

11-14 YEARS SESSION 6: Were women better off as a result of collective action groups?

Subject: Geography

Age range: 11-14 years

Time: 1 hour

<p>Outline Learners will use charts and case studies to evaluate how being part of a collective action group can empower women.</p>		
<p>Learning objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To interpret qualitative and quantitative data To evaluate the impact of collective action on women's empowerment 	<p>Learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will use data and case studies to explore the impact of collective action groups Learners will use case studies and data as evidence and examples in their writing 	
<p>Key questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does collective action have an impact on women's empowerment? 	<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slideshow 6 <i>Learner worksheet 6A: The Impact of Collective Action Groups on Women's Empowerment</i> <i>Learner worksheet 6B: Case Studies of Women in Collective Action Groups</i> 	
<p>Curriculum links</p>		
<p>England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils should be taught to extend their locational knowledge and deepen their spatial awareness of the world's countries using maps of the world to focus on Africa Pupils should be taught to understand geographical similarities, differences and links between places through the study of human and physical geography of a region within Africa Pupils should be taught to understand human geography relating to: population and urbanisation; international development; economic activity in the primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary sectors; and the use of natural resources Pupils should be taught to analyse and draw conclusions from geographical data, using multiple sources of increasingly complex information. 	<p>Wales <i>Geography Key Stage 3</i></p> <p>Understanding places, environments and processes - describe and explain physical and human features, explain the causes and effects of physical and human processes and how the processes interrelate</p> <p><i>Mathematics Key Stage 3/ Numeracy Framework</i></p> <p>Using data skills - interpret results</p>	<p>Scotland <i>Social studies</i></p> <p>I can explain why a group I have identified might experience inequality and can suggest ways in which this inequality might be addressed. SOC 3-16a</p> <p><i>Numeracy and mathematics</i></p> <p>When analysing information or collecting data of my own, I can use my understanding of how bias may arise and how sample size can affect precision, to ensure that the data allows for fair conclusions to be drawn.</p> <p>MTH 3-20b</p>

Starter (5 min)

What do you need to know?

Ask learners to write down any information they think they would need to answer this question: to what extent does collective action have a positive impact on women farmers' lives? Ideas might include: data to compare women who belong to the collective action groups with those who don't, data on the women's income or wealth, and information about how happy the women are.

Learners should try to draw on what they have learnt in the previous lessons in this series, for example: comparing the data of women in groups with those not in groups.

You could encourage discussions around what a positive impact on the women's lives might look like. Can learners think of impacts other than earning more money? For example: how confident the women are, how happy the women are, what their stress levels are, how much free time they have, how much control they have over decisions in their families. Note, these are not all easily measurable and most were not included in this research project but they are ideas that learners might suggest.

And/Or:

Display slide 5 in Slideshow 6. Ask learners to choose the three areas that they think would be most important for enabling women farmers to improve their lives. Learners should write down or discuss their reasons and choices.

The eight areas to choose from are:

1. More influence over what happens on farms where the woman works. These farms could be either the family farm or a commercial farm.
2. More say in how money earned from farming is spent.
3. Owning more money, land, animals and/or equipment.
4. A woman's right to decide what is done with land, animals and farming tools is respected.
5. More influence over borrowing money.
6. More say in how money is spent in the home (everyday needs and bigger purchases).
7. More freedom to travel away from home.
8. More freedom to attend collective action group meetings.

Explain to learners that all of these areas have an impact on women's empowerment – a very simple explanation of women's empowerment is supporting women to be able to improve their lives.

Also explain that Oxfam looked at how far and in what ways collective action groups help women to empower themselves. This helped Oxfam and other organisations to understand which are the best strategies they can use to support women farmers to improve their lives and escape poverty.

Then ask learners:

- Why do you think that the researchers chose to measure empowerment using the above eight dimensions? Encourage learners to think about how each of these would impact on the women's lives. There is more information on women's empowerment in the background notes and a learner-friendly definition on slide 5 in Slideshow 6.
- If you were doing your own study to measure women's empowerment, what other things might you want to collect information on?

Activity 6.1 (15 min)

The impact of collective action groups on women's empowerment

Explain that learners will now look at more of the data and findings from the project to decide to what extent the groups had a positive impact on women's empowerment.

Hand out learner worksheet 6A: The Impact of collective action groups on Women's Empowerment and ask learners to decide for each statement whether it is a positive impact on the women farmers. Learners could cut out and sort the statements in order of which had the most impact.

Overall, do learners think that being part of a group helped to empower women?

Learners could also decide which impact they think was the most important for women's empowerment, and why. They could write their ideas down.

Differentiation

Make it easier:

Rather than deciding on the extent to which the groups had a positive impact, learners could just decide whether they think the impact was positive or not.

Activity 6.2 (10 min)

Interpreting charts

Explain to learners that they will now be presented with more quantitative data to develop their understanding of women's empowerment in the two study countries.

Display the chart showing the data on women's empowerment in Ethiopia (for more information, see the background notes) on slide 6 in Slideshow 6.

Learners answer the questions on the following slide.

There are further questions connected to the chart on slide 7 in Slideshow 6 (see background notes for support with question 4).

Differentiation

Make it easier:

Instead of learners answering the questions in the presentation, present them with some statements about the chart and ask them to decide whether they are true or false. For example:

- True or false? Women who belong to collective action groups have more access to credit (borrowing money).
- True or false? Women who belong to collective action groups have less freedom of movement.

Activity 6.3 (15 min)

Case studies

Hand out learner worksheet 6B: Case Studies of Women in Collective Action Groups and either read individually or as a class.

Discuss in small groups or as a class what the case studies show about the impact of being part of a collective action group on the women.

Explain to learners that the case studies were another form of data collection – qualitative data - and that collecting this type of data is important as it can add to and alter the understandings and findings of the quantitative data. The overall research findings drew conclusions from both the qualitative and quantitative data collected.

- Qualitative data helps us to understand the quantitative numbers. Interviews with the women can reveal new things the researcher hadn't thought of, which could lead to further questions for the quantitative study.
- Meanwhile, quantitative data provides an overall picture to balance interviews where the person being interviewed might not be representative of the wider group.

Ask learners whether the case study changed the opinion they reached in the previous activity.

Activity 6.4 (15 min)

Writing a response

Using slides 10-14 in Slideshow 6, ask learners to decide to what extent they agree with the statement "Collective action groups have a positive impact on women farmers". They first decide what percentage they agree with this statement i.e. I think it is 80% correct then use the final slide to choose words that correspond with that percentage.

- It is worth stressing to learners that there is both an income element and an empowerment element to the impacts on women farmers. Try to draw out that empowerment impacts like decision-making power are vital alongside economic gains. For example, there is limited impact of a higher income if you have no control over how the money is spent.

Learners now write a response to the statement, drawing on the statements in learner worksheet 6A, the charts and the case studies in their answer. Use slides 15 and 16 to support learners' writing. As an alternative you could present the statement as an 'opinion continuum' and ask learners to stand in a line to show how much they agree, they then respond to each other's opinions.

Differentiation

Make it harder:

Ask learners to draw on what they learnt in the previous four lessons and reference the data they have been using in their answer.

Further ideas

Learners could share their learning with others in the school and/or wider community by writing a news article, making a film, giving an assembly etc.

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The Impact of Collective Action Groups on Women's Empowerment in Ethiopia

Women who are members of collective action groups earn 80% more than those not in groups.

Women who are members of collective action groups have a higher quality product and make more of their product.*

Women who belong to groups have more control over how money is spent in the home.

Belonging to a group did not always help women overcome some of the problems that stop them selling their products. For example, often women are not allowed to travel far from their home so they can't go to markets where they might get a better price for their products. Also, looking after their family and home often does not leave women with enough extra time to sell products. And local culture says that selling products is a man's role not a woman's.

Women who are members of groups have more access to credit (money they can borrow to pay for things like transport).

Women who belong to groups have greater access to information about their product's market e.g. what prices they can charge for it.

Women in groups were not always able to access buyers who would pay more money for their products. For example, even if they made a higher quality product, they could not necessarily access wealthier buyers, such as people living in towns or abroad, who would be able to pay more money.

*This conclusion was drawn from all three study countries (Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mali).

Case Studies of Women in Collective Action Groups

Bosena, Ethiopia



Bosena is 40 years old, and she is seen as one of the most successful women beekeepers in Amhara region. She is a well-respected member of her community and an executive committee member of Meserethiwot honey cooperative. She has succeeded in spite of having a relatively difficult childhood, never attending school and getting married at eight years old. As a married woman, she had to carry out all the traditional duties and responsibilities expected of rural mothers in the region (such as cooking, cleaning and collecting firewood), without much support from her first husband and his family.



A combination of factors has enabled Bosena to succeed as a businesswoman. These include her personal qualities and skills, her participation in Oxfam training, and the support of her second husband. Bosena is known for being proactive and adopting new ideas before others in her village. It is because of this quality that she was the first woman sent for training, by Oxfam, to help form women-only groups in the area. After the training, Bosena was asked to select 20 women from poorer households to join her in establishing a village women-only group. Her selection criteria for membership included trustworthiness, being an active member of the community, readiness to work with others, and ownership of at least one beehive.

Members of the women-only group believe that the example set by Bosena, as its first chairperson, is the reason why the group is performing better than the other groups in the area, and she is seen as a role model for other women in the village.

In addition, Bosena has been elected to the executive committee of her honey cooperative, in recognition of her leadership skills and knowledge of beekeeping. The committee realized that, although she is not literate, she performs very well at representing women and attracting more women members. She is the first woman to hold a senior position on the committee, which has broken with the traditional thinking that this kind of position is only for men.

Bosena feels she has a very close and supportive relationship with her second husband. He advises other husbands to support their wives in collective action group activities. Bosena recognizes that it would be much more difficult for her to carry out her group roles and responsibilities without his support and encouragement. Bosena appreciates the support provided by Oxfam, such as training, encouragement to take on leadership positions, and access to financial support. Oxfam has also provided her with modern bee hives and safety equipment. She says that without Oxfam's support, "I would remain just like any housewife in our village with no information about the external world... I would not attend meetings, let alone lead them... I could only play a very minor role in the beekeeping sector."