

# DECENT WORK FOR WOMEN

## TEACHERS' OVERVIEW

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### Introduction

The global economy isn't working for women. In Wales, there are more women in work today than ever before. Yet there is still a gender pay gap of 20%, taking into account part-time and full-time work. Around 80% of part-time jobs are occupied by women, and as a result of this women have more temporary and casualized, zero-hour contracts. This means that they are often in insecure, low-paid jobs that offer little chance of progression.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, a survey across the UK by Girlguiding found that 37% of girls and young women aged 11 to 21 said their confidence would be better if there were no gender stereotypes. It also found that 55% of girls and young women said that gender stereotypes affected their ability to say what they thought.<sup>2</sup> More shockingly, women contribute around \$10 trillion to the global economy in unpaid care work. A total of 104 countries have laws preventing women from working in certain jobs, such as in manufacturing and construction. There are 2,043 billionaires worldwide, and nine out of ten of them are men. It will take 217 years to close the gap in pay and employment opportunities between men and women if change continues at its current rate.<sup>3</sup>

### Aims of *Decent Work for Women*

This resource will consider the effects of gender inequality on women's access to decent work in Wales and in the wider world. Learners will consider how women's access to work is unequal, grounded in

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<sup>1</sup> Claire Evans (June 2017) *In-work poverty and decent work for women in Wales*, Cardiff: Oxfam Cymru, [repository.cardiffmet.ac.uk/handle/10369/9676](https://repository.cardiffmet.ac.uk/handle/10369/9676)

<sup>2</sup> Girlguiding (2017) *Girls' Attitudes Survey 2017*, [www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2017.pdf](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2017.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> From Winnie Byanyima speech (2018) 'Why Economic Inequality is a Feminist Issue', [www.oxfam.ca/blogs/why-economic-inequality-is-a-feminist-issue](http://www.oxfam.ca/blogs/why-economic-inequality-is-a-feminist-issue)

stereotypes and hindered by barriers, such as a lack of government policy to support the diverse needs of women. Without these policies to support women in the workplace there will not be gender equality in decent work. As Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam International, says, 'economic inequality is absolutely a feminist issue'.<sup>4</sup>

### Curricular links (overview only)

This resource supports the delivery of the Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation / National KS4 Global Citizenship Challenge. Please note that if these lessons are used to teach the Global Citizenship Challenge in the classroom, learners will not be able to complete the Decent Work for Women Global Citizenship Challenge for their assessment.

### Structure of *Decent Work for Women*

The sessions are designed to support the delivery of the Global Citizenship Challenge. The sessions are split into three elements:

1. Develop an understanding of the global issue by considering information, views and opinions from a variety of sources, including peers and others, and by undertaking personal research.
2. Develop a personal standpoint by considering facts and differing opinions and viewpoints.
3. Develop and implement a creative and innovative approach to raising awareness on a global issue for a target audience.

Oxfam Education's approach to global citizenship (learn – think – act) is embedded within these lessons. Learners are encouraged to think critically, solve problems, make independent judgements and be creative and innovative in helping to make change happen.

### Session overviews

Session 1: Women and decent work: what is decent work?

Decent work means different things to different people. In Session 1, learners will explore what decent work means to men and women and investigate the different priorities, constraints and requirements of men and women.

Session 2: Women's unequal access to decent work: causes, effects and solutions

Despite the fact that women outperform men in education and in training, because of their care responsibilities and unequal access to work, women's engagement in the world of work is different to that of men. In Session 2, learners reflect on the relevance of gender to work and they uncover the root causes of the issue by using facts and statistics from a variety of sources, and create a why-why-why chain. Wales is used as a case study and learners use the infographic 'Decent work for women in Wales' to explore the causes of the inequalities faced by women in work in Wales, the effects these

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<sup>4</sup> From Winnie Byanyima speech (2018) 'Why Economic Inequality is a Feminist Issue', [www.oxfam.ca/blogs/why-economic-inequality-is-a-feminist-issue](http://www.oxfam.ca/blogs/why-economic-inequality-is-a-feminist-issue)

inequalities have on women, and the possible solutions to this problem. Why are more women than men in part-time positions, on zero-hours contracts or in a low-pay, no-pay cycle? What is the effect on women, and how can they be supported to move out of this situation and into decent work? Learners design an issue tree capturing their learning.

### Session 3: Women and decent work: making change happen

In Session 3, learners are asked to do a detailed analysis of a case study from a range of six that span Wales and the wider world. They then compare and contrast their findings. Making change happen is the second focus of this session. Women are seen to occupy lower-paid professions because they choose to, mostly because of their care responsibilities. However, this narrow view ignores other labour market barriers that women encounter, such as inflexible working hours, discrimination or a lack of opportunity to progress. Women's contribution to the UK economy is growing, but the gender pay gap remains. There are relatively few women in leadership roles in government and public bodies. Learners are asked to think creatively and innovatively about how they can raise awareness of these issues, first by thinking about campaigns that have been successful. They then identify three 'asks' that they can put to their school, their community and the government, and consider how to target them in their campaign to appeal to the head (evidence and rational arguments), heart (values and emotions) and hands (action). They will explore a variety of methods for raising awareness and decide on a method that they feel will educate, inform and raise awareness successfully on the issue of decent work and women in Wales and the wider world.

## Important teaching notes

### Gender

The concept of gender refers to the socially constructed norms and expectations encountered by girls and boys, women and men, and the roles and attitudes that are assigned to them. These norms are learnt over time from families and friends, schools and communities, the media, the government and other organizations. Gender equality refers to the equal rights and responsibilities of women and men, as well as the equal opportunities available to them. Real gender equality means taking the interests, needs and priorities of both men and women into consideration. Gender inequality should fully engage men as well as women.

Men and women are biologically and socially different. Their engagement in the world of work is also different. Decent Work for Women explores the underlying reasons for the resulting inequality that women experience in work, as well as some of the possible solutions to the problems. It also explores the differences and similarities between the situation women find themselves in, in Wales and across the world.

While this resource focuses on the binary gender categories of women and men, you may wish to explore the resources from a LGBT+ perspective, as some people do not identify in this way. In addition to this, you may wish to adapt the resource to consider other households or relationships that include LGBT+ parents and caregivers.

The content of this resource could also be considered from different frames of reference. You may wish to include additional questions or characters to represent other diversities and experiences, or perhaps encourage contributions from students whose experience may be different to that of the characters or case studies represented in this resource. For example, the refugee experience, which may include

additional barriers in terms of language, culture or religion, could be explored during the delivery of this resource.

## Background information

### Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Gender Equality<sup>5</sup>

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are a set of goals agreed by world leaders in September 2015. Each goal has separate targets to be achieved by 2030. Sustainable Development Goal 5 is Gender Equality. This goal is important for a range of reasons:

- One in five girls globally are growing up in extreme poverty.
- More women than men live on less than \$1.90 per day.
- Only two-thirds of countries in developing regions have equal access to primary education for girls and boys.
- The proportion of parliamentarians who are women is 23% worldwide.
- Women do three times as much unpaid domestic care work as men.
- In 18 countries, men can legally prevent their wives from working.
- Only 30% of professionals in the sciences, worldwide, are women.<sup>6</sup>

Both women and men hold the ideas and can assume the leadership to solve these problems. Gender inequality has huge implications for jobs, productivity, GDP growth and general inequality.

### Gender equality in the UK<sup>7</sup>

Research undertaken by Girlguiding highlighted the concerns of girls and young women in 2018. Girls and young women feel that they don't have the same chances as boys/men:

- 67% of girls and young women aged 11–21 think women don't have the same chances as men, compared to 53% in 2011.
- 73% of girls and young women aged 11–21 think women have to work much harder than men to succeed, compared to 57% in 2011.

Despite an increased desire on the part of girls to be taught politics and citizenship, compared to 2010, many girls are put off politics because of how female politicians are represented in the media, while three-quarters of 11- to 21-year-olds believe there are fewer women business leaders because women are treated less fairly than men.

### Unpaid care

A reason that women have not participated in the labour market as much as men is in large part due to their traditional role as the primary caregivers, which has resulted in many women being employed in occupations which reflect their perceived caring and nurturing characteristics. These are the sectors

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<sup>5</sup> [www.globalgoals.org/5-gender-equality](http://www.globalgoals.org/5-gender-equality)

<sup>6</sup> [www.globalgoals.org/5-gender-equality](http://www.globalgoals.org/5-gender-equality)

<sup>7</sup> Girlguiding (2018) *Girls' Attitudes Survey 2018*, [www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2018.pdf](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2018.pdf)

which typically are undervalued by society. The majority of the jobs with higher than average proportions of workers on low pay and temporary contracts are in the service sector. Women are significantly more likely to find themselves employed on casual contracts, which pose particular problems for them in terms of the weaker maternity rights and the variable hours.

## Useful web links

### Chwarae Teg

A government-funded organization that aims to promote women's equality in Wales.

[www.cteg.org.uk/](http://www.cteg.org.uk/)

### Girlguiding

The organization behind the Guides and the Brownies. It aims to help girls and young women fulfil their potential.

[www.girlguiding.org.uk/](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/)

### Decent work

Decent work is a concept devised and promoted by the International Labour Organization, a specialist agency of the United Nations, to help countries legislate to improve employment law.

[www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm)

## Resource title

## Detailed resource outline

Session overview	Learning objectives	Learning outcomes	Key questions	Activities	Resources
<p>Session 1: Women and decent work: what is decent work?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reflect on the concept of decent work.</li> <li>To understand that gender affects women's ability to access decent work.</li> <li>To think critically about why men and women do not have equal access to decent work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will be introduced to the concept of decent work and given the opportunity to reflect on it, in the context both of their own lives and globally.</li> <li>Learners will understand that gender affects women's ability to access decent work.</li> <li>Learners will use critical thinking skills to understand how gender affects women's access to decent work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is decent work?</li> <li>How does gender affect access to decent work?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activity 1.1: Imagining decent work</li> <li>Activity 1.2: What makes work decent for men and women?</li> <li>Activity 1.3: Decent work role-play game</li> <li>Activity 1.4: What does decent work look like for different people?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decent Work for Women slideshow (slides 2–6)</li> <li>Resource sheets:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decent work game role-play cards</li> <li>The factors of decent work</li> <li>Factors of decent work, by gender</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<p>Session 2: Women's unequal access to decent work: causes, effects and solutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To use evidence to discuss the statement: 'Gender affects people's access to decent work'.</li> <li>To evaluate and assess statistics and other source material.</li> <li>To analyse the causes and effects of women's unequal access to decent work, in Wales and around the world, and to consider possible solutions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will identify the inequalities locally and globally between women and men trying to access decent work.</li> <li>Learners will analyse the issue of women and decent work in Wales and around the world, considering causes, effects and solutions.</li> <li>Learners will collaborate to reach a decision about which solution(s) would work best for Wales and for the world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What effect does gender inequality have on women's access to decent work?</li> <li>What causes this inequality?</li> <li>How can this inequality be addressed?</li> <li>Why is it important to implement the solutions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activity 2.1: The relevance of gender to work</li> <li>Activity 2.2: Uncovering the root causes of the issue</li> <li>Activity 2.3: Decent work for women in Wales</li> <li>Activity 2.4: Designing an issue tree</li> <li>Activity 5: Diamond 9</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decent Work for Women slideshow (slides 7–9)</li> <li>Resource sheets               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women and decent work – sources</li> <li>Women and decent work – Facts, statistics and opinions</li> <li>Decent work for women in Wales</li> <li>Possible solutions: Diamond 9 activity</li> </ol> </li> <li>Activity sheets               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why-why-why chain</li> <li>Issue tree</li> <li>Diamond 9</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

<p>Session 3: Women and decent work: making change happen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify how best to make work decent for women.</li> <li>To analyse how change can happen and who can engineer this.</li> <li>To write a personal standpoint.</li> <li>To create an innovative awareness-raising campaign.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Learners will consider and be aware of their own personal standpoint.</li> <li>Learners will use their creativity to produce and evaluate an innovative campaign to raise awareness of the issues; they will decide on three 'asks'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What needs to be changed to make work decent for women?</li> <li>Who is responsible for increasing the economic empowerment of women?</li> <li>What can we do to create change?</li> <li>How can we raise awareness of the need to create change?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activity 3.1: Opinion continuum</li> <li>Activity 3.2: Case study analysis</li> <li>Activity 3.3: Personal standpoint</li> <li>Activity 4.3: Taking action – raising awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decent Work for Women slideshow (slides 10–24)</li> <li>Resource sheets:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case study: Childcare in Wales</li> <li>Case study: Job quality in Wales</li> <li>Case study: Employability and skills in Wales</li> <li>Case study: Factory work in Vietnam</li> <li>Case study: Care in Uganda</li> <li>Case study: Women's organizations in Kenya</li> </ol> </li> <li>Activity sheets:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing your campaign</li> <li>SWOT analysis</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
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## Global citizenship

This is a global citizenship resource written for teachers of the Welsh Baccalaureate in Wales to learners aged 14 to 19. Education for Global Citizenship is a methodology that aims to help young people to develop as active global citizens. Oxfam suggests a learn – think – act approach to give young people the opportunity to learn about issues, think critically about how to solve them, and act as responsible global citizens. Actions may simply be to find out more or think more deeply about an issue. They may also involve making others more aware of an issue or engaging in specific fundraising or campaigning activities. For more information, see: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship)

The key elements of responsible global citizenship are:

Knowledge and understanding	Skills	Values and attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social justice and equity</li> <li>• Identity and diversity</li> <li>• Globalization and interdependence</li> <li>• Sustainable development</li> <li>• Peace and conflict</li> <li>• Human rights</li> <li>• Power and governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative and critical thinking</li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Self-awareness and reflection</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Cooperation and conflict resolution</li> <li>• Ability to manage complexity and uncertainty</li> <li>• Informed and reflective action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of identity and self-esteem</li> <li>• Commitment to social justice and equity</li> <li>• Respect for people and human rights</li> <li>• Value diversity</li> <li>• Concern for the environment and commitment to sustainable development</li> <li>• Commitment to participation and inclusion</li> <li>• Belief that people can bring about change</li> </ul>

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For further information about Oxfam Education, including a wide range of other curriculum-linked resources, see: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education)

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