

Background notes for teachers – 14-16 years additional information.

It is recommended that teachers read both the 11-14 years and 14-16 years background notes before embarking on teaching these sessions. Much of the useful background information is contained in the 11-14 years teacher's notes and hasn't been repeated in detail. The 14-16 years sessions can be taught as a self-contained set of sessions or can be used as a follow-on from the 11-14 years sessions.

The 11-14 years background notes contain detailed information about Women's Collective Action, the research carried out by Oxfam, information about the data used and specific information about the research in Ethiopia.

The Oxfam research was carried out in three countries Ethiopia, Mali and Tanzania. The 11-14 years sessions focussed on Ethiopia, the 14-16 years sessions examine the research more widely and include information about Ethiopia and Mali.

Mali

Background

Mali has one of the largest areas of shea trees in the 'shea belt' of western and central Africa. Shea resources in the country may amount to as many as 408.6 million trees, and national production is approximately 80,000 tonnes per year, compared to an estimated annual global production of between 610,000 and 650,000 tonnes. (Ministry for the promotion of Women, Children and the Family (MPFEF) (2003) 'Stratégie de renforcement des capacités des femmes dans la lière de karité au Mali'.)

Shea producers in Mali have tended to sell shea nuts either raw or processed as butter. Over the last 20 years, opportunities to sell to overseas markets and to create added-value have led to the production of improved butter, which sells for a higher price than the traditional product.

Traditionally, WCA (Women's Collective Action) groups were only involved in the process of extracting the butter, but, as part of these innovations in the production and marketing of shea, groups are now involved in the purchase of the kernels, the extraction and preservation of the butter, and the handling and sale of the final product. The WCA research was carried out in Koutiala district in Sikasso, a region in the south-east of the country near the border with Burkina Faso. Environmental conditions in this area are highly favourable for the growth of shea trees, and shea butter production is a well-established activity.

Change at the personal, household and community level

In 2012, women in the WCA groups surveyed earn approximately \$12 per year more from traditional butter sales than corresponding producers who were not members. Along with the sales of improved shea butter, this meant earnings from shea products of 81 per cent more than women not in groups, translating to an increase in profit of \$20 per year. The transfer of improved techniques in shea butter production, processing and marketing to WCA members' other income-generating activities can mean that these are also more remunerative.



Overall, across the 27 groups surveyed, women members were significantly more empowered than non-members in terms of decision-making power over agricultural incomes, use of credit and freedom of movement. These changes, along with women's increased ability to contribute to household costs, positively influenced relations between husbands and wives, such that women in these groups had more say within the household. The President of the cotton producers' cooperative in N'Gountjina explained that the men in the village now believe that *"Women are an invaluable help to men when it comes to household management. So the woman should always be consulted on important decisions relating to the survival and future of the family"*.

This extract was adapted from Oxfam's *Women's collective action in the shea sector in Mali Transformational change for women and their communities. Improving gender relations through women's collective action*. Further information can be found at <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/womens-collective-action-in-the-shea-sector-in-mali-275772>

Session 1: Setting the scene / Scatter Graphs

Further information about the research can be found in the background information for the 11-14 years sessions and the material produced for the 11-14 years Session 1

The Quick Quiz activity: This could generate quite a bit of discussion around the issue of employment and wealth equality. The information for this quiz can be found in the Human Development index <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2015-report> Learners may find it interesting to look at the statistics for the UK or for either of the research countries (Ethiopia and Mali). Useful information on gender and specifically on Women's Economic Empowerment can be found on the Oxfam website <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/our-work/gender-justice/womens-economic-empowerment>

The data used in this session comes largely from Ethiopia, with the introduction of some information from Mali. Learners will get a more detailed introduction to Mali and the shea production in 14-16 years Session 2.

Session 2: Cumulative Frequency Graphs

Further information on WCA (Women's Collective Action) can be found in the background information for the 11-14 years sessions and the material produced for 11-14 years Session 1 and 11-14 years Session 2.

Supporting information for the questions on slide 29 can be found in the lesson plan.

Session 3: Pie Charts / Histograms

Pie charts: The first activity sets out to demonstrate the use and the limitations of pie-charts using marital status data. Point out to learners that it is not necessarily valid to assume national trends from local statistics. Therefore, while some of the data used in the pie charts could correlate with wider regional or national data in Mali or Ethiopia, the relatively small sample size means learners would need to look at larger data sets to draw meaningful conclusions about the countries as a whole.

This activity could also lead to interesting class discussions around what similar pie-charts might look like in England and Wales and how these might correlate to the UK as a whole. You might like to look in advance at the Office for National Statistics website for England and Wales data.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/> Again it is useful to remind learners that the pie charts used in this session are from one small group of women and do not accurately represent the whole community or country.

Remind learners that although there are a higher number of widows in the WCA study this does not necessarily mean there are a higher number of widows in the country as a whole. Women who are widowed are more likely to be involved in WCA groups because they are frequently sole parents and need an increased source of income in the absence of financial support from a husband. This could account for higher than average representation of widowed women amongst the WCA groups.

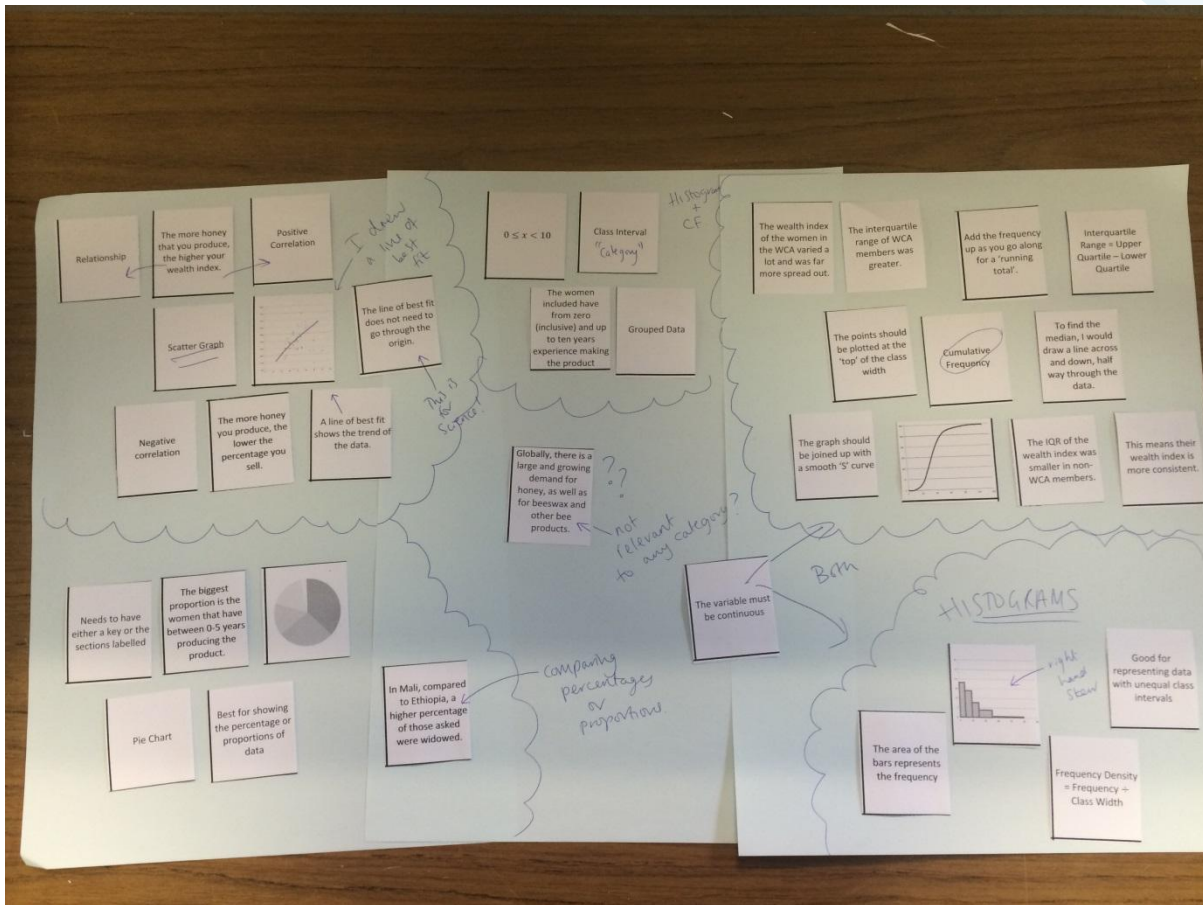
It is worth exploring with your learners the variety of possible reasons for the higher number of widows in the Mali group compared with the Ethiopia group. It is the role of statisticians to consider and explore different options when they compare data sets and draw conclusions.

For example, two simple explanations for a higher number of widows in Mali could be that men in Ethiopia die younger or that they marry at a younger age. Another explanation could be that, because life expectancy is calculated from an average of the ages people die, it is greatly influenced by child mortality rates. If child mortality is high, this will reduce the national average life expectancy. Average life expectancy does not therefore tell us how long a person lives once they have survived to marital age, so in this case it does not tell us how long a young adult male in Mali or Ethiopia will live once they have married. Statisticians would need to carry out further research to get a clearer idea of the most appropriate explanation.

As part of the discussion around the limitations of using pie-charts it is also worth noting that they can be very difficult to interpret for people who are colour-blind.

Histograms: For extra information on histograms see the 11-14 years background notes.

Summary activity: This activity is designed to recap the lessons learnt through the three sessions and to stimulate questions and discussion amongst the learners. Below is an example of how you could group the cards. There are no set answers or structures for this session and it should be used as an opportunity to consolidate and expand the learning from the three sessions. It would also be a good idea to remind learners of the context of the data and print out or display some of the pictures and captions from the research projects in Mali and Ethiopia.



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To spread that change and make it last, political solutions are also needed to tackle the root causes of poverty and create societies where empowered individuals can thrive. We will always act, we will speak out, and we won't live with poverty.

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The MA is run by members for members from its headquarters in Leicester and is managed by a Council of around 19 MA members. But the heart of the MA is to be found in its publications, its committees and subcommittees, and its other activities, which provide an invaluable opportunity for interested teachers to work together on topics of common interest - work which often results in publications, resources or discussion documents for the wider community.

Website: www.m-a.org.uk/history



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