on women and men, and to predict how future initiatives may benefit or disadvantage them.

## 6. Statistics

Statistics are needed that are relevant for women and men; this is known as gender disaggregated data (see the section on 'Gender Impact Assessments'). Where possible, statistics should also cover other variables such as race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, class, age and so on.

Statistics should include data on trends in changing gender relations, such as employment and the division of labour in the household.

## 7. Resources

A commitment should also be made to providing the resources for:

- developing policy techniques and tools
- establishing new channels of cooperation, consultation and communication
- providing gender expertise and training for policy makers so that they can deliver strategies for achieving gender equality.

# Gender mainstreaming and the policy process

## 1. Policy preparation and planning

This is the stage at which problems and challenges are identified and analysed, their scope and importance considered, and outcomes defined in their application to women and men.

All areas of policy making can be considered from a gender perspective.

## 2. Policy decisions

At this stage, decisions are taken on what problems and challenges should be addressed, whether issues should be placed on the political agenda and what resources should be allocated to them.

Looking at potential policy problems and

challenges from a gender perspective while defining political priorities may lead to a new ranking of the problems.

## 3. Policy implementation

This is the stage at which issues are detected and analysed, broad policy goals specifying gender issues and targets are defined, and a priority allocated to them.

## 4. Policy evaluation

At this stage, outputs and outcomes are assessed to find out whether the policy delivered the intended changes, affected gender relations and increased gender equality.



Credit: Ian MacNicol

# Gender Impact Assessments

Public authorities in the UK are under a duty to assess the impact of their current and new policies and practices on gender equality, and must carry out an impact assessment if it is likely that there will be an adverse impact (see section on 'The law in the UK').

## What is a Gender Impact Assessment?

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) is a systematic way of examining whether a new or existing function, policy or procedure affects women and men differently.

## Why conduct a GIA?

GIAs deliver more effective policies by enabling decision makers to think about the different effects their policies have on women and men. They help decision makers to picture the effects of a given policy more accurately, and to compare and assess the current situation and trends with the expected results of the proposed policy.

GIAs can be applied to legislation, policy plans and programmes, budgets, reports and existing policies. However, they are most successful when carried out at an early stage in the decision-making

process, so that changes and even the redirecting of policies can take place.

With policies such as those affecting work-life balance, it is obvious that gender issues are central. However, with other policies the relevance of gender can be less obvious, and this can lead to them being labelled 'gender neutral'; for example, health and safety policies and regional or town planning.

With policies such as these, it can be tempting to imagine that people are affected as a homogeneous group. However, if policies are mistakenly perceived as gender neutral, opportunities will be missed to include the views of different groups of women and men in the formation and delivery of those policies, and the different effects on women and men will be misjudged.



Credit: Ian MacNicol

## Activity: Preparing for a Gender Impact Assessment

### Purpose:

To consider how to apply a Gender Impact Assessment to the development of a new policy.

### Resources:

- Copies of the case study given below.

### How to use:

- Ask participants to work in groups of three or four. If possible, mix groups up so that a range of professional expertise is represented in each group.
- Give the groups copies of the following case study. Ask them to discuss the case study and consider how a Gender Impact Assessment might affect their considerations.

- After the groups have had some time to discuss the case study, ask them to report back and respond to the following questions:
  1. What are the main themes to consider in relation to gender? What needs and gaps are likely to exist in current service provision?
  2. What data is currently available that would help inform a gender impact assessment? Is there a need to source other forms of data? How could this be obtained?
  3. How would you ensure that all key stakeholders were involved in the process and consult with service users in order to inform the gender impact assessment? Is there anyone else who should be consulted?
- After groups have responded, ask participants to reflect on how they will design, develop and review policies and service provision in their own contexts.



### Case study: Access to services

You have received a substantial grant to open a service targeting people who are economically inactive. You are preparing a short briefing note about what will need to be considered when

looking at premises and operating the service. Part of your remit is to ensure that the services are accessible to the whole community.

# Conducting a Gender Impact Assessment – a step-by-step guide

## Where to start

A GIA has relevance for most policies, because most will impact directly or indirectly on the lives of women and men. However, a body's ability to carry out a GIA on every policy may be limited by constraints on time and money, and it might be more effective to concentrate first on the policies and services where gender is directly relevant.

## Step one: Identify the issues and define the outcomes

- Understand who the policy or service is for, and what effects it will have on different groups. If the outcome for one group has unintentional outcomes for another group, consider how these will be addressed.
- Identify the goals and objectives of the policy and service, and analyse the problems and concerns raised so that the main factors affecting women and men are taken into account. Make sure the outcomes enable women and men to make an equal contribution to the economy and to society.
- Talk to women and men and the organisations representing them early in the process.
- Start planning the communication strategy by setting out what the policy or service will deliver for different groups of women and men.

### Questions to ask:

- What is the policy trying to achieve, and who will it benefit?
- Does the policy meet the different needs of women and men?
- Have previous policies raised gender considerations for this policy?
- Is the policy meant to overcome gender inequalities or eliminate barriers, and if so should there be a gender equality objective?
- Are gender issues identified within the communication strategy?
- What do men and women, including their representative organisations, say about the issues and outcomes?

## Step two: Collect data

- Get specialist advice if you don't have the knowledge to do this yourself.
- Consider what evidence is required to inform the policymaking process or to develop policy options.
- Carry out research and conduct surveys.
- To understand the customer base, collect statistics that are **gender disaggregated**: collected and separated by gender in order to enable comparative analysis. At the same time, consider the potential for collecting statistics covering minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities and people of different age, religion and sexuality.

**Unless statistics are gender disaggregated it will be virtually impossible to understand how a policy or service will impact differently upon women and men. It will be equally difficult to set meaningful targets and indicators, and to measure the success of the policy without baseline statistics.**

- Request information from national and community-based organisations, and consult women's and men's groups, academics and researchers.
- Consult departmental research and statistical units: they can help with the design and analysis of data collection, with consultation, and with interpreting the facts and findings from an equality perspective.

### Questions to ask:

- How are stakeholders and different groups of women and men going to be consulted?
- Do representative organisations truly reflect the voice of the men and women expected to benefit from the policy? If not, what is the strategy for reaching them?
- What is the gender make-up of the people affected by the policy?
- How can data and statistical information be collected by gender, race, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation?
- Other than gender-disaggregated data, what



other information is needed to understand the issue?

- What are the risks of early consultation? How are expectations and conflicting interests going to be managed?

### Develop options

Use the results of your research and data collection to help develop the policy recommendation or policy options, and present them in terms of the opportunities they offer for giving women and men equal access to policy benefits.

#### Questions to ask:

- How does the policy recommendation or each policy option impact positively or negatively on women and men?
- Does the recommendation or any of the options reinforce or challenge traditional or stereotyped perceptions of women and men?
- Which option gives men and women real choice and an opportunity to achieve their full potential in society?
- Where there will be a negative impact on one group over another, is there a need to consider mitigation? What action can be taken to reduce the impact, or to create a more gender-balanced policy?

### Step three: Communicate

A communications strategy sets out how to build relationships and convey ideas and messages in ways that different groups of women and men can understand.

The strategy used to communicate a policy can play a significant role in its acceptance and implementation. Timing, choice of media, language and public involvement are all factors in ensuring that the public body's intent and the impact of the policy, programme or legislation are understood.

- Produce key messages about what the policy will do for those it is aimed at, and produce another set of key messages for all other interest groups.
- Test these messages to see if they are understood. Communicating with different target audiences may require using different forms of media, as well as face-to-face meetings, focus groups and seminars.

#### Questions to ask:

- What message needs to be communicated?
- How will the message reach different groups of women and men?
- Are separate approaches necessary?
- How does the policy reflect the public body's commitment to equality? Is a specific message about equality to be included?
- Have gender-inclusive language, symbols and examples been used in the materials communicating the policy?
- How will you communicate with women and men whose first language is not English?

Under Freedom of Information legislation, the background and supporting information for a policy decision may be scrutinised in order to meet the requirement for transparency.

**Well thought-out decisions, based on evidence and consultation with different groups of women and men, and presented to the public in a clear and open manner, are more likely to pass the test of scrutiny.**

### Step four: Deliver

Now focus on exploiting the investment made during steps one to three in order to deliver results.

**Approach the experience from the perspective of the user or customer.** Think about how different women and men will experience the policy or service, and consider the potential impact of double discrimination, for example on the grounds of race and disability.

Promote equality and increase awareness of the customer base by ensuring that those developing and delivering the policy represent the diversity of the community being served.

Remember to **plan your strategy for getting customer feedback** and information on customer satisfaction. Ensure the feedback results in an understanding of how different groups experience the service, and of whether the outputs have delivered the intended outcomes.

#### Questions to ask:

- Will the policy or service be experienced differently by women and men? Will the difference be affected by race, disability, age, religion or sexual orientation?

- Is the service responsive and flexible? Is it possible for all groups of potential users to access the service? If not, what arrangements are in place to reach those who may be excluded?
- Is the service delivered in a joined-up way? Can other public bodies or government departments, local and nationally-based organisations, help deliver the service to the women and men targeted?
- Do those delivering the policy or service represent the diversity of the community being served?
- Will the strategy for measuring customer satisfaction reflect satisfaction rates for different groups of women and men, or does it have a bias towards the views of the majority users?
- Will the monitoring process enable the identification of policy benefits?

**Step five: Monitor and evaluate**

**Monitoring** is the continuous process of scrutiny and examination of the impact of a policy on women and men. It helps determine how well programmes are meeting their goals, and provides opportunities for improvements.

The process of monitoring highlights the need for baseline statistics, against which progress towards equality targets can be measured. Focus on achieving full participation for different groups, and if differentials still apply then consider taking action to address the imbalance.

**Questions to ask:**

- Were monitoring requirements specified in the implementation plans?

- Do they include a measure for gender equality and a measure for customer satisfaction?
- How can external organisations representing different groups in the community help in monitoring the policy outcomes?
- Are measures in place to initiate an investigation, or to change the policy, if it is not delivering either the equality objective defined at the outset of the project, or equality of opportunity for women or men?

**Evaluation** is the task of assessing and analysing the data captured during the monitoring stage in order to identify the success of the policy or service.

To be effective, policymaking must be a learning process that involves finding out what works and what does not, taking corrective action to redress imbalances, and making sure others can learn from the experience. This means feeding back the lessons learned from evaluation to other policy makers.

**Questions to ask:**

- Is the policy promoting and delivering equality of opportunity for women and men?
- Did one group receive a greater benefit than others? If so, how will the imbalance be addressed?
- Is there a need for additional data collection? Do targets and indicators need adjusting in the light of experience?
- What lessons are there for improving future policies and services? Who needs to be informed? How is the information to be presented?



Credit: Ian MacNicol



## Case study: Leeds Equality Network

The Leeds Equality Network is a partnership of organisations that have signed up to a shared set of outcomes and priorities under the Leeds Strategic Plan (see [www.leedsinitiative.org/lsp/](http://www.leedsinitiative.org/lsp/)).

The Network aims to support and direct work to embed equality and diversity principles and performance within the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-2011 framework. One of the priorities of the plan is to reduce the number of children living in poverty.

As part of the GenderWorks project's 'Policy into Practice' training initiative, Oxfam held a facilitated session regarding the Gender Equality Duty with the Leeds Equality Network.

This included an action planning session on how the group could best use the expertise offered through the initiative to produce real outcomes in their programmes.

The Network agreed to coordinate and deliver a piece of work focussed on key areas of activity that contribute to the over-arching goal of reducing child poverty.

### Action points were agreed as follows:

1. Individual partners to approach the strategic groups responsible for the following:
  - Strategies for those **not in education, employment or training**
  - **Employment opportunities**, including issues such as low pay, the poor quality of part-time work and the lack of affordable childcare
  - Strategies to reduce **teenage pregnancy**.
2. Each of these groups to be invited to conduct a Gender Equality Impact Assessment of their policy, strategy or work programme.
3. Following agreement from these groups to be involved, the partners to identify key individuals and sectors to be involved with the impact assessment.

4. The Network to agree a programme of reporting back, publicising and promoting good practice.

Three facilitated training sessions were held, attended by a range of partners from the public and third sector. Each of the sessions was slightly different due to time constraints and the audience, but they all included the following elements: an overview of the Gender Equality Duty and partners' responsibilities under it; a discussion on the three specific areas relating to a Gender Equality Impact Assessment: data, stakeholders (consultation and involvement) and identifying impact; and an action-planning element.

For example, the first session was held as part of a meeting of the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy Board. At the session, the Board agreed to the following action points:

- An equality impact assessment to be conducted on the teenage pregnancy strategy for Leeds.
- Each member to identify what disaggregated data is available regarding their individual work programmes and projects.
- Literature and information to be reviewed for inappropriate language which might create barriers for different people.
- The gender impact assessment progress to be discussed at an early board meeting in 2010.

The findings from all the Gender Equality Impact Assessments will not only identify current good practice, but also ways in which services can be improved and targets met in relation to reducing child poverty in Leeds.

# Gender budgeting

**Different lives, different needs. Gender budgeting is a gender mainstreaming tool that gives you 'bite'.**

It's a relatively new tool, and means asking the question: Where do the resources go, and what impact does this have on gender inequalities?

By tracing the money that a government or public body spends, you can find out how women and men benefit differently from that spend.

Gender budgeting is a flexible tool which can

work at any level, from the smallest organisation to a national government, and can involve a retrospective analysis or gender budget building.

Gender budgeting can reveal that a programme or service isn't reaching women and men equally, and demonstrate how addressing this will result in more efficient programmes.



## Case study: The Job Connect service

Oxfam and its partner Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council conducted some research into whether women and men benefited equally from the Job Connect programme. The assumption was that because it was a public service, the Job Connect programme would benefit and indeed be used by women and men equally.

However, the research found that 75 per cent of the users of the programme were men and only 25 per cent of users were women. As a result of the research, the council has undertaken to use more and different ways in which to reach out to women and increase their participation in the programme.

## 'Gender neutral' or 'gender blind'?

Most budgets and initiatives are assumed to affect everyone more or less equally, and could therefore be described as 'gender neutral'.

However, gender inequalities mean that women and men experience budgets in distinct ways. What appears on the surface to be gender neutral, and could therefore be expected to impact equally on

men and women, may on closer examination be seen to be 'gender blind'.

That is, the impact of the policy of budget expenditure may in fact affect one gender very differently to another (see the case study on the Job Connect service above).

## Gender budgeting is good for women and men

Gender budgeting is not a separate budget for women, but aims to analyse expenditure or resource allocation from a gender perspective, ensuring that discriminatory effects are neutralised and gender equality is promoted.

In this way it identifies the impact and compares the implication of budgets and policies on both sexes, highlighting the gap between policy statements and the resources committed to their

implementation, and ensuring that public money is spent in more gender equitable ways.

This gendered approach can be described as wearing 'gender lenses', through which processes can be viewed, and can be effective at any stage of the budgetary process, including planning, objective setting, auditing or evaluation. Taking into account both the paid and unpaid economies will create a more effective budget.

### So, gender budgeting is:

- The analysis of any form of public expenditure, or method of raising public money, from a gender perspective.
  - The identification of the implications and impacts for women and girls as compared to men and boys.
  - Not a separate budget for women.
- A common misunderstanding holds that gender analysis will affect men negatively, but this is not the case: **gender analysis is good for both women and men, and ensures appropriate and effective service provision for both.**



### Case study: Using a gender budget approach in transport policy

A transport policy, in which access to roads, trains, buses and other modes of public transport is not restricted to the use of any particular group, may appear to be gender neutral. However, depending on how the policy is designed, the actual usage of transport may be gender biased. For example:

- Around 71 per cent of all adults in Britain held a full car driving licence in 1999-2001, but there were significant differences according to gender, with 82 per cent of men holding a full licence compared with 60 per cent of women. Government transport expenditure tends to favour roads.
- A total of 73 per cent of men in Britain commuted to work by car in 2001, compared with 66 per cent of women.
- Women were more than twice as likely to travel

to work by bus (11 per cent of women, 5 per cent of men). In fact, just 22 per cent of men used a bus at least once a week, compared with 32 per cent of women.<sup>8</sup>

Subsidies for buses tend to be the lowest of all transport budgeted provision, so women's needs are not being fully catered for.

Additionally, most buses are supplied for the busiest commuter rush hour, providing transport to workplaces before 9 a.m. As women are more likely to work part-time or have flexible working patterns, and may need to access childcare facilities before commuting to work, they could be disadvantaged by such a policy.

Adopting a gender budget approach could inform service providers of how to increase usage in general by both men and women.

<sup>8</sup> Source: National Travel Survey -Transport 2000



## Activity: Gendering the budget of a school playground

This activity has been adapted from ‘Budgeting for all: manual for local gender budget initiatives’ by Sheila Quinn in collaboration with Thera van Osch and Jacintha van Beveren.

### Purpose:

- To show the impact a gender budgeting approach can have on the provision of services.
- To demonstrate the impact gender budgeting can have on the allocation of resources, and how this can affect service users.
- To demonstrate how weighted democracy with a gender focus can influence outcomes.

### Example

A school has a budget of £10,000 to improve the school playground. 100 children use the playground – 50 boys and 50 girls. The children are to be involved in deciding what activities and facilities they want for the playground, and how the money should be spent.

### 1. First voting count

The children are asked what they want from their playground and given 10 choices. Voting shows the following:

**Table 1:**

Choice	Votes	Boys	Girls
Football	42	40	2
Seesaw	14	3	11
Marble playground	10	6	4
Hopscotch	9	0	9
Swing	7	0	7
Tennis	5	0	5
Slide	5	0	5
Table tennis	2	1	4
Climbing frame	5	0	2
Place to hang around	1	0	1

Discuss what the likely implications are for gender and the use of space if this voting system is used.

### Resources:

- The tables below, given on a PowerPoint presentation or on handouts.

### How to use:

- This exercise is best conducted as a discussion with a small group. It has been broken down into steps to aid the discussion process.

## 2. Budget analysis

The table below shows an analysis of how the first voting count will use the budget. Seventy-five per cent of the votes are for football, seesaw, marbles and hopscotch. As costs to provide play facilities are pre-determined, providing for the four top-choice activities will use 100 per cent of the available budget.

**Table 2:**

Preference	Votes	% of budget required to provide necessary facilities	Budget
Football	42	56	£5,600
Seesaw	14	19	£1,900
Marbles	10	13	£1,300
Hopscotch	9	12	£1,200
TOTAL	75	100	£10,000

Discuss what questions might be asked in relation to a gender equality impact assessment if this budget allocation was to go ahead.

## 3. Gender analysis of the use of space

### A likely breakdown of how the space might be used at any one time might show:

- 70 per cent of the area will be used for football, for 22 children
- 10 per cent of the area will be used for seesaw, for 2-6 children
- 10 per cent of the area will be used for marbles
- 10 per cent of the area will be used for hopscotch.

### A likely gender analysis of how the space might be used might show:

- 22 boys playing football, with 5 boy spectators and 15 girl spectators
- 10 boys and 6 girls playing marbles, and 4 girls waiting
- 3 boys and 3 girls using the seesaw, with 6 boys and 9 girls waiting
- 6 girls playing hopscotch, with 7 girls and 4 boys watching.

**Table 3:**

Activity	% of space used	Boys active space		Girls active space	
		Number	%	Number	%
Football	70	22	70	0	0
Marbles	10	10	6.25	6	3.75
Seesaw	10	3	5	3	5
Hopscotch	10	0	0	6	10
Total	100	35	81.25	15	18.75

### Observations:

- Only half of the children – 35 boys and 15 girls – will be using the playground actively
- The other half will be watching or waiting to play
- The boys playing actively will be using 81.25 per cent of the playground
- The girls playing actively will be using 18.75 per cent of the playground

From a gender perspective, discuss who will benefit most from the services provided.

#### 4. A new voting system

A new voting system is introduced. Each pupil is asked to choose three playground facilities. The choices are recorded by age, sex and any access/disability requirements, and weighted according to whether they are first, second or third choices. The result is 300 disaggregated choices.

**Table 4:**

Children's choices	Combined average weight as % of total
Seesaw	12.6
Climbing frame	12.4
Marbles	11.4
Swing	11.0
Football	10.5
Hopscotch	10.5
Slide	9.9
Table tennis	9.8
Tennis	9
Non-play area	2.9

Discuss what changes in preference this voting system shows in comparison to the first vote.

#### 5. Final outcome – budget and space allocation

**Table 5:**

Children's choices	Required budget	Required space as % of total
Seesaw	£1,500	10
Climbing frame	£3,000	15
Marbles	£500	10
Swing	£1,500	15
Hopscotch	£500	10
Slide	£1,500	15
Table tennis	£1,000	15
Non-play area	£500	10
Total	£10,000	100

In the final outcome of the voting process, there are winners and losers:

- In the end, no provision was made for football. It was the fifth preference, but uses 70 per cent of the space and has a 22-person capacity at any one time.
- No provision was made for tennis. It was the ninth preference, but costs £3,000, uses 60 per cent of the space and has a four-person capacity at any one time.
- However, it was possible to make provision for all eight of the children's other choices, compared with only four using the first voting system.
- The first choice of 44 girls was realised, and the second and third choices of all boys were realised.

**Discuss what the final outcome means for the provision of facilities and equality; what difference has taking a gender budgeting approach made to the outcomes for children, and to gender equality?**



## **i** For more information

For further information, help and support in undertaking gender budgeting, contact:

The Women's Budget Group  
[www.wbg.org.uk](http://www.wbg.org.uk)

The Scottish Women's Budget Group  
[www.engender.org.uk/budget](http://www.engender.org.uk/budget)

Clymblaid Genedlaethol Menywod Cymru  
Wales Women's National Coalition  
[www.wwnc.org.uk](http://www.wwnc.org.uk)

See also:

### **Gender budgets make cents – Understanding gender responsive budgets**

*Debbie Budlender, Diane Elson, Guy Hewitt and Tanni Mukhopadhyay*

Divided into four sections, this publication provides a conceptual and theoretical framework, traces the evolution of work in this area, assesses the role of different stakeholders and highlights lessons learned to date.

Copies of this publication can be accessed by searching the internet, or by contacting the Commonwealth Secretariat at [www.thecommonwealth.org](http://www.thecommonwealth.org) or tel +44 (0)20 7747 6342.

### **Gender budgets make more cents – Country studies and good practice**

*Debbie Budlender and Guy Hewitt*

Copies of this publication can be accessed by searching the internet, or by contacting the Commonwealth Secretariat at [www.thecommonwealth.org](http://www.thecommonwealth.org) or tel +44 (0)20 7747 6342.

### **A Change in Thinking: Gender budgeting – now's the time**

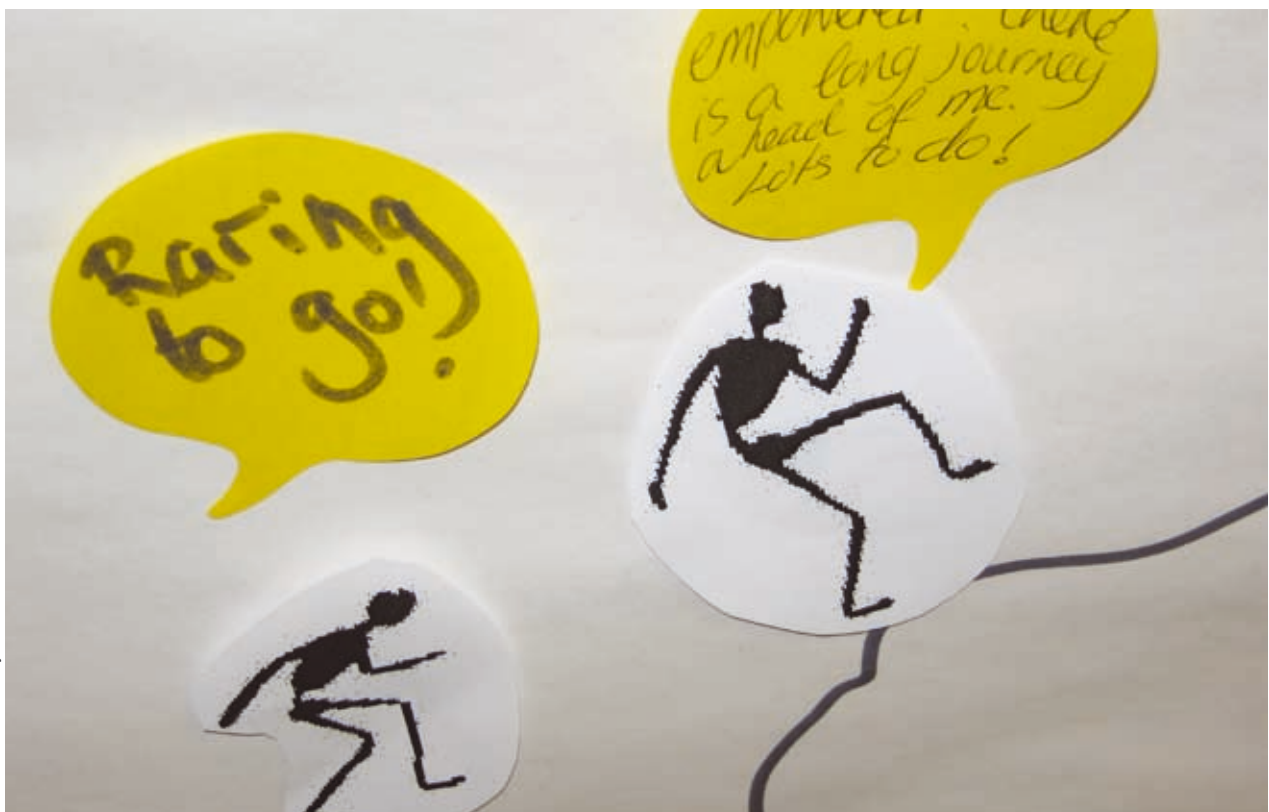
'A Change in Thinking' is a CD Oxfam GB put together with its partners to show how gender budgeting can deliver better-value services for both women and men.

For more information, see the Resources page on the GenderWorks website, [www.oxfam.org.uk/genderworks](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/genderworks)

### **Gender Responsive Budgeting**

A website with a wide variety of resources that was set up by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Commonwealth Secretariat and Canada's International Development Research Centre.

See: [www.gender-budgets.org](http://www.gender-budgets.org)



Credit: Kate Rowley

# Gender disaggregated data

Gender disaggregated data is statistical information that is collected and separated by gender in order to highlight the differences between men's and women's experiences and behaviour. This helps decision makers understand who needs to benefit from a programme and where resources should be targeted.

Many organisations collect information but do not analyse it, interpret it or act on it, all of which are essential if there is to be a real improvement in services.

Collecting local statistics and data to build up a 'gender profile' enables policy makers to assess the impact a programme is having on men's and women's lives, and analyse whether it is making the situation better or worse for women and men.

Public bodies should contact the women's groups in their area to discuss what data those groups collect and whether it could be used to help decision makers understand how services are accessed and what impact their programmes have.

For help with sourcing and collecting gender disaggregated data, see the list of resources below.

## List of resources

In the UK, national gender disaggregated data and gender inequality statistics can be accessed via the **Government Equalities Office** ([www.equalities.gov.uk](http://www.equalities.gov.uk)) and the **Equality and Human Rights Commission** ([www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)).

For gender disaggregated data in Scotland, see the **Scottish Household Survey**, which is available from the Scottish government ([www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)).

In Wales, see the data produced by the **Welsh Assembly Government's Statistical Directorate** ([wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics](http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics)).

You could also contact the national women's budget group in your country:

The Women's Budget Group  
[www.wbg.org.uk](http://www.wbg.org.uk)

The Scottish Women's Budget Group  
[www.engender.org.uk/budget](http://www.engender.org.uk/budget)

Clyblaid Genedlaethol Menywod Cymru  
Wales Women's National Coalition  
[www.wwnc.org.uk](http://www.wwnc.org.uk)

And for more information about the women's groups in your area, get in touch with a wider network of women's organisations, for example:

The Women's Resource Centre  
[www.wrc.org.uk](http://www.wrc.org.uk)

The National Alliance of Women's Organisations (NAWO)  
[www.nawo.org.uk](http://www.nawo.org.uk)

## The Equality Measurement Framework

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Government Equalities Office have jointly developed an Equality Measurement Framework (EMF), which is intended to monitor social outcomes from an equality and human rights perspective.

The framework monitors “the central and valuable things in life that people actually achieve” - such as:

- enjoying an adequate standard of living
- being healthy
- having good opportunities for education and learning
- enjoying legal security
- being free from crime and the fear of crime.

It is particularly concerned with the position of individuals and groups with regard to characteristics such as age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender and social class.

The EMF is not a performance measurement framework, but provides a baseline of evidence to inform policy priorities and help to identify inequalities that need further investigation.

For more information see the EHRC’s website, [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)



Credit: Ian MacNicol

# Participation

The participation of users is essential in the design and development of effective services. It ensures that services are developed with the needs of users in mind, and enables decision makers to draw upon a diverse range of knowledge and expertise.

Effective participation is key to enabling people to influence the decisions that affect their lives.

Under the Gender Equality Duty, public bodies are required to: consult with service users and others in developing their Equality Schemes; gather and take into account relevant information as to how services may affect gender equality; and consult with service users to ensure the implementation of objectives.

Participation is both a means to the enjoyment of human rights and a human rights goal in itself. Participation is also part of the PANEL acronym used by United Nations bodies to describe the different elements of a human rights based approach:

**P Participation:**

How can people influence decisions that affect their lives?

**A Accountability:**

The state (and its agents) should be held accountable to the human rights standards it has an obligation to deliver.

**N Non-discrimination:**

Prioritisation of vulnerable groups, such as those affected by the different equalities strands.

**E Empowerment:**

How aware are people of their human rights, and how effectively can they demand and access them?

**L Legal frameworks:**

The utilisation of international or domestic human rights legal frameworks.

Participation is a buzzword that can have many different meanings, depending on who is using it. The following exercise explores how the term 'participation' is used to describe different processes.

## Activity: Exploring different types of participation

**Purpose:**

- To analyse the characteristics of different types of participation
- To reflect on participants' experiences of participation
- To discuss the characteristics of meaningful participation in relevant contexts.

**Resources:**

- Cards with the names of various types of participation and their characteristics written on (see following page).

### How to use:

- The chart below outlines four different types of participation. Write the names of the different types on pieces of card, and each set of characteristics on a separate piece of card. Ask the group to match each type with the relevant characteristics.
- Have a short group discussion on each type. Can participants give examples of their experiences of this type of participation? What are the limitations and benefits of each type? What are the ideal characteristics of participation?
- Ask participants to, in pairs, identify an area of their work in which giving consideration to participation can make a planning, engagement or consultative process more meaningful. Each pair should identify ways in which more meaningful participation can work in this area, and which characteristics are relevant.
- Each pair should then share their ideas with the larger group, with discussion as appropriate.

### Different types of participation<sup>9</sup>

Type	Characteristics
Token participation by manipulation	People sit on official committees, but they are not elected and have no real power.
Participation by consultation	People participate by being consulted or by answering questions. External agents define problems and the information-gathering processes, and control the analysis. The professionals are under no obligation to include peoples' views.
Functional participation	People participate at the request of external agencies to meet predetermined objectives. There may be some shared decision-making, but this usually happens only after the big decisions have already been made by external agents.
Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis and development of action plans. Participation is seen as a right, not just a means to achieve project goals. The process involves methodologies that seek all the different perspectives and use structured learning processes. Groups are involved in decision making, and so have a stake in maintaining the project. Local institutions are strengthened.

## **i** For more information:

**COGS (Communities and Organisations: Growth and Support)** is an independent organisation specialising in policy and practice in the area of community engagement, empowerment and development.

The **Active Partners Framework** can be used by local authorities or community planning partnerships to develop an understanding of community participation, focusing attention on what is already in place and what still needs to be achieved to maximise community participation.

The framework highlights four important dimensions of community participation, which are broken down into 12 benchmarks of community participation, with accompanying questions to aid analysis and discussion.

To find out more, see 'Benchmarking community participation: Developing and implementing the Active Partners benchmarks', by Mandy Wilson and Pete Wilde. This publication is available on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation website, [www.jrf.org](http://www.jrf.org) See also the COGS website: [www.cogs.uk.net](http://www.cogs.uk.net)

<sup>9</sup>Adapted from Veneklasen, L. & V. Miller (2007), A New Weave of People, Power and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation, Practical Action Publishing (page 88)



Credit: Ian MacNicol

# The law and you

**A guide to European policy on  
issues of gender and poverty,  
and the law in the UK.**



# The impact of the European Union

A guide to what difference the European Union (EU) has made – and is making – to women’s equality, and what mechanisms can be used to push for change.

## Quick quiz – women and men in the European Union

You probably know more about Europe than you think! See if you can answer these questions; the answers are below<sup>10</sup>.

1. On average, what is the size of the gender pay gap across the EU?

- 12 per cent
- 17 per cent
- 27 per cent
- 35 per cent

2. The percentage of women employees working part-time is how much higher than that of men?

- Twice as high
- Four times higher
- Ten times higher

3. Who are more vulnerable to human trafficking and gender-based violence – women or men?

4. Why are women more at risk in times of rising unemployment?

5. What is the proportion of women directors of top-quoted company boards across the EU?

- 1 per cent
- 3 per cent
- 6 per cent
- 10 per cent

6. In how many EU member states do women make up more than 30 per cent of the national parliament? Why does it matter?

### Answers

1. 17 per cent.

2. The percentage of women employees working part-time in 2007 was 31.2 per cent – four times higher than for men.

3. Women and girls are more vulnerable to human trafficking, and women are the main victims of gender-based violence.

4. Women are more at risk because they are over-represented in precarious jobs based on short-term contracts.

5. 3 per cent.

6. Women make up more than 30 per cent of the national parliament in 11 member states. This matters because 30 per cent is deemed to be the minimum level (or ‘critical mass’) necessary for women to exert meaningful influence on politics.

<sup>10</sup>Statistics from Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Equality between women and men — 2009 {SEC(2009) 165} /\* COM/2009/0077 final \*/



# What difference does the EU make?

The European Union, which is made up of 27 member states, has a poor public image in the UK. Media coverage propagates myths of bureaucracy gone mad, the power of Brussels to impose law over Britain and supposedly pointless directives. As a result, few policy makers have any significant working knowledge of what the EU can offer to anti-discrimination practice.

There is also little public knowledge of the very significant difference EU law and policy has made to the wellbeing and equality of women. The EU has been a driving force in setting standards and benchmarks, assembling research and ensuring a strong analysis of poverty as it affects women and men.

A basic working knowledge of what it has to offer should be an essential part of any toolkit for change, for policy makers or women's organisations. These are some of the areas in which the EU has led the way on gender equality.

## 1. Clear analysis

The EU's interpretation of the causes of, and solutions to, gender discrimination, is more progressive than that of most of its member states. For instance, its roadmap for gender equality<sup>11</sup> emphasises:

- Equal economic independence for women and men
- Reconciliation of private and professional life
- Eradication of gender-based violence
- The need for flexible gender roles
- Social protection for all, over a lifetime
- The right of citizenship for all.

This contrasts with a policy focus in many member states that:

- Does not see the value in women's economic equality
- Does not measure or understand the hidden poverty costs for women inside households

- Sees women as instrumental in tackling household poverty, rather than important in their own right
- Bases policy on poverty snapshots, rather than over a lifetime.

## 2. Research and tools

A network of gender experts funded by the European Commission (EC) researches and comments on member states' own laws and policies, from a European perspective, in regular reports with detailed analysis of evidence from research and statistics.<sup>12</sup>

For instance, the network of gender experts comments on the National Action Plans on Social Inclusion produced by member states (see below: 'What mechanisms can be used to get action on women's poverty?').

The EC also produces tools for gender mainstreaming, such as manuals on how to implement it in social inclusion and employment policies.<sup>13</sup>

## 3. Laws and directives

A commitment to gender equality has always underpinned the EU. Articles 2 and 3 of the EC Treaty (the legal basis for the EU's activities) set out the EU's commitment to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality between women and men in all its activities.

European directives are legislative acts which require EU member states to achieve a particular result without setting out the means of achieving it; in other words, how member states transpose directives into their own national laws is up to them, as long as they do it somehow.

European directives on gender equality have set standards for progressive legislation such as the public duties to promote race and gender equality in the UK. Areas in which European directives have helped force the pace of change in member states include:

<sup>11</sup>A Roadmap for Equality between women and men 2006-10 <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=422&langId=en>

<sup>12</sup>For example, Gender mainstreaming of employment policies: a comparative review of 30 European countries, Group of experts on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment (EGGSIE), Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Unit G1, September 2007

<sup>13</sup>Manual for gender mainstreaming of employment policies, July 2007; manual for gender mainstreaming social inclusion and social protection policies, both from European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Directorate-General

- Equal pay
- Equal treatment in employment
- Equal treatment in social security schemes
- Treatment of pregnant workers
- Parental leave
- Equal treatment in goods and services.

For more detailed information about EU Gender Equality Law, see <http://ec.europa.eu/social/><sup>14</sup>

The EU has also set up bodies such as the

European Social Fund, a 'Structural Fund' devoted to promoting employment in the EU that also promotes equality between women and men; and PROGRESS (2007-2013), a financial programme for supporting the implementation of gender equality and promoting gender mainstreaming in all EU policies.

The GenderWorks project which produced this toolkit was funded by PROGRESS as part of its programme to promote mutual learning on social inclusion and social protection.

## **How can the EU improve life for poor women?**

Europe has few sticks, but many carrots. While real power in relation to issues of poverty and social exclusion lies with the member states themselves, the EU – and in particular the EC – has a role in encouraging mutual learning, gathering data, raising awareness and organising peer reviews.

It cannot enforce, but it can encourage, support, advise and inform, and accessing the mechanisms through which it does this provides a valuable tool for anyone working to bring about greater equality.



Credit: Ian MacNicol

<sup>14</sup> EU Gender Equality Law, European Commission, Susanne Burri and Sacha Prechal, European Commission DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Unit G.2, September 2008

## Opportunities to get action on women's poverty

Reducing poverty and social exclusion and promoting greater social inclusion have been key policy priorities for the EC since 2000. Each member state is committed to producing a 'National Action Plan on Social Inclusion' (NAP) every two years, to report on what it is doing to tackle poverty and social exclusion.

The process of consulting on and producing the NAPs is an opportunity for women's organisations and networks to inform government about what is happening to women in poverty, and lobby for change.

Local and community groups working to overcome poverty should be consulted by the government as part of the NAP process.

If you would like to get involved and help to influence the NAP in your country, either as an individual or as a member of an organisation, get in touch with your national contact point for social inclusion issues (see below), letting them know that you would like to be consulted and asking them how you can have your say (there is a template for this on page 50.)

You might want to mention a specific issue that you would like the NAP to address; for example, domestic violence, childcare availability or the gender pay gap.

The common objectives for the NAPs include gender mainstreaming, which makes it possible to hold governments to account for their actions.

The NAPs published by member states tend to

be summaries of what governments are already doing across policy areas rather than action plans as such; however they provide a useful focus for national lobbying.



For more on the National Action Plan process, see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/spsi/poverty\\_social\\_exclusion\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/poverty_social_exclusion_en.htm)

There is also a useful page on the GenderWorks website:

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/ukpoverty/genderworks/naps.html>

To read the most recent National Action Plans drawn up by Member States, see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/spsi/strategy\\_reports\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/strategy_reports_en.htm)

To discover who is your national contact point for social inclusion issues, see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/spsi/contacts\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/contacts_en.htm)

To read a toolkit produced by the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) about how to engage with the NAP process, see:

<http://www.eapn.eu/content/view/296/34/lang,en/>

In the UK, the NAP is produced by the Department of Work and Pensions, see

[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

## Monitoring EU gender activities

Keep an eye on the web pages of the European Commission Directorate-General on Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/>).

This has a whole section on gender equality, which includes information on gender mainstreaming, the gender pay gap and exchange of good practices. It also hosts a report published by the EC each year on changes to equality between women and men across the EU.



Credit: Sonalle

# The law in the UK

Gender equality is everybody's right – and everybody's duty.

A look at law and the Gender Equality Duty:

- If you're a women's organisation, which legislation should you use to campaign and how can you use it?
- If you're a public body, what are your responsibilities?

This section of the toolkit is adapted from the GenderWorks project's 'Making the Gender Duty Work' training course, and has been reproduced with the permission of **The Public Law Project** ([www.publiclawproject.org.uk](http://www.publiclawproject.org.uk)).

## The law and the public sector duties

Public law principles govern the way public bodies behave, ensuring that they

- act lawfully and fairly
- don't exceed their powers.

Public law only applies to public bodies, and only applies to their public functions.

### Example:

A local authority or Primary Care Trust (PCT) granting funding to a voluntary sector organisation is a public body exercising a public function; therefore public law principles apply.

An understanding of public law and knowing how a public body is governed can be beneficial to women's organisations and can strengthen their relationship with the public sector.

Similarly, a stronger relationship with women's organisations can benefit the public sector, enabling public bodies to improve their working practices and meet their duties under the equalities legislation.

### Example:

Transparent decision-making with clear, open processes helps organisations make better applications for funding, and everyone involved has more confidence that good quality, fair decisions will be made as a result.

## The principles

Often, public law principles are used when something has gone wrong; but the principles actually make a good starting point for building a strong working relationship between women's organisations and the public sector.

### The principles state that:

- Public bodies must take into account relevant information (and must ignore irrelevant information)
- Public bodies must legally have the power to do what they are doing
- Public bodies should consider each issue fairly on its own merits: there should be no blanket policies
- All decisions must be based on a 'fair hearing', which includes elements such as disclosing relevant documents and allowing those affected to have their say
- Public bodies must follow agreed procedures
- Public bodies should give reasons for their decisions
- Public bodies must ask themselves the right question and undertake sufficient enquiry when deciding something
- Public bodies must make rational and reasonable decisions
- Public bodies must consult properly: consultation should be undertaken when proposals are at a formative stage, with sufficient information and time for those consulted to respond in a meaningful way, and the results of any consultation should be taken into account when the public body makes its decision
- Public bodies should generally keep their promises: if a public body has said it will do something or has always done something in the past, this may create a 'legitimate expectation' that it will do it in the future. However, this cannot prevent a public body from lawfully changing its policies. A decision made in breach of a legitimate expectation may be unlawful. Individuals or organisations may also have a legitimate expectation that they will be consulted over a particular decision (see above point on consultation).
- Public bodies must comply with all the statutory duties that apply to them.

## Public sector duties

Public bodies in England, Wales and Scotland are subject to public law and the public sector duties. These are the

- Race equality duty
- Disability equality duty
- Gender equality duty.

This toolkit focuses on the gender equality duty specifically, but it provides examples of good practice relevant to all of the duties.

### A new emphasis on equalities

The public sector duties place a new onus on public bodies to be proactive and promote equality, rather than on the individual to challenge discrimination. This means that equality has to be at the centre of decision-making and policy development.

The public sector duties are designed to ensure that public services meet the needs of different groups, in contrast to a 'one size fits all' type of service provision.



Credit: Ian MacNicol

# The Gender Equality Duty

Under section 76A of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, a public authority, when exercising its functions, must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

This came into force in April 2007 when sections 84 and 85 of the Equality Act 2006 amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. This is known as the ‘general duty’ and is the main part of what we call the Gender Equality Duty (GED).

(All public authorities must meet this and some must also meet the specific duties – see below.)

Breaking down the GED’s constituent parts helps us work out what it applies to and how it works:

- What is a public authority and which ones must meet the duty?
- What are a public authority’s functions?
- What does ‘due regard’ mean?
- What does a public authority need to do to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity (to meet the ‘general duty’)?

## 1. What is a public authority and which ones must meet the duty?

A public authority is defined as “any person who has functions of a public nature”.

This means it includes all the obvious public authorities (such as local councils, schools, government departments and so on), but might also include private organisations or even voluntary-sector organisations that carry out “functions of a public nature”.

There is no definition of what a “function of a public nature” is, but it generally applies to a service that no one else provides, such as tax collection or running a prison.

There is also no definitive list of the public authorities that the GED applies to, but you can look at the Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice for more information; it can be accessed from the Equality and Human Rights Commission website ([www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)).

## 2. What are a public authority’s functions?

Core functions for public bodies are also described in the Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice, and they include:

- Policy development
- Service design and delivery
- Decision making
- Exercise of statutory discretion
- Any services and functions which have been contracted out.

## 3. What does ‘due regard’ mean?

An important part of the GED is how it is worded in law: the duty is to have **due regard to the need** to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity.

While it’s helpful that this is a positive duty (in other words, something that must be done and which public bodies must be proactive about), the duty is only to have ‘**due regard**’.

There have been some court cases about what these two words mean, and one judge said:

“What is due regard? In my view it is the regard that is **appropriate in all the circumstances**. These include on the one hand the **importance** of the areas of life of the members of the disadvantaged racial group that are affected by the inequality of opportunity and the **extent of the inequality**; and on the other hand, such countervailing factors as are relevant to the function which the decision maker is performing.”

The Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice also explains what due regard means:

“Having due regard means that the weight given to the need to promote gender equality is **proportionate** to its **relevance** to a particular function. In practice, this principle will mean public authorities should **prioritise action** to address the **most significant gender inequalities** within their remit, and take actions which are likely to deliver the best gender equality outcomes.”

“Gender equality will be more relevant to some functions than others. Relevance is about how much a function affects people’s gender equality.”



#### 4. What does a public authority need to do to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity (to meet the 'general duty')?

To meet the 'general' Gender Equality Duty, some public bodies must also meet the specific duties: see below. Obviously, all public bodies can use the specific duties as steps that will assist them to comply with the general duty, even if they are not required by law to meet the specific duties.

##### Specific duties for (some) public bodies to meet the GED

The public bodies that must meet the 'specific duties' part of the Gender Equality Duty are listed in the legislation, but can also be found in the Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice.

The specific duties are helpful because they set out the practical steps that public bodies must take. A failure to meet these duties can be used as evidence that a body has not met the general Gender Equality Duty.

##### The specific duties are as follows:

- Prepare and publish a **Gender Equality Scheme (GES)**
- In preparing the scheme, a public authority must **consult service users and others**
- In preparing the scheme, a public authority must have taken into account **information it has gathered or considers relevant** as to how its policies and practices affected gender equality in the delivery of its services.
- The GES must set out the actions the public authority will take to:
  - **Gather information** on the effect of its policies and practices on women
  - **Use information** to review the implementation of its objectives
  - **Assess the impact** of its policies and practices on gender equality
  - **Consult service users and others**
  - Ensure implementation of its objectives.
- The GES and its actions must be implemented within three years.
- The GES must be reviewed and revised every three years.
- The GES must be reported on every year.



Credit: Somalie

## Understanding discrimination

Understanding equality is linked to understanding discrimination. Indeed, equalities legislation and associated best practice have evolved due to the need to tackle long-standing and systematic discrimination.

The Gender Equality Duty is an example of this. Whereas previous legislation relied heavily on individuals taking action to challenge discrimination, the Gender Equality Duty places a responsibility on public bodies to identify and prevent discrimination.

### Activity: Exploring discrimination

This section of the toolkit is adapted from the GenderWorks project's 'Policy into Practice' training course and mentoring programme, and has been reproduced with the permission of **Adele Baumgardt**, consultant trainer.

#### Purpose:

- To identify examples of discrimination
- To understand direct, indirect and institutional discrimination
- To explore how discrimination occurs in an organisation.

#### Resources:

- Three flip chart sheets, labelled 'Direct discrimination', 'Indirect discrimination' and "Institutional discrimination"
- Post-it notes
- Markers
- The following dictionary definition:

#### **Discrimination (noun) DIFFERENT TREATMENT:**

"Treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, religion, sex, etc."

#### How to use:

- Begin with a short discussion on discrimination. It's likely that participants will have different ideas about the concept of discrimination. If required, give participants the dictionary definition to begin the discussion.
- Put the flip chart sheets up on the walls. Ask participants to write down ways in which discrimination occurs in each of the three categories on post-it notes. They may refer to discriminatory practices they have witnessed or experienced, or practices they have heard about.
- Take each type of discrimination in turn, and ask participants for their ideas. Share the variety of ways in which each type of discrimination occurs, and try to identify the key characteristics of each type.
- Have a concluding discussion on whether and how each type of discrimination occurs in participants' own organisations. You may also want to reflect on whether the activity has highlighted any forms of discrimination that are unseen, and not currently well understood or addressed.

## Impact assessments

Public authorities are under a duty to assess the impact of their **current and new policies and practices** on gender equality. They must carry out an impact assessment if it is **likely that there will be an adverse impact**.

Public authorities therefore need to have a **screening process** to go through all their existing policies and practices, considering whether or not to do an impact assessment on them, as well as considering doing impact assessments on new decisions they take or plans they make.

**The Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice describes the purpose of an impact assessment as two-fold:**

- To ensure that neither sex is **disadvantaged** by an authority's decision and activities
- To identify where public authorities can **promote equality** of opportunity between men and women.

Any impact assessment process should reflect this and be clear and easy to understand in its conclusions. All impact assessments should be made available to the public.

If the public authority does an impact assessment and discovers there will be a **negative impact or a missed chance** to promote equal opportunities, it must consider whether it needs to **modify** the policy or practice in order to meet the GED.

The public authority may, in fact, be able to **justify** the adverse impact and go ahead with its plans anyway, but it must be able to show that it has gone through the impact assessment process and why it thinks any adverse impact is justified.

If the public authority cannot justify the adverse impact, it must take steps to **reduce or eliminate it**, or **abandon** the policy altogether.

Not all policies and practices will be equally relevant to gender equality, so public authorities should be using a **two-stage process**: an initial screening of everything it does to decide how relevant the policy or practice is to gender equality, and then an impact assessment on the policies and practices it decides are relevant.

All impact assessments should include **consultation** with the people who will be affected by the policy or practice. If at this stage it is felt that the policy will have an impact on gender issues, a **gender impact assessment** should be carried out (see the section below on equality impact assessments).



The Equality and Human Rights Commission provides guidance on impact assessments: see [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)



Credit: Ian MacNicol



Credit: Ian MacNicol

# The introduction of the Single Equality Bill

In April 2009, the UK government published the draft text of the Equality Bill

This new act will tackle discrimination across the following equality strands:

- race
- disability
- gender
- gender identity
- religion and belief
- age
- sexual orientation

The bill is due to come into force in 2011, and marks a move to strengthen protection against discrimination and simplify the law: the single bill will replace more than 100 different pieces of equality legislation.

## What will the Equality Bill do for gender equality?

Critics argue that the Equality Bill is too weak, does not contain enough that's new and merely forces public bodies to do what they are supposed to be doing anyway. However, the new duty does make a stronger provision for women than existing legislation, and aims to make it easier to demand equal pay, for example.

As with the Gender Equality Duty, the new Bill is likely to prove a useful tool in increasing gender equality, but only if women use it.

A number of measures set out by the Bill should increase gender equality, such as the requirements to:

- **Bring in pay gap reporting (clause 73).**

This will apply to the public sector first. The private sector will follow in 2013 if insufficient voluntary progress is made in the meantime. The Bill will also ban secrecy clauses that prevent employees discussing their pay with colleagues.

- **Use public procurement to improve equality**

For example, a government department contracting out its recruitment services requires that all jobs must be advertised on a part-time basis or with flexible working unless there is a business reason why this is not possible. This will help to ensure that its work is available to all groups of people, in particular women.

- **Extend the use of positive action in the workplace**

Employers can choose to make their workforce more diverse when selecting between two job candidates who are equally suitable.

- **Extend the power of employment tribunals**

The Bill will ensure that employment tribunals can make recommendations that benefit the whole workforce and not just the individual who brought the claim, who often ends up leaving the company.

- **Implement new Equality Duty on public bodies**

The Duty will mean public bodies need to think about the needs of everyone who uses their services or works for them, whatever their gender. This will specifically apply to pregnant women and new mothers.

- **Extend the permission to use women-only shortlists to 2030**

This will help to increase the proportion of women in Parliament.

- **Protect carers from discrimination**

The Equality Bill will protect women (and men) who are, for example, caring for a disabled child or an older relative. They will be protected by virtue of their link to that person.

- **Protect breastfeeding mothers**

The Equality Bill will make it clear that it is unlawful to force breastfeeding mothers and their babies out of places like coffee shops, public galleries and restaurants.

- **Ensure private members' clubs do not discriminate against women**

Women will have to be treated equally if they belong to clubs with over 25 members.

## **i** For more information, contact:

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC):

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

The Government Equalities Office (GEO):

[www.equalities.gov.uk](http://www.equalities.gov.uk)

The Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA):

[www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)



Credit: Kate Rowley

# Conclusion

## We are stronger together!

Shared learning was at the heart of the GenderWorks project.

We worked with partner organisations engaged in similar work across Europe to share experiences and develop practice, and to jointly engage with policy makers to share the findings of our learning.

In our training work in the UK, we worked simultaneously with women's organisations and women directly affected by poverty, and also with local authorities and policy makers who are tasked with providing services.

We believe space must be created for women to come together, to share their experiences and give each other the support and confidence to try to bring about change in their community; particularly vulnerable and excluded women.

Space must also be created for women's groups as a sector, both in grassroots service delivery and in the planning of public services. This space must

be supported through engagement work, and the appropriate provision of funding.

We believe service providers must maximise opportunities to engage with women's groups, and value their input as a vital source of information about the lived experiences of women in the local area; not only because it is a duty under public law, but because it is best practice.

This toolkit and accompanying DVD provide the tools and encouragement for women's organisations and public bodies to work together to ensure the problems faced by women experiencing poverty are tackled more effectively.

The shared learning approach acknowledges that we don't have all the answers, but is built on the belief that we can work creatively and constructively to develop solutions together.

We believe that by sharing our learning, we all become stronger.



Credit: Ian MacNicol













***“Women didn’t just write the letters, they got involved in the campaign, came to demonstrations and so on. That transforms them from being passive victims to active agents of change.”***

Pragna Patel, Chair, Southall Black Sisters (SBS)

**Use people power  
for maximum effect**

**Use people power  
for maximum effect**

- Have someone co-ordinating the activism to bring people together
- Involve all interested groups and individuals to reinforce the campaign message and widen the impact
- Where there are wider principles at stake, lever for change if possible (for example, by the time SBS got to court, its campaign was no longer about funding but about equality)
- Speak to the people you are campaigning on behalf of and make sure you give an honest account of their experiences
- Be aware of your power – ‘people power’ really can make a difference!

***“The ‘Behind the Façade’ exhibition has such a big impact on visitors... It means that there’s another group of people who have a better understanding of the issues, and that’s actually the first step to change.”***

Regina Webhofer, Project Coordinator, WAVE Network  
(Women Against Violence in Europe)

**Get the message across**

## **Get the message across**

- Make decisions about how best to approach the issue in order to get the message across
- Use humour where possible to make the campaign more accessible, to keep spirits up and to attract public attention
- Be creative and have fun!

***“We realised that there were a lot of different groups that had a reason to be interested in this issue. Women’s groups, equality groups, human rights organisations, local residents groups and community forums...”***

Sandrine Levêque, Campaigns Manager, Object

**Build support**

## **Build support**

- Build a coalition of support – we are stronger together!
- Forge effective alliances and team up to campaign (for example, Object joined forces with the Fawcett Society)
- Link up with sympathetic politicians and decision-makers on the “big picture” issues
- Make the decision-makers sit up and listen and see that the issue is in the public interest.

***“We were fed up with traditional methods of campaigning... so decided to go along two avenues – working on the ground, exploring issues with women in communities, as well as continuing to needle away at politicians and power holders.”***

Steph Mayo, Beechwood Women & Arts Group

**Be strategic**

## **Be strategic**

- Identify your strengths and opportunities and think of ways to use these to overcome the challenges you face
- Decide on the target group(s) you want to reach and consider how you communicate with them. Develop an information database or mailing list
- Respond quickly and try to keep up a fast pace to your campaigning; politicians, the media and people generally can rapidly lose interest
- Consider your options carefully; for example, negotiation versus a more confrontational approach, such as legal action
- Monitor and review the progress of the campaign, collecting feedback.



***“I handed over a petition with 6,500 signatures. The Councillor just said it wasn’t worth anything. How could he stand there and tell me the voice of Dumfries and Galloway was worthless?... So we put an article in the local papers and named and shamed the councillors.”***

Elaine North, Support for Learning Assistant  
Dumfries, and UNISON union steward

**Stand firm,  
stay focused**

## **Stand firm, stay focused**

- Have the courage of your convictions, and don't be put down by others who seem to have more power and control
- Be clear about the desired outcome of your campaign
- Remain consistent in your focus and your message(s)
- Don't be tempted to take on other people's opinions or arguments that move you away from your goal.

***“We knew that if we were going to stand any chance of being heard, and having... any victory, we should be visible – both inside and outside the court.”***

Pragna Patel, Chair, Southall Black Sisters (SBS)

**Use the media**

## **Use the media**

- Forge relationships with the media – recognise that this is important in terms of influencing politicians. Be very strong with journalists
- Use the media in a variety of ways: write blogs for websites and letters to newspapers; aim for TV and radio coverage; target local and national media as appropriate
- Get the message out to the general public, build on existing foundations and challenge old myths
- Be creative and be visible – the media like strong visuals.

