

SESSION 3: WOMEN AND DECENT WORK: MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

Age range: 14–19

<p>Outline</p> <p>Learners will analyse a case study from Wales or the wider world and will consider what needs to happen in order to help women gain better access to decent work. They will also think about who is in a position to make this happen and how it can be done, comparing and evaluating the similarities and differences between Wales and the wider world. They will create and present their own personal standpoint, and devise a creative and innovative awareness-raising campaign including three ‘asks’ for improving access to decent work for women in a chosen area.</p>	
<p>Learning objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify how best to make work decent for women. • To analyse how change can happen and who can engineer this. • To write a personal standpoint. • To create an innovative awareness-raising campaign. 	<p>Learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will look at a range of local and global case studies and consider what needs to happen to bring about change, who is in a position to make this happen, and how it can happen. • Learners will consider and be aware of their own personal standpoint. • Learners will use their creativity to produce and evaluate an innovative campaign to raise awareness of the issues; they will decide on three ‘asks’.
<p>Key questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs to be changed to make work decent for women? • Who is responsible for increasing the economic empowerment of women? • What can we do to create change? • How can we raise awareness of the need to create change? 	<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decent Work for Women slideshow (slides 10–24) • Resource sheets: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Case study: Childcare in Wales 2. Case study: Job quality in Wales 3. Case study: Employability and skills in Wales 4. Case study: Factory work in Vietnam 5. Case study: Care in Uganda 6. Case study: Workers’ organizations in Kenya • Activity sheets: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing your campaign 2. SWOT analysis

Curriculum links

Wales

Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation / National Key Stage 4 Global Citizenship Challenge

- Understand how to and be able to generate ideas and identify and make the most of opportunities
- Demonstrate original thinking and an ability to identify and challenge assumptions
- Be able to combine or develop ideas
- Assess and evaluate ideas, choosing and implementing options
- Demonstrate imagination and initiative
- Reflect on the process and identify how it could be improved

Activity 3.1 (10 mins)

Opinion continuum

- Ask learners to reflect briefly on their learning from the previous session. Put them into pairs and ask them to talk to each other for one minute each about what they have learnt so far, what their views are and if anything has surprised them. Tell them to talk for a minute while their partner listens. Time them while they do this, then tell them to swap roles.
- Clear a space in your classroom or teaching area and tell learners to form a line across the room.
- Label one side of the room 'Strongly agree' and the other 'Strongly disagree'. Say that you are going to read out some statements and that learners should move to a point on the line that reflects how much they agree or disagree with each statement. Explain that there are not necessarily any 'right' or 'wrong' answers.
- Present the statements using the slides:
 1. Work is the best way for people to get out of poverty. (Slide 11)
 2. It is more difficult to find decent work in Wales if you are a woman. (Slide 12)
 3. It is more difficult to find decent work in the global South if you are a woman. (Slide 13)
 4. Everyone should have the right to decent work. (Slide 14)
 5. Access to affordable childcare would solve the problem of poverty among working people. (Slide 15)

After each statement ask learners to talk to others about their views. If possible, they should pair up with someone who is standing on the opposite side of the opinion line. Tell the learners to explain their views to each other. If they feel strongly, learners should try to persuade others to change their views! Encourage the learners to use the facts and statistics from the previous learning to back up their opinions.

- After each discussion, ask learners to line up again and move to a different place if they have changed their mind. You could then ask individuals to tell the group why they have moved.
- You could also open the discussion to thinking about other elements of a woman's identity or experience that may affect equal access to decent work, such as being an asylum seeker or refugee, language barriers, religious or sexual identity.

Activity 3.2 (50 mins)

Case study analysis

- Learners will take part in an activity that will enable them to think more deeply about the solutions to the problem of gender inequality and work, both locally and globally.
- Divide the class into six groups and give each group one of the case studies found in Resource sheets 1–6. Tell the groups to answer the following questions:
 - What is the problem?

- What needs to be changed?
 - Who is in a position to change this? Think about the government, employers, educators or the public.
 - Who has the most influence over the change?
 - Are there any conflicting viewpoints?
 - Do women face similar situations in other countries? What can be done locally to help the global situation?
- Ask learners to present their findings to the class. They could use slides 16–21 for this.
 - When all the groups have finished presenting, lead a discussion on the similarities and differences between the case studies, using the questions as a guide.

Differentiation

- Make it easier: reduce the number of case studies.
- Make it harder: ask learners to report back on a local and global issue or research further examples of work across the globe.

Activity 3.3 (10 mins)

Personal standpoint

- Ask learners to prepare a one-minute speech setting out their own personal standpoint on the issue of women and decent work. They should consider the answers to the following questions:
 - What was your opinion before your research?
 - What have you learnt about gender inequality and decent work? What are the key facts and statistics? Did any surprise you? Is the situation different locally and globally?
 - What discussions or work have you undertaken to form your personal standpoint?
 - What views and opinions have you come across? Did you come across any person or source that was biased? Why? Did anyone in the class change your mind?

Differentiation

- Make it easier: give learners a writing frame to complete.
- Make it harder: ask learners to prepare a speech for their class.

Activity 3.4 (60 mins)

Taking action – raising awareness

- Tell your learners that their task is to design an awareness-raising campaign to educate and inform the local community.
- Lead a discussion on what change is. When we talk about change, we generally mean change for the better. We can create change in a small way, for example in our families, or in a big way, for example by being part of a group that works together to make a difference in society.

- Show learners the pictures on slide 16 of the presentation, and ask them what they show. Put them into pairs to talk about what is in the pictures. Ask them to feed their ideas back to the class.
- Tell learners that each picture represents a change that has taken place and ask them what they think the change was. Go through their answers and describe each change in a little detail:
 - Votes for women – a campaign by the suffragettes to get votes for women, which meant that in 1918 some women could vote for the first time in UK elections. For many working women, or women under the age of 30, the vote didn't come until 1928.
 - Rosa Parks – an end to segregation. Rosa Parks refused to sit in the area of the bus designated for black passengers, thereby helping to start a movement that led to greater rights for black people.

These are historic examples that changed the world in a big way. Each one started on a small scale, with one woman taking a stand for what she believed in and taking action. After that it became something much bigger. It shows we all have the power to change things in our lives and in the world.

- Their task is to create a campaign that will raise awareness in their school, the local community and the government. Ask each group to devise three 'asks' – one to be put to the government, one to the public, and one to teachers or peers at their school.
- Lead a brainstorming session on what makes an effective campaign or action. Ask all groups to write their ideas on sticky notes, to share on the board. Ideas may range from designing an exhibition, writing a poem or song, and writing to an MP or Assembly Member, to running an assembly, peer teaching, writing a blog post, creating an infographic, designing a board game, an app or a website, writing quizzes, organizing pop-up shops, or using social media.
- Give learners 30 minutes to design their campaign using Activity sheet 1.
- Ask them to pitch their ideas to the class.
- Give each learner a copy of Activity sheet 2, a template that will enable them to do a SWOT analysis. Ask them to use it to evaluate the pitches.
- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each idea?
- Ask learners to feed their analysis back to the class.

Welsh Baccalaureate skills development

- Learners could look at job adverts and consider how employers advertise vacancies.
 - Which factors do they highlight as being important, to try to attract potential employees?
 - Does the information provided include the factors which learners identified as being most important to them? Look in the local papers for adverts in the local area. What are the most popular sectors in which jobs are advertised?
- Further develop learners' understanding of work, including unpaid work, by asking them to break down the individual tasks of different roles such as a nurse, a stay-at-home parent, a self-employed person, someone caring for a relative, a cleaner or a bank manager. This could be done through research or by interviewing or shadowing someone working.

Terms of use

Copyright © Oxfam GB

You may use photographs and associated information from this resource for educational purposes at your educational institution. With each use, you must credit the photographer named for that image, as well as Oxfam. You may not use the images and associated information for commercial purposes or outside of your educational institution. All information associated with these images relates to the date and time that project work took place.

Case study: Childcare in Wales

Resource sheet 1

From zero confidence to full-time employment

Rumi Razzak, from Cardiff, is a busy mum to three boys, and her husband works full time. Last year she started thinking about returning to work, but didn't know where to start.

'Last year I felt quite helpless really,' says Rumi, who used to work as a customer sales executive with British Gas. 'I felt like I would never get a job because I don't have any experience. I haven't got anything to show on my CV, like recent experience, because I've been caring for my sons.'

Five months ago, Rumi joined Skills for Life, a project run by Oxfam Cymru and South Riverside Community Development Centre to enable women in Cardiff to gain the skills and confidence they need to progress into decent work. The Skills for Life project had a particular focus on Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women, and delivered a year-long tailored and supportive programme of workshops, training, professional coaching and voluntary work placements.

Recently, the project received the wonderful news that following a three-month work placement at the National Museum Cardiff, Rumi had been offered a paid position there. 'I am very excited about getting a job and I am looking forward to starting the training. I am most excited about the hours, as I can still fit the school run around the job,' says Rumi.

Rumi's story is only one of the project's many successes. In total, Skills for Life supported 54 women, and at least 14 have now secured employment.

A manifesto* for universal childcare

The Skills for Life participants felt that lack of suitable childcare keeps women out of the workplace, hinders their development, affects family relationships, keeps women isolated and affects their mental health. As a result, women felt disadvantaged in comparison to men and thought that their labour was not valued. Women felt that childcare was expected of them – 'It's just what you do.'

These were some of the issues identified:

- In the absence of public funding, childcare has become a business charging high fees.
- When childcare is discussed, the focus is often on very young (pre-school) children, but lack of suitable childcare remains a problem even when children are at school.
- There is no childcare available for women while they are looking for jobs (for example, for job interviews).
- The current system of tax credits only covers a proportion of childcare costs, which doesn't leave women with enough money to meet all their needs.

Proposals

1. Childcare should be community-based and public.
2. Women should campaign in local schools and the community to get after-school provision.

*This manifesto was developed following a Skills for Life workshop.

Source: 'From zero confidence to full-time employment: Success stories from the Skills for Life project', 9 May 2018, Oxfam Cymru, oxfamapps.org/cymru/2018-05-oxfam-cymru-skill-for-life-blog/



Case study: Job quality in Wales

Resource sheet 2

The notion of 'decent work' was introduced in 1999 by the International Labour Organization, a specialist agency of the United Nations, and became part of one of the global Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015. Decent work is about job quality.

Job adverts in the care industry

The adverts below come from a report commissioned by Oxfam. Research was done into decent work for women in the food and drink and home-based care sectors.

CARE IS NOT A DIRTY WORD

Care is real life, enabling someone to do simple, everyday tasks. Be part of something special.

No experience or training required. Full industry leading training provided.

- **Guaranteed hours (up to 40 hours per week) or flexible working – whatever suits you!**
- **Access to high street voucher scheme.**
- **Welcome pack for all new carers.**
- **Healthcare career progression available to all - along with access to industry qualifications & skills improvement.**
- **Range of reward and recognition benefits.**
- **Be part of a local, friendly and supportive team.**

WANTED
Care Assistants

What we offer:

- Competitive rates of pay. Basic hourly rate of £8.00 - £9.00 (09h00 - 18h00) and enhanced rates for unsociable hours before 09h00 and after 18h00
- Hourly rate of pay on sleeping nights which meets national living wage
- In addition to this we pay 34p per mile
- Time and a half is paid on bank holidays.
- Up to 28 days' annual leave with holiday pay
- Along with zero hour, we offer 20, 30 and 40 hour contracts. Guaranteed hours will be subject to availability.
- Opportunity to enroll into a pension scheme
- Work phone will be provided
- 24/7 support network and allocation to your own Team Leader
- You will need to have a degree of flexibility to assist with early mornings, evenings and weekends
- Employer will pay for a fully enhanced DBS check to cover working with adults
- No experience needed as we offer full mandatory training
- Driving license and own transport essential as we deliver care in the community. 'Walkers/cyclists' could be considered

A little bit about us....

- The duties of Care Assistant include all elements of personal care; from washing and bathing to companionship.
- We pride ourselves on the care that we extend to elderly people, younger adults with learning or physical disabilities and people with dementia.
- We don't wear uniforms as we like our staff to show their individuality.
- Our staff have a strong work ethic and share the values of humanity, optimism, decency, compassion, loyalty and creativity.

Figure 1: A leaflet by a private care company picked up in a shop in South Wales.

Figure 2: A job advert for care assistants in a private care home spotted in the window of a recruitment agency in South Wales. The starting rate for the position is £8.00, which is lower than the rates paid in the local supermarket.

Report – ‘Decent Work for Women in Wales: A Sectoral Study’

Below is a summary of the report’s key findings.

Home-based care sector

- Low pay and poor working conditions remain key barriers to making this work decent and improving recruitment, retention and ultimately progression in the home-based care sector.
- Zero-hours contracts are not a clear-cut issue within the care sector. Some employees appear to value the flexibility, while for others it can lead to insecurity and financial worries.
- Career progression, while possible, is difficult in home-based care. A supportive manager who can identify opportunities and access to training is crucial. Some home-based care workers do not want to progress into management as they wish to continue caring for people.

Food and drink sector

- The food and drink workforce remains segregated on the basis of gender, and issues of sexism and discrimination persist, with examples of women being excluded from heavier work in professional kitchens and prevented from getting the experience that would help them become chefs. This can be more marked for those workers who have come from outside the UK.
- Low pay is a problem and workers’ pay does not reflect the difficult nature of many jobs in the sector. As in care, contracts are a complex issue and overworking is the norm. While the flexibility offered by zero-hours contracts is welcomed by some, a lack of permanent contracts is seen by others as causing a high turnover of staff.
- There is a long-hours culture in the food and drink sector and poor work–life balance is a key issue. This affects the wellbeing of staff and can make progression much tougher for women, who are more likely to have care responsibilities outside work.
- Career progression is not the aim for everyone in the food and drink sector. For some, jobs in the sector are a job ‘for now’ while they pursue other interests and passions, which are linked to their career aspirations. For those who do wish to progress, it can be difficult. Furthermore, the rewards for moving into managerial roles can be minimal.
- Initial training is good, but there is not very much professional development training on offer. While there are examples of good training and development programmes, these tend to be in larger corporate settings in the hospitality industry.

Source: Chwarae Teg (2017) Decent Work for Women in Wales: A Sectoral Study, www.cteg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Decent-Work-for-Women-in-Wales-A-Sectoral-Study-03.10.17-Final.pdf

Case study: Employability and skills in Wales

Resource sheet 3

Overview: Poverty among working people is a growing problem in Wales. The number of children living in poverty with parents who work is growing. Parents need to have access to high-quality jobs with good training and support, opportunities to progress, a flexible work environment and enough hours to earn the income necessary to meet basic family needs. A range of barriers prevent lone parents, minority ethnic workers, and parents of larger families, young families and families with disabled members from finding good-quality jobs and staying in work. These groups would benefit from structured and tailored support to help them get back into work.

Promotion prospects in domiciliary care

A report commissioned by Oxfam indicates that although many workers leave the domiciliary care sector, some do stay and get promoted. Most of the people we spoke to said that managers tended to have come into the sector as care workers, but there seemed a consensus that progression was slow and could be difficult to achieve. Management structures are quite flat in domiciliary care with only a handful of management tiers, which can make progress slow.

Case study 1

Worker A entered the sector as a domestic care worker and is now an assistant director. Thanks to a supportive manager, she was able to move into a more senior role as a lead support worker after a couple of years. Working at this level and in this environment gave her the confidence to pursue a nursing qualification. After coming back into the care sector, she went into a back-office role, gained further qualifications and worked her way up from registered manager, to area manager, to regional manager and now assistant director. She says:

'...it's been absolutely hard work... Now I've got the qualifications and experience behind me I feel like I can fulfil my role.'

Case study 2

Worker B entered the sector as a community care worker who already had NVQ Level 2 and Level 3. She soon progressed to senior care worker, then team leader, managing care packages in the community. She gained the qualifications necessary to become an assessor and then she opened a training department. This led to her gaining HR responsibilities and eventually becoming a training and HR manager. She has gone on to be registered manager and recruitment and training manager. She says:

'I had lots of opportunities, lots of support, [and benefitted from] being able to access lots of funding.'

Source: Chwarae Teg (2017) Decent Work for Women in Wales: A Sectoral Study, www.cteg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Decent-Work-for-Women-in-Wales-A-Sectoral-Study-03.10.17-Final.pdf

Case study: Factory work in Vietnam

Resource sheet 4

For many women, working long hours is not a route out of poverty. In Vietnam, Oxfam has interviewed women working in garment factories who, despite working 12 hours a day, six days a week, struggle to meet their basic needs with the wages they receive. However, the clothing industry is one which generates large profits for some of the richest people in the world. One worker interviewed, Tham, earns less than \$1 (75p) an hour. She says:

‘My working hours and pay are unfair. The thing I find unfair is that with the same amount of work, my wages have decreased... We, as workers, cannot do anything to influence management. In the case of urgent orders and difficulties the overtime and wages are decided by management. We only follow those decisions.’

Women’s economic empowerment requires the creation of decent, good-quality work opportunities with fair pay, as well as an increase in women’s decision-making power. Setting and enforcing minimum wage levels to ensure workers are lifted above the poverty line, improving regulations and introducing rights such as parental leave, are all measures which can improve the quality of the jobs that women do.



Photo: Sam Tarling/Oxfam

Source: Francesca Rhodes (2017) ‘Three ways to change the economy to make it work for women’, views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2017/03/three-ways-to-change-the-economy-to-make-it-work-for-women/

Case study: Care in Uganda

Resource sheet 5

Unpaid care work is estimated to be worth \$10 trillion globally each year, but it is often not counted or acknowledged as part of the economy. The fact that it is women who are mostly responsible for this work means they have less choice about how to spend their time – on work, education or leisure. In Uganda, Oxfam interviewed Florence Alur, who described how this inequality affected her life:

‘My brother-in-law’s wife and I used to do most of the work. We would work a lot, just the two of us, to produce food for the entire family.’

Oxfam’s WE-Care initiative works in the community to give training and raise awareness about women’s heavy and unequal responsibility for care work. Zakayo Opwonya, Florence’s husband, attended the training, and reports that it changed his attitudes towards domestic tasks and his wife’s role:

‘As a man, I used to feel it was not my responsibility to engage in that kind of work. It was a mindset borne out of the patriarchal nature of our Acholi society that gave the men absolute authority over their wives. Of course, I now know it was wrong to subject my wife to such a punishing schedule that would not allow her to do anything else that was beneficial to all of us.’



Photo: Julius Ceaser Kasujja/Oxfam

Economic policies such as austerity measures, which reduce public services, often make this inequality worse. There are currently 57 million unpaid workers around the world filling the gaps caused by inadequate healthcare provision, the majority being women who have given up work to fulfil this role.

Governments and international institutions must include unpaid care work as a key component of their economic development strategies, and ensure that there is increased investment in the infrastructure and services that will reduce and redistribute women’s unequal share. They also need to encourage changes to social norms, in order to support this process.

From: Francesca Rhodes (2017), ‘Three ways to change the economy to make it work for women’, views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2017/03/three-ways-to-change-the-economy-to-make-it-work-for-women/

Case study: Workers' organizations in Kenya

Resource sheet 6

In order to be equal in the economy, women need to be involved in decision making and they need policies to be shaped in line with their priorities. Women's collective action – in labour or social movements – is one of the most important factors in upholding women's rights. However, labour rights have often been constrained in order to keep wages low. Domestic workers, 80% of whom are women, are one group which faces particularly big challenges when it comes to organizing for their rights, because they are often informally employed. In Kenya, Oxfam and its partners have supported domestic workers in Nairobi to organize together. One member, Margaret, explained the benefits of this:

'If these organizations are formed and employers know there is a strong organization, they won't mistreat people, because they know they will be taken to the authorities. Domestic workers will be like the other workers if they are put on the same level as other jobs.'

'I'm involved in the domestic workers' group because I don't feel good when I see others suffering. It is important to be informed because it will change our status of working. Because if I know my rights, I will not work ten hours – I will work eight hours. When you are sick, you are given time off to go to the hospital. I will be paid what is supposed to be paid.'

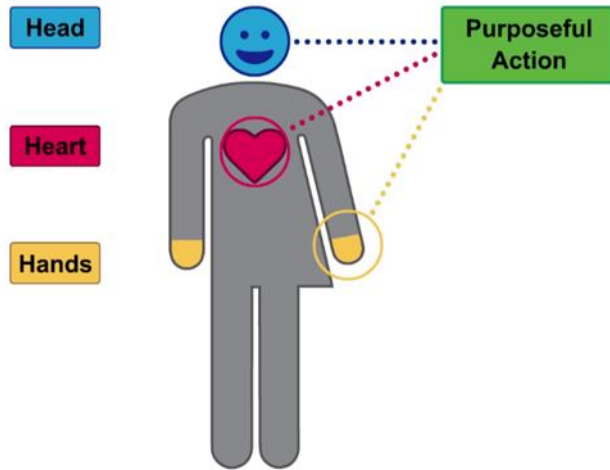


Photo: Allan Gichigi/Oxfam

From: Francesca Rhodes (2017), 'Three ways to change the economy to make it work for women', views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2017/03/three-ways-to-change-the-economy-to-make-it-work-for-women/

Developing your campaign

Activity sheet 1



	Message	Message	Message
Audience	Head – evidence and rational arguments – what do you want them to know?	Heart – values and emotions – what do you want them to feel?	Hand – what action can they take – what do you want them to do?
Government			
Public			
Teachers or peers at school			

SWOT analysis

Activity sheet 2

What are the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for the campaign?

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats