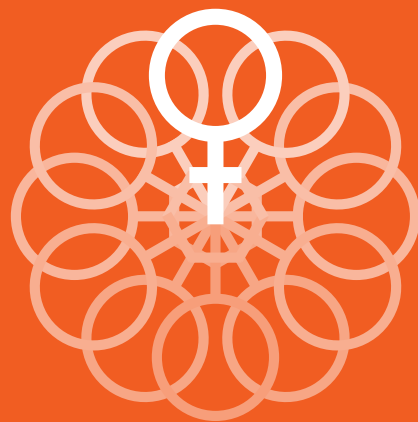


Women Reaching Women





the everyone foundation

Foreword

NFWI Women Reaching Women

I would like to introduce you to “Women Reaching Women”, a three year project which the NFWI Public Affairs Department has developed together with Oxfam Great Britain and the Everyone Foundation, in answer to members’ requests that we widen our work on international issues.

This project focuses on world poverty and gender inequality, highlighting the disproportionate effects of climate change on women. Climate change is already making the lives of the world’s 1.3 billion poorest people even more difficult. Over 70% of them are women and gender inequality makes them even more vulnerable to the changing climate.

“Women Reaching Women” aims to broaden awareness of these issues amongst WI members, their families and communities. WI members have spearheaded work on women’s rights in the UK and now we are inviting them to be at the forefront of supporting the efforts of women all over the world to achieve recognition of their rights and redress the imbalance.

We hope that by engaging WI members in this educational campaign, the key messages will flow out into their communities and help to build a well informed and pro-active society that is prepared to take responsibility for its own impact on the planet. We aim to empower people to take action in support of development efforts throughout the world. By promoting an understanding of the role that individuals can play, we hope they will go on to make informed choices with the knowledge of how their actions impact on the world around them.

This workbook is a resource for your federation, providing information about gender and development issues in more depth. I am sure you will find it interesting and hope you will share it with others. The “action pack” section will help you to plan and organise development events – both large and small. It includes information on key dates, types of events and promotion. You will also find contact details for possible speakers and regional Oxfam support. Finally, we have enclosed a memory stick full of templates both for planning your events and keeping the NFWI informed.

We aim to empower people to take action in support of development efforts throughout the world. By promoting an understanding of the role that individuals can play; we hope they will go on to make informed choices with the knowledge of how their actions impact on the world around them.

Don't forget that for maximum success, forward planning is vital, as is working with your Federation Executive and Public Affairs Committees. Do get your local councillors, MP/AM involved as well as the local media. Ideally, your federation events will bring together fellow WI members, other women's groups, politicians, children, faith groups, and environmental and development groups to learn about women and poverty and to motivate and inspire each other to take action together.

I wish you all every success, and I hope you enjoy your journey over the next three years.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Fay Mansell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the top of the first letter.

Fay Mansell
NFWI Chair 2008

What will I find in this workbook?

Hello and welcome to the workbook! We hope you'll find it a stimulating read; that it's thought-provoking, and full of ideas that will inspire you to be part of a global movement working for development for women around the world.

This book is part of a unique collaboration between the National Federation of Women's Institutes, Oxfam, and The Everyone Foundation. The WI brings more than ninety years' experience supporting women's rights and defining women's roles in the UK, alongside its vast, powerful membership (you!). Oxfam brings its experience of working alongside poor people and communities, and campaigning for change around the world for more than sixty years. The analysis here is based on that experience. The Everyone Foundation brings a focus on our common humanity, and a commitment to creating deeper human connections across the globe.

The WI, Oxfam and the Everyone Foundation are excited about working with you to encourage connections between you and women from all over the world; to share ideas and learn together; to be outraged by the state of the world; and to be inspired to take action together. You'll hear about the lives of people around the world and, through this book, they'll speak to you about their experiences, their hopes, and their dreams for a better future. Their voices will emphasise just how similar we all are, even though we may live in different circumstances.

But most of all, the aim of this workbook is to enable you to spread the view that we're all human beings who have an impact on the way our shared future will look, and a responsibility to look after each other's interests. Together we can change the world, improving life on this planet for everyone.

The following chapters will explore the global challenges we all face today, and propose some principles and tools to help you make sense of, and influence, the direction of change in the future. But the world's a big place: there's no way that one book can cover everything! In some of the sections, there will be pointers to further information to help you to do your own research, and questions for reflection, for use by yourself or to discuss with other members, to help you digest what you're reading. At the end of each chapter you'll find a summary of key arguments as well.

The WI, Oxfam and the Everyone Foundation are excited about working with you to encourage connections between you and women from all over the world; to share ideas and learn together; to be outraged by the state of the world; and to be inspired to take action together. You'll hear about the lives of people around the world and, through this book, they'll speak to you about their experiences, their hopes, and their dreams for a better future.

Why are we focusing on women? Women are consistently denied their basic rights, and are more likely to be poor than men. And the impacts of climate change could mean that the development we've already seen in many parts of the world could actually be reversed in the near future, making women's lives even harder. Without action now, all our lives will get worse, not better. It's time for a big push for change.

One final "health warning": this book looks at global issues, which, by their nature, are interconnected and complex. We'll do the best we can to explain the most important challenges facing the world today, but the emphasis will be on the situation and role of women living in poverty and, in the first year of the project, specifically on the impacts of climate change, because they are vital to get to work on right now if we're to build a better world together. So please read on.



Women dancing at the Museum Centre in Ololosokwan, Tanzania, to greet the arrival of visitors. The centre has been developed by the women's groups in the village. Most of the funding has come through a grant of 4.5 million Tanzanian shillings from Oxfam Life. Photo credit: Geoff Sayer/Oxfam



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What are they doing to change their lives around the world?

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1. Life in our interconnected world

People all over the world are denied their basic rights, and unchecked climate change will only make these inequalities worse. The challenges that these injustices present to individuals and countries around the world – to everyone’s communities – will be discussed later on. But first we’ll look more closely at what development has to do with you, and how you can be part of the changes needed to create a better future for people all over the world.

Re-imagining the world as a village

People often find it easier to understand and empathise with people who are in some way like us. “Like us” tends to mean people we know personally, those who live near us, or who share our culture, race or religion. But why do we not feel this same sense of connection with “other” people? We’re all human, all sharing a global home, and, as we’ll see, our futures are inextricably linked. We all have hopes and dreams for ourselves, for our children, for our grandchildren, and for the future of our planet. Imagine a world where people didn’t turn their back on those who are different or who seem far away: a world where everyone acts as if they really mean it when they say that everyone’s human rights should be respected.

In this world, we wouldn't feel, as so many of us do, that what happens around the world is somehow less real than what happens on our doorstep. We'd feel a sense of empowerment, that we're all in this together, and that our choices really can change the direction the world moves in. Global communication technologies now mean that we all know that millions of people are living without access to the basics. The suffering of a child in Bolivia ought to be as abhorrent to us as the suffering of a child next door. From this starting point of connection, we might then naturally move on to ask the question we'd naturally ask if it were our friend in trouble: What can I do?

**“If you think you're too small to make a difference,
you've never been in bed with a mosquito.”**

Anita Roddick, Founder, The Body Shop

Part of the problem or part of the solution?

Your personal choices and actions make a difference. In our interconnected world, your actions and choices, and the actions and choices of the institutions and governments you choose to support (or not), will affect the lives of people both close to home and further afield.

**“From a state of powerlessness that manifests itself
in a feeling of ‘I cannot’, activism contains an element
of collective self-confidence that results in a feeling
of ‘we can.’”**

Naila Kabeer, Academic

You have a lot of power. You are a consumer, and, as such, you wield power over big business. You are a voter in a democracy, and so you wield power over politicians. You are a member of a community, and so you wield power over the way your street, village or town goes about its business. You may be an employer or employee, with a say in how your company functions. You can choose to talk to others about how you think the world could and should be developed. As an individual you have power. And by working with others, within and outside the WI, you have even more power. One person can make a big difference, but more often than not, it takes lots of people coming together to make change happen.



Real life stories: rebuilding shattered lives
If you ever feel powerless to change the world, or that it's too big a job, it might help to imagine yourself in the shoes of Justine Masika.

Justine is Director of “Synergie des femmes pour les Victimes de Violences Sexuelles” (SFVS), an Oxfam partner organisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central Africa. Since 2003, Synergie has worked to help rehabilitate more than 7,000 women who have fallen victim to the sexual violence that is used to repress and humiliate in the ongoing war in the eastern part of the country. Synergie also educates local chiefs and helps overcome the stigma Congolese society puts on to women who have been victims of rape. Justine’s family have paid a high price for her important work. In September 2007, six soldiers came to her house and tortured her two daughters, aged 22 and 20. Despite this, Justine continues her struggle. Because of organisations like Synergie, women are speaking out more about their experiences. But changing society’s attitudes is slow work, and women here continue to face shame and opprobrium on top of the horrific sexual violence they have already suffered.

Justine Masika. Photo credit: Oxfam

Ram Katori watches a play about rural women's rights at the end of an awareness raising rally in Biona Ranja village, Uttar Pradesh, North India. Photo credit: Rajendra Shaw/Oxfam



Empathy, anger and action

Women Reaching Women really embodies these ideas. It starts with a person reaching another person, and builds outwards, based on the belief that we are all connected. Initially, you can build connections with other WI members and women in your community to learn together, share ideas and experiences, and hopefully decide to do something together. In the longer term, Women Reaching Women hopes to provide you with a forum to connect with women all over the world. You can help women suffering injustice by building connections with them, understanding what they think needs to be changed about their lives, and standing side by side with them in their struggles. The WI can strengthen alliances and movements already working around the world to secure women's basic rights. Your empathy, anger at injustice, and action can help change the world, from the bottom up.

Using your power every day

If you're part of the WI, you are already part of a local activist group, which in turn is part of a national organisation working towards change. So you're already part of an activist movement. Your local group might already be working for a greener locality, maybe by trying to get better public transport, improved recycling services, or other amenities. Spreading knowledge and understanding about inequality and climate change, and the links between the two, is also "activism", and can be a springboard for other people to get involved, standing in solidarity with poor people, and especially poor women, everywhere. And in our interconnected world, what you do locally has an impact globally.

Later on, we'll look at different ways you can have an impact on the direction of our world's development. First, we'll explore what development means: where is it that we should be trying to develop to? While you're reading, try and keep in mind a vision of a world where everyone counts, and where everyone can make a difference.

Chapter 1

Summary

- 1 Building a better world is possible. We can achieve it if we work together.
- 2 All around the world, people are connected: by shared hopes and dreams for the future, by love for our families, and by virtue of our common humanity.
- 3 We have a lot more power to change the world than we might think.

Questions for reflection

- 1 Who are the leaders in your communities?
- 2 Have you already been involved in taking action to change the world?
What actions have you taken?
- 3 Do you feel powerful? If so, why? If not why not? How much control do you have over your life and the lives of others?





2. The basics of development

What is development?

Development is a process of change, with the aim of improving life on our planet. It is a process that leads to a preferred, or better, world.

We've all lived through – and are still living through – changes that are developmental. In the UK, for example, racism is no longer tolerated, the NHS provides people with free healthcare, schooling is freely available, and children have rights. These things didn't happen by accident. People make choices that cause and sustain changes, based on the way in which we decide we want the world to be different. Whether it's "development" that's taking place or just "change" (which can have positive or negative impacts on people) depends on whether life is improving.

One course of development that you might be familiar with is that of women's rights in the UK. It is only relatively recently that these changes occurred.



Amina Hassan lives in the Wajir district of Northern Kenya, East Africa. She shares a new latrine with three households. She's happy with the latrine because before, she says, "the children were just going to the toilet around the plot and spoiling the water source."

Photo credit: Jane Beesley/Oxfam

A very brief history of women's rights in the UK

August 1870 Women gain some rights over property taken into a marriage or accumulated while married – prior to this, a married woman's property became her husband's.

1 January 1883 The Married Women's Property Act is extended to allow married women full rights to their property.

October 1897 Two suffrage organisations combine to form the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, which is able to co-ordinate peaceful campaigns.

10 October 1903 Frustrated by the lack of success of peaceful struggle, Emmeline Pankhurst forms the Women's Social and Political Union.

4 June 1913 Suffragette Emily Wilding Davison is trampled to death by the King's racehorse at the Epsom Derby. Hunger strikes, suicide attempts and violent protest are by now part of the arsenal of the WSPU's campaign.

16 September 1915 Women's Institute formed with two clear aims: to revitalise rural communities; and to encourage women to become more involved in producing food during the First World War.

16 February 1918 Women are allowed the vote for the first time, as long as they are over 30 and propertied.

1 December 1919 Lady Astor is elected to Parliament. She is the first woman to take her seat in the House of Commons.

23 December 1919 The Sex Disqualification Removal Act makes women's exclusion from many jobs illegal.

7 May 1928 The Equal Franchise Act makes the UK a near-democracy for the first time, granting all women over 21 the right to vote.



The story so far

One of the things about an ever-changing world is that global knowledge about what works for development is also constantly developing. Our ability to understand what makes change happen is improving: we've more evidence about what works. Our ability to make change happen is also improving: we have more money and better technology available. The more we understand what's possible the harder it is to do nothing as the world trundles along a path on which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

Learning from the mistakes of the past is part of the process of development itself. We've all taken part in this learning process, just as you have probably contributed to a variety of development changes over the years, internationally and in your own communities. To help us understand today's strategies for development, let's take a quick look at the recent history of approaches to development.

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A very brief history of development

October 1945

After the Second World War, the United Nations (UN) was formed to promote peace, security and economic development.

1940s and 1950s

Money and technologies were sent to poor countries, but often without sufficient collaboration and planning with the countries themselves. And when consultation did occur, women were excluded. So, although this improved lives, the actual wishes and needs of the people being "helped" were not always taken into account.



Awatef Salih (left) is a 20 year old trained midwife working at the recently improved Maddodha Health Clinic in Yemen, in the Middle East. The clinic has one delivery bed, and also provides vital antenatal care and family planning advice to women in the area. Photo credit: Abbie Trayler-Smith/Oxfam

1960s and 1970s

Developing countries were granted better access to developed country markets, and in 1971, the “Least Developed Countries” group was identified, drawing attention to the particular needs of the world’s poorest countries.

Development is a process of change, with the aim of improving life on our planet. It is a process that leads to a preferred, or better, world.

1980s and 1990s

International financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave loans and advice geared towards making developing countries open their borders to free trade and encouraging investment from rich countries. Developing countries that didn’t comply with this programme of “structural adjustment” were refused loans. Some developing country governments were not in a position to manage these economic changes effectively (as is still felt to be the case). The loans themselves had punitive rates of interest, often siphoning more money out of developing economies than was put back in. We begin to recognise that while economic growth is very important for development, it is not the only thing that matters.

2000 to date

One of the most important advances in our understanding of change is that development isn’t something that’s done to other people. Instead, it should be driven and “owned” by the people of the country or community where development is desired. Lessons have been learned about the importance of developing country governments and citizens steering their own development. Countries now draw up their own development strategies, which then receive funding. We also recognise that development needs to start from where a country really is. A country’s economic condition, type of government, religious and ethnic mix, attitudes towards women, social structure, civil service, legal system, education and health systems, and its infrastructure (including transport, energy, and sanitation) all determine the approach to development required. One-off events such as conflicts and natural disasters can also be catalysts for change, although not always for development.

Basic human rights

Wouldn't it be great to live in a world where everyone's basic human rights were met and respected? The concept of human rights provides a useful, existing framework to help us know whether we are moving towards our development destinations. If more people have their basic human rights met, we're going in the right direction: people's lives are improving. The United Nations Charter enshrines human rights as fundamental rights to which all people are entitled, yet, despite this Charter, billions of people are denied their rights every day, particularly women¹.

Using human rights as an indicator means that we are focusing on people's basic needs, not their particular wants. It does not mean that we want everyone to have the same kind of life, the same amount of money, or the same level of intelligence. It just means aiming for a situation in which everyone has the basics. Not too much to ask, nor too much to achieve.

The concept of human rights provides a useful, existing framework to help us know whether we are moving towards our development destinations. If more people have their basic human rights met, we're going in the right direction: people's lives are improving. The United Nations Charter enshrines human rights as fundamental rights to which all people are entitled, yet, despite this Charter, billions of people are denied their rights every day, particularly women.

What makes development possible?

There are three conditions that, when combined, seem to lead to a country's development:

- 1 An effective government that is able to plan and implement change;
- 2 An active citizenry able to demand their rights and have a say in how change happens;
- 3 Global conditions that support economic development more fairly.

Jamila Yusuf is a Hygiene Mobiliser, working in Basininja, in the Wajir district of Northern Kenya. She received training, and works to encourage other households to adopt hygienic practices to prevent disease and sickness. She says people's health has improved because of her work.
Photo Credit: Jane Beesley/Oxfam



Development strategies that aim to improve conditions in these three areas – with a combination of input from developing country governments and citizens as well as the international community – have historically led to improvements in people’s lives. When weighing up the relative merits of different development plans, estimating their likely impacts in these key areas is vital.

Campaigning for change brings about change

You’re probably used to campaigning for change, and may have seen first hand how effective national campaigns are at bringing about real change. In development, campaigning in powerful countries is vitally important, as we can push for fair support and fair agreements for developing countries on behalf of people who do not yet have a voice. In this book, we will consider how women in particular are constantly denied a voice in the global development arena.



Halima Muhumud is also a Hygiene Mobiliser in Basininja, Northern Kenya. She says: “I think it’s a good idea that the hygiene mobilisers are all women ... Men have a role and women have a role and most of the hygiene practises are in women’s role so it’s better to target the women through all women mobilisers.”

Photo credit: Jane Beesley/Oxfam

But campaigners in the UK can’t do everything, nor would the millions of campaigners in poorer countries want us to! That’s why initiatives like Women Reaching Women are important. Working together with women around the world, WI members can understand more about the changes poor women want to see, and the ways in which they think their own societies need to change to achieve their rights. WI members can then make plans to support poor women’s efforts to improve their own lives, based on learning and listening to what they say will make their lives better.

The efforts of campaigners from all over the world have helped to make world leaders sign up to the “Millennium Development Goals” (MDGs). These are a series of eight crucial goals to be achieved by 2015 (agreed in 2000). The Goals are agreed, but how well are we doing at reaching them? It is ultimately down to us, as global citizens, to ensure that our government plays its role in making sure these goals are achieved. And time is running out...

These are the eight goals:

Goal 1

Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Goal 2

Achieve universal primary education

Goal 3

Promote gender equality and empower women

Goal 4

Reduce child mortality

Goal 5

Improve maternal health

Goal 6

Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Goal 7

Ensure environmental sustainability

Goal 8

Develop a global partnership for development



We'll look more closely at each of the Goals in the course of this book, and particularly the impact on women of the progress, or lack of progress, made towards achieving them. (N.B. the Goals will not be tackled in numerical order in this book).

In the run up to 2015, numerous organisations, including Oxfam, will be pressing world leaders to do whatever is needed to meet the MDGs, and to make sure that all parts of the world meet the targets, so that sub-Saharan Africa (the world's poorest region) is no longer left behind. Goal 8 is an important focus for campaigning. The citizens and governments of poor countries need to be in charge of their own development, but there are things that we can do as rich country citizens to help "clear the road" for them so they have more chance of success.

It is also worth noting that promoting gender equality sits as a single Goal, separate from the other seven, when in fact promoting women's rights is a precondition for achieving many of the others. Similarly, ensuring environmental sustainability (Goal 7) is essential to achieving all others. Failure to tackle climate change and attitudes towards women will make achieving the other goals impossible, as we'll see. Inequality, women's rights and climate change are all intimately connected, and over the coming chapters, we will try to untangle these urgent challenges.



This picture was taken by Khadija as part of a women's photography project in Herat, Afghanistan. She says, "I look at this photograph and see another woman in our community who has no education."

Chapter 2

Summary

- 1 Development is a process of change to improve people's lives.
- 2 Everyone is entitled to his or her basic human rights. It is unjust that people are denied their rights when it is perfectly possible to achieve them.
- 3 Developing countries and their citizens need to plan and participate in their own development.
- 4 WI members have the power to clear the road for developing countries and poor people to claim their rights through effective campaigning.
- 5 The Millennium Development Goals are eight goals agreed by world leaders in 2000, to be achieved by 2015.

Questions for reflection

- 1 How have the changes to society you've seen in your lifetime affected you?
- 2 Have you contributed to the direction of change in the UK or elsewhere?
- 3 Which issues in this chapter chimed with you personally? Which are you most interested in?



Further reading and resources:

The Urgency of Now, Duncan Green and Isobel Allen (2008)

From Poverty to Power, Duncan Green (2008)

No-Nonsense Guide to the United Nations, Maggie Black (2008)

Blind Spot: The continued failure of the World Bank and IMF to fully assess the impact of their advice on poor people, Oxfam Briefing Paper, (2007) – download free from the Oxfam website: www.oxfam.org.uk/resources

No-Nonsense Guide to Human Rights, Olivia Ball and Paul Gready (2006)

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2007, United Nations (2007)



3. Inequality: It's just unacceptable

Development has often been thought of as being about increasing people's wealth. But development must also be about reducing inequality. People who are denied their basic rights face not only inequalities of income and wealth, but also inequalities of power and participation in society. In a survey of 64,000 people living in poverty, it was the non-material aspects of poverty that come up time and again:

“Poverty is pain; it feels like a disease. It attacks a person not only materially but also morally. It eats away one's dignity and drives one into total despair.”

A poor woman in Moldova²

People experience poverty as exclusion and a lack of choice. People living in poverty, and especially women, don't have equal access to all sorts of decision-making arenas, nor do they have the power to make choices about how they live their lives. Adding insult to injury, people suffer discrimination because they're poor – and discrimination can be a reason why people are poor in the first place. Unequal treatment because of gender, race, caste, religion, age, disability or illness all create or perpetuate poverty.

A woman raises her arm, showing off her white wristbands. Almost 60,000 people were in Edinburgh to Make Poverty History on the eve of the G8 summit at Gleneagles in 2005. Photo credit: Ian Homer/Oxfam



United Nations Millennium Development Goal 1

Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target 1

Between 1990 and 2015, halve the proportion of people whose income is less than US \$1 a day.

Progress

980 million people are estimated to live on less than \$1 a day, down from 1.25 billion in 1990. If you live on less than \$1 a day, you are defined as living in extreme poverty. Using a standard unit allows us to make comparisons between countries. The proportion of people living in extreme poverty worldwide is falling: down from nearly one in three people in 1990 to one in five in 2004. If progress continues at this rate, this Goal will be met by 2015. But the global figures obscure the fact that most of this progress is due to rapid economic growth in Asia. In other parts of the world progress has been much slower..

Challenges

- On average, nearly 20 per cent of women and men in developing countries live below this poverty line: in sub-Saharan Africa, it is more than 40 per cent.
- It is estimated that 70 per cent of the world's poor are female.
- While the number of people living in poverty are decreasing, inequality is rising. In sub-Saharan Africa, the figure remains as horrific today as in 1990: 20 per cent of the population share just 3.4 per cent of the wealth.

Target 2

Halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015.

Progress

Since 1990, the number of hungry people in developing countries has decreased by just 3 million to 820 million.

Challenges

- Despite women growing most food, they often don't have the right to own land, thus they depend on their relationships with men for their food supply.
- Women tend to prioritise feeding their families first when times are hard, and suffer as a result.
- Between 1990 and 2005 the number of children under five suffering hunger in developing countries has only decreased from one-third to one-quarter.



Adaha holds a mixture of a fruit called tarakatt and a herb called teth, which she sells locally as a remedy for stomach ache. She lives in Mali, which in 2007 had the highest percentage of people living below the poverty line in any country: 90 per cent.

Photo credit: Ami Vitale/Oxfam

Of course, having unequal access to basic services (education, health care, energy and fuel, telecommunications, and sanitation) is also part of being poor. Many poor women and men face unequal access to these services because they are unable to afford it, because these services simply aren't available where they live, or because discrimination refuses them access. Often, an individual's relative lack of wealth is less important than a government's inability to provide affordable services for its citizens.

What does gender inequality look like?

One of the gravest consequences of inequality is that women are consistently denied their rights and life-chances more than men. Around the world, women are often the poorest and the most discriminated against. Being a woman and being poor is the worst of both worlds.

Development has often been thought of as being about increasing people's wealth. But development must also be about reducing inequality. People who are denied their basic rights face not only inequalities of income and wealth, but also inequalities of power and participation in society.

It is clear that there can only be true development if change benefits men and women equally. But this doesn't happen as a matter of course. It is vital to understand the specific problems faced by women simply because they are women – otherwise, development plans may help men while women fall even further behind, creating more inequality.

For poor women, as opposed to poor men, it's not simply about more and better provision of basic services. True development must also ensure women have fair access to those services. In addition, women must have a say in decisions that affect them. It is harder for women to achieve their basic human rights. This chapter will explore why, and what we can do about it.

Below, women describe some of the many forms of powerlessness they experience:

“There is a health clinic [here] but it is very basic. If we need treatment for a serious illness we have to go [further]. The distances are so great that if someone was extremely ill, they could die before they reached a hospital.”

Fadimata Walett Tokha, Mali, West Africa

Did you know? More than half a million women die in pregnancy and childbirth every year: 99 per cent of these deaths are in developing countries. In parts of Africa, 1 in every 16 mothers will die in childbirth or of complications from being pregnant³.

“Usually in our community it is the women who are responsible for food, and we used to go for maize up Malambo. Some of us used to go with donkeys, and others even carrying children. The journey is four hours”

Kijoolu Kakeya, Tanzania, East Africa

Did you know? Women grow over 60% of the food in developing countries, but own just 2% of the land⁴. More than 60% of unpaid workers are women – many are carers or family agricultural labourers⁵.

“My father was afraid that if I went to school I would become a different person, and I would not be happy to marry and stay at my husband’s place.”

Noorkishili Naing’isa, Tanzania, East Africa

Did you know? Nearly 60 per cent of the children who don’t go to primary school are girls⁶, and 75 per cent of the world’s 876 million illiterate adults are women⁷.



Fadimata Walett Tokha
Photo credit: Ami Vitale/Oxfam



Kijoolu Kakeya (left)
Photo credit: Geoff Sayer/Oxfam



Noorkishii Naing'isa (left)
Photo credit: Geoff Sayer/Oxfam

Ganawathi is a Change Maker in Sri Lanka, working as part of the We Can End Violence Against Women campaign. Here, she takes part in a performance depicting women breaking the silence and speaking out against violence. Photo credit: Annie Bungeroth/Oxfam



Did you know?

Domestic violence is the single biggest cause of injury and death to women worldwide⁸. Gender-based violence causes more deaths and disability among women aged 15 to 44 than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents, and war.

“There is a local anecdote that makes us very angry and it also makes us laugh [because the women support each other now]. The anecdote says that ‘if a husband stops beating his wife it means that he doesn’t love her anymore’. Women actually believed that bad treatment was because of love.”

Dolores Benitez, Honduras, Central America

These women’s experiences and the appalling statistics illustrate how unequal power relations create and sustain suffering. Inequality, whether because of poverty or discrimination, utterly restricts people’s choices about how they live their lives. These unequal power relations don’t happen by accident: they are usually a result of cultural, religious or national values. Changing them involves changing long-standing attitudes and beliefs, and the legal and societal rules and regulations that pass them on from generation to generation.



Ideas for action

Help spread the word about women’s lives around the world. Tell at least three people one of these statistics or real life stories today.

These women's experiences and the appalling statistics illustrate how unequal power relations create and sustain suffering. Inequality, whether because of poverty or discrimination, utterly restricts people's choices about how they live their lives. These unequal power relations don't happen by accident: they are usually a result of cultural, religious or national values. Changing them involves changing long-standing attitudes and beliefs, and the legal and societal rules and regulations that pass them on from generation to generation.

Inequality introduction summary

- 1 Changing the world for the better doesn't just mean making people richer. We also need to end discrimination and tackle inequality.
- 2 Women are consistently denied their rights more than men and are poorer than men.
- 3 Women need better access to the basics, because even where services like education and healthcare exist, women living in poverty face discrimination and unequal access to them.

Issues facing women

There is a gender dimension to every development issue. We can only cover a selection of the most important issues here, and through them we hope to demonstrate how women are particularly affected.

Education

Education is literally a stepping stone to a better life, and girls and women are routinely denied that chance to break the cycle of poverty. There are so many benefits from educating women that it is hard to know where to begin. Let's look at the global picture of girls' education first.



Cynthia Kuya uses her knee to support her exercise book as she writes at Kalobeiyei school, in the Turkana District of Kenya, East Africa. Pastoralist districts like Turkana typically have low school enrollment rates as they move with their livestock while state schools remain static. Of the minority of children who attend school, girls are fewer than boys. Photo credit: Crispin Hughes/Oxfam

United Nations Millennium Development Goal 2

Achieve universal primary education

Target 1

Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Progress

There has been considerable progress towards this goal: more children are in school than ever before.

Challenges

As of 2005, about 72 million children are still not getting an education, and nearly 60 per cent of them are girls. This is the global pattern, but it is worst Western and Southern Asia.

However, no figures are available to show how many children enrolled in school actually attend regularly, and in many parts of Africa and Asia, girls' caring roles and household commitments mean that they are the first to be kept home from school if they are needed to work elsewhere.

Girls missing out on education more than boys is a symptom of long-standing cultural values and views of women's roles. This is a vicious circle, since educated women are more able to claim their rights and create the freedom to define their own roles.

Education is literally a stepping stone to a better life, and girls and women are routinely denied that chance to break the cycle of poverty. There are so many benefits from educating women that it is hard to know where to begin.

As we heard from Noorkishili Naing'isa in Tanzania, some fathers are afraid that if their daughters go to school, they will get all kinds of new ideas about what they want to do with their lives. While it's easy to dismiss this view as simple ignorant prejudice, it's worth considering that for nomadic peoples and subsistence farmers (often the poorest of the poor), an extra farm-hand or someone to care for a sick relative can mean the difference between survival and destitution, as can securing a good marriage for your daughter, and for these reasons, you need to keep your daughter in the village. Girls' relative lack of access to education holds back development, but it is a very difficult cycle to break.

The benefits of educating girls, aside from the inherent benefits of receiving education itself in terms of personal fulfilment, are massive for development. Educated women tend to be better off, healthier, have fewer children, understand their rights, and have the tools at their disposal to claim them. Educating girls is one of the most all-encompassing ways of breaking the cycle of poverty.



Ideas for action

Organise a talk at your local school to raise awareness and support girl's education.



Real life stories

In Liberia in West Africa, a lot of work is going on to get more girls into school.

In 2007, the Liberian government received US\$844 million of debt relief, and was able to stop charging for primary education, making primary schooling theoretically available to every child.

But even with free education available, there is no guarantee that Liberian girls will be able to go. In 2006, Oxfam started working with a partner organisation, “Forum for African Women Educationalists” (FAWE), to pave the way. Girls in Liberia face numerous challenges to getting an education. As in many other countries, girls are often expected to work to support their families, and early marriage, teenage pregnancies and a traditional bias towards educating boys frequently put an early end to girls’ schooling.

At Quelimim Toto Elementary School in Maimu, Liberia, FAWE set up a girls’ club that runs twice a week after lessons. The club aims both to enable more girls to attend school, and to give those already there a safe space to talk about their lives and to learn about their rights. This helps to keep girls in school once they’ve started attending, as girls’ drop-out rates are higher than boys, as they will be the first to be kept at home if money gets tight, if a relative is ill, or if they are needed to do more work for the household.

(Continued on the next page)

Real life stories

In Liberia in West Africa, a lot of work is going on to get more girls into school.

Since FAWE started the club, the number of girls enrolled in the school has risen from 60 to 206. Many of the pupils are older than those receiving primary education in the UK, since they could not afford to go when they were younger.

Cecilia Yoku is a 19-year old student at the school. She explains: “I come to this school because of the good teaching. I have been coming here for 2 months. My best subject is history and mathematics. I have three sisters who also come to this school (13 years, 15 years and 6 years). When I finish school I want to be a fireperson.”

“At the girl’s club I make bread and candy. We sell the bread and give the money to the girls club leader. We can use this money to give it to a girl from the club if she is sick. We also buy uniforms, school shoes, exercise books. I have four exercise books. I help my mother to sell in the market after school, everyday. My mother wants me to go to school because she did not learn, and her mother did not send her to school. My parents send me to school so that when I finish I will find a job to help them.”

As well as raising girls’ awareness, the girls’ club helps to provide other girls with the essentials for going to school. Although fees have now been abolished, parents need to find the money for exercise books and uniforms, which can still mean that some parents have to choose between educating their sons or their daughters if they cannot afford both.

Picture, previous page: Cecilia Yoku (front left). Photo credit: Aubrey Wade/Oxfam

Education summary

- 1 Nearly 60 per cent of the 72 million children denied an education are girls.
- 2 Girls face numerous challenges to getting an education, including early marriages, cultural beliefs about the value of educating girls, and the pressures of domestic chores.
- 3 Education improves women’s life chances like nothing else.



نوفاق إمدان - ويس-أشمالان
:(> , < =)

5---487 699---599
7---500 670---480

$$600 + 300 = 900$$

$$780 + 120 = 900$$

$$600 + 200 + 100 = 900$$

$$500 + 400 = 900$$


$$650 + 250 = 900$$

A schoolgirl stands by the blackboard in the village of Intedeyne, in Mali, West Africa. Many fewer girls attend school than boys, and female literacy rates are less than half those of men.

Photo credit: Ami Vitale/Oxfam

Health

Aside from the massive problem of violence against women (which will be discussed in detail further on), women's health suffers in many other ways because of inequality. Whether you look at access to healthcare, ability to pay for medicines, or exposure to HIV infection, women are worse off than men.

A high-angle photograph of a mother sitting on a light-colored, speckled tile floor. She is wearing a black long-sleeved top and black leggings. Her feet are visible, wearing white flip-flops with blue straps. She is holding a newborn baby wrapped in a red and white patterned cloth. The baby's face is visible, and it appears to be sleeping. The background is the same tiled floor.

A mother holds her newly born baby in Sayoun General Hospital, Yemen, in the Middle East. Dr Lewen Taleb works at the hospital. He says, "There are many miscarriages, especially among young girls. Usually it is because they continue to undertake heavy work up until they deliver their child. Another reason is the lack of money to access hospitals, doctors and medicine." Photo credit: Abbie Trayler-Smith/Oxfam.

United Nations Millennium Development Goal 5

Improve maternal health

Target 1

Between 1990 and 2015, reduce the maternal mortality rate by three-quarters.

Progress

The current rate of progress is less than one-fifth of what is needed to hit the target.

Challenges

- Lack of health education and money to pay for contraception and health care.
- Lack of trained nurses and doctors, and clinics.
- Women's lack of political influence over healthcare provision and spending decisions means that their needs are not prioritised.

N.B. In sub-Saharan Africa, a woman's risk of dying of pregnancy-related illness or in childbirth is 1 in 16 during her lifetime, compared with 1 in 3,800 throughout the developed world. One woman dies of pregnancy-related illness or in childbirth every minute of every day in the developing world.

Recognising the lack of progress towards this Goal, in 2007, the UN set a new target to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015.

HIV and AIDS

Lack of contraception greatly increases the chances of infection from HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. Changing employment patterns (meaning men spend longer periods of time working away from home in cities, sometimes using the services of prostitutes) as well as polygamous marriage increase women's vulnerability to infection. Physiologically, women are more easily infected than men.



Putni Dai' talks about the work being done to reduce the incidence of HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) infection in Sukina Bhata village in Orissa, on the east coast of India. She is part of a women's self-help group, that holds meetings to educate women about protecting themselves and their families. Photo credit: Shailan Parker/Oxfam.

United Nations Millennium Development Goal 6

Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Target 1

Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV and AIDS, malaria and other major diseases.

Progress

Globally, HIV infection has begun to level off, but it continues to rise in sub-Saharan Africa.

Challenges

- 75% of young adults living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are women.
- Violence against women can be both a cause of heightened infection rates (for example through rape or forced prostitution) and a consequence of infection.
- People who are HIV-positive still suffer massive stigma and marginalisation.





Real life stories

Taking HIV seriously. Huge strides can be made to counter both the stigma, and infection and death rates from HIV, as this story from Brazil illustrates.

In Brazil, a well-planned combination of action from citizens, government strategies and investment has halved the numbers of AIDS-related deaths. Prevention and treatment programmes were undertaken simultaneously, along with education programmes to reduce the discrimination against those with the disease, and reduce infection rates as understanding about transmission was improved.

The Brazilian government took on the might of the world's pharmaceutical companies to allow it to cheaply produce the anti-retroviral drugs ("ARVs") needed to treat those already infected (though not cure – no cure is yet available). It set up government-funded clinics and provided extra training for health workers, and passed anti-discrimination legislation to protect people with HIV and AIDS. Brazilian citizens were equally responsible for the achievement, with gay rights groups being the first to speak out and start overcoming stigma, distributing free condoms as well as lobbying for additional funding for healthcare and education. The national media played its part too, covering citizens' actions, and running adverts to raise awareness about HIV. This shows what can happen when people take action – and remember that governments are made up of people too! People in Brazil prioritised the problem, financed the strategies needed, and have changed the face of AIDS in Brazil.


HIV testing is vital. This test is positive for HIV. Andy Hall/Oxfam GB

In countries where women face additional discrimination that makes them more vulnerable to infection, governments need to embark upon similar education and treatment programmes, spurred on by citizens. For sub-Saharan countries, the costs associated with such programmes are often prohibitive, and this is one case where aid from developed countries – such as that given through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, or NGOs like Oxfam – is essential to get things moving before the epidemic gets worse. It is very difficult for a country to develop if one in five people is HIV positive and likely to die of AIDS, as is currently the case in Namibia, for example. Children are orphaned or born with the disease themselves, women are trapped in caring roles or become too weak to work or care for their families...it's part of a massive spiral of poverty.



Ideas for action

Overcome the stigma surrounding HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases with a visit to a local clinic with another WI member (or friend).



Gladys Ballah is 18 and lives in Maimu, in Bong County, Liberia, West Africa. She is the President of the Girls Club at Quelimim Toto Elementary School, and says, "The best thing... is learning about my rights, it has helped me to take care of myself, and my health. Women can sometimes be raped. I have learnt to protect myself, as I may get sick [from an STD or HIV]."

Photo credit: Aubrey Wade/Oxfam

Over-population

While there's no doubt that the world's population is growing quickly (currently 6.5 billion, and estimated to rise to 9.1 billion by 2050⁹), there are many myths surrounding over-population. It isn't as simple as fewer births equalling more share per person of finite resources – particularly since there's no guarantee that fewer births will lead to fairer sharing!

Even if this were the case, trying to control population growth using legislation raises clear human rights issues in restricting people's choices about how many children to have, such as China's infamous one-child policy, which tends to result in discrimination against girl children (as we'll see in the Violence Against Women chapter, later). Some of the stories are shocking. In the population control programmes of the 1970s, poor women and men in countries including India were given free saris and radios in return for sterilisation, for which health workers earned a commission.

The world still has sufficient resources to provide enough for a decent life for everyone, if they can be shared out more fairly. Technological advances could enable the planet to support a far greater global population by 2050.

There are a number of reasons for high birth rates in developing countries, but ultimately it is lack of choice and control over fertility that make poor families have more children. Poverty, lack of education, and prevailing religious and cultural views about the use of contraception and the role of women as mothers, all restrict women's choices. Given more choice, people choose to have less children. Ironically, in most developed countries where people are more free to choose, populations are aging because birth rates are so low. This causes different social problems.

Finally, the world still has sufficient resources to provide enough for a decent life for everyone, if they can be shared out more fairly. Technological advances could enable the planet to support a far greater global population by 2050, but, as we'll see, uncurbed climate change will put additional pressure on resources in the future, such as land for growing food, and clean water. Leaving practicalities aside, though, moral discussions about curbing population growth come back to a simple, intractable question: whose children shouldn't be born? Does anyone have the right to decide?

United Nations Millennium Development Goal 4

Reduce child mortality

Target 1

Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

Progress

Although every region has made progress on this goal since 1990, on current trends the target will not be met until 2045.

Challenges

- Girls are less likely to reach their fifth birthday than boys across Asia, and have a staggering 37 per cent greater likelihood of dying before that age in China.
- 10.1 million child deaths globally are “mostly from preventable causes”.
- Most of the improvements since 1990 are in the richest 40 per cent of households, mostly in urban areas or the children of mothers with some education.

Health summary

- 1 Women have less access to healthcare, are less able to afford medicines, and are more likely to be infected with HIV than men.
- 2 Lack of healthcare during pregnancy and while giving birth means one woman dies every minute of every day in the developing world.
- 3 Lack of education and choice means that poor women have more children than their educated, better-off counterparts.

Aid, debt and trade

The global community of nations has a responsibility to create and sustain conditions that help poor countries develop, and poor women will continue to be hit hardest by failure to deliver. Achieving Millennium Development Goal 8 is of vital importance if we are to create conditions in which poor countries are able to take forward their own development by removing major obstacles to their progress – lack of money, and unfair global structures. It was failure to deliver progress on this goal that was the impetus behind the calls to “Make Poverty History” in 2005, asking for more and better aid, debt relief to the poorest developing countries, and fairer trade.



Ideas for action

Does your home, federation or office buy Fairtrade products? If not, take steps to make it happen!

United Nations Millennium Development Goal 8

Develop a global partnership for development

Target 1

Address the special needs of least developed countries.

Progress

2005 saw the first drop in the proportion of rich countries' national incomes being spent on aid since 1997. Aid donors are failing to live up to their commitments.

Challenges

- Women's needs are not recognised as core to all strategies to achieving the MDGs.
- MDG data is not disaggregated to show whether current efforts are impacting on men and women equally.
- Less than 10 per cent of funding goes to aid programmes in which women's rights are a significant element.

Target 2

Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

Progress

There is still no overall agreement on measures to improve the prospects for the least developed countries to have fair access to global markets.

Challenges

- Poor countries lack power to influence the way in which global trade and investment rules are designed.
- Women's rights and women's access to markets are not explicitly tackled.

Target 3

Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt.

Progress

A mixed picture. 40 "highly-indebted" countries have been identified, but only 22 have so far been granted debt relief.

Challenges

- Weak or fragile states (those facing conflicts or poor governance) are unable to meet the conditions to qualify for debt relief.
- Debt burdens have particular impact on women, as the poorest of the poor.



Real life stories

Debt relief kick-starts change – free healthcare in Zambia.

Brenda Mwila is the only nurse at a clinic in Zambia, Southern Africa. Thanks to debt relief, healthcare is now free – where it is available.

After receiving \$4 billion in debt relief as part of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, the Zambian government was able to introduce free healthcare in April 2006. Four million people who had previously been unable to afford healthcare now can.

So if you took part in Make Poverty History, you've achieved something amazing: these debt relief packages were a direct result of G8 commitments made at Gleneagles, Scotland in 2005. But this is just the start of the story. As Brenda would tell you if you could talk to her, even though there are no hospital fees, there just aren't enough doctors and nurses to go around. Even more people could be getting the healthcare they need. Which is why, for Zambia, world leaders still urgently need to deliver on their aid and trade promises as well.

Brenda Mwila is the only nurse at a clinic in Zambia, Southern Africa. Thanks to debt relief, healthcare is now free – where it is available. Photo credit: Oxfam

Aid, trade and debt summary

- 1 The international community has a responsibility to ensure that global rules give developing countries a fair chance to develop.
- 2 Trade rules, massive indebtedness to rich countries, and a failure to live up to global commitments on aid need to be put right.
- 3 Progress on women's rights should be explicitly recognised as one of the preconditions for achieving the other MDGs, and MDGs need to be measured in terms of how they improve women's lives.

Violence against women

Violence against women is commonplace around the world. It is worth reflecting that, in the UK, rape within marriage only became illegal in 1991, and two women a week are killed by a former or current male partner. Today in the UK, domestic violence is reported to the police every minute¹⁰. The problem is truly global, and a violation of everyone's right to live free from violence and the threat of violence.

“Violence against women continues to persist as one of the most heinous, systematic and prevalent human rights abuses in the world.”

Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General

Missing women

One of the most shocking forms of violence is the phenomenon of “missing women”. Discrimination against girls and women through selective abortion, and girl-child neglect, means that the world's female population is much lower than it should be compared to males. 101.3 million women are estimated to be missing globally. Eighty million of these are Indian or Chinese¹¹.

This sinister unseen violence contrasts with more widespread domestic, health-related, sexual and other routine violence that women experience every day. This violence is an expression of power, usually by men known to the victim. To change this, we must tackle the very roots of gender inequality, changing attitudes and beliefs and ultimately changing behaviour.

Female genital mutilation

The continued prevalence of female genital mutilation (FGM, also known as female circumcision) is a physical manifestation of men's power over women. The practice of genital cutting, and in some countries sewing the vagina shut or even inserting a thorn, providing proof of virginity to a future husband, is closely linked to women's subjugation as a matrimonial prize. Girls have little choice but to allow themselves to be cut: the alternative is to be shunned by the community and considered forever inappropriate as a wife – a particularly threatening prospect where women have no rights to land or property except via their husbands.

Trafficking

The trafficking of women and girls for sexual or bonded labour purposes is a modern form of slavery. Routinely tricked by the promise of a good job, women become victims of sexual abuse and/or forced into unwaged labour. Escape is dangerous, and hard to achieve with no money or contacts in a foreign country. Women are more regularly victims both because of prevailing sexual power relations around the world, and because their relative poverty makes them more vulnerable to the approaches of people offering a chance of a better life.

End violence against women

The WI is involved in a UK coalition that is campaigning to End Violence Against Women (EVAW): WI members and women around the world have been campaigning on this issue for the last 50 years. There has been some success: for example, the UK government has signed and ratified UN conventions on violence and discrimination against women. However the UK government has yet to implement a cross-departmental strategy to end violence against women. At present, only the Crown Prosecution Service has a Violence Against Women strategy and action plan, launched in April 2008. As part of the Gender Equality Duty since 2007, public bodies in England, Scotland and Wales have been required to take steps to eliminate discrimination and harassment, and promote equality. But there is more to do. The EVAW campaign is demanding a more co-ordinated approach and a greater focus on prevention, as well as victim support and prosecution.



Ideas for action

Add your voice to the End Violence Against Women campaign.



Beauty Ara (second from left) is a 'change maker' in the We Can campaign. In this meeting, she used posters to help women understand their right to be free of domestic violence. Photo credit: G.M.B. Akash/Oxfam

Oxfam is part of a long-term, groundbreaking campaign in South Asia called “We Can” (see real life story below), which tackles discrimination and violence by recruiting millions of male and female “change makers” to challenge the perception that violence against women is acceptable in their own communities¹². African states ratified the African Women’s Protocol in 2005. Women’s groups across Africa are lobbying hard, just as the WI is in the UK, to ensure its recommendations against discrimination and violence are enforced through practical action by governments. Traditionally patriarchal societies are gradually having their discriminative practices worn down as women (and men) get more access to education, and as globalisation means that fewer people are living isolated from knowledge of their rights. But there is still a lot more to be done to support these women.



Real life stories

Changing the world from the bottom up.

In South Asia, millions of men and women are coming together to end violence against women. Comprising over 600 organisations and individuals across six countries, the “We Can End Violence Against Women” campaign is known more simply as “We Can”. Its aims? To empower women and men to educate their communities and challenge ingrained cultural views about the acceptability of violence against women, and the practices that stem from them. The vision is of five million such “change makers” reaching 50 million women and men by 2011.

Being a change maker is a brave job. To be highly visible in your community, working for changes that go against many people’s attitudes and beliefs, takes guts and perseverance.

Beauty Ara is a change maker from Bangladesh: “When We Can started this campaign to inform and mobilise people in the community, I became interested and wanted to get involved. I have seen so much unfairness and violence – early marriage, divorce, dowry, violence – these have all been part of my life, and I don’t want any more women to face these problems so I am now a part of this campaign to stop early marriages in our community. We organise our own sessions and rallies in different areas to make people aware of the issues and I take time to contact and visit families, sometimes setting up community groups. I try to stop early marriages by providing counselling.”

(Continued on the next page)

Real life stories

Changing the world from the bottom up.

“I face challenges of course – the main one being that women in society are generally not seen as human beings. This is the main problem. I always try to make men understand that women are human beings too, and that we won’t put up with violence, and that we deserve equal rights.”

“I am optimistic about the future because, while we face many challenges, I feel positive when people respond. When someone says that they have made up with their wife and they now have a normal relationship and understand each other, this makes me optimistic because I know that have made a positive difference.”

Picture, previous page: Beauty (right) at work in her community. She goes from house to house, and wherever she finds couples having marital problems, she assists them in understanding their problems and solving them. Photo credit: G M B Akash/Oxfam

Violence against women summary

- 1 Violence against women is a truly global problem that causes untold misery and hampers women’s development.
- 2 The cultural, religious and societal views that condone and perpetuate violence against women can and must be changed.
- 3 Women working together have more power than working alone.

Women’s participation in the home, economy and politics

Women spend more on family welfare

Many studies have shown that when women have money they tend to spend a higher proportion of it on supporting their families than do men, for example, on healthcare and education. In rich and poor countries alike, where women control more of the household income child health improves¹³. When women have more control over money, it is good for everyone, and so for development. There are many ways in which women can be supported to earn. For example, micro-finance schemes provide loans for women’s groups or individuals to buy raw materials to start small businesses.

Paid and unpaid work

Ensuring that development works equally for women and men isn't just a question of justice. Simply put, while women are being routinely denied their basic rights, the world is missing out on the benefits of including nearly half the human race! If women don't have access to good jobs, their talents are being squandered. Gender discrimination in workplaces is wasteful as well as unfair. One study estimates that if all the states in India eradicated such discrimination as effectively as one state (Kerala) has done, national output (i.e. the value of all good and services produced in that country) could increase by a third¹⁴. More equality equals more productivity.

On top of this, what is still in many parts of the world primarily “women's work” often goes unrecognised: it is simply not counted as important to the economic well-being of a country. This is the case right around the world, not just in poorer countries, even though women who are poor feel its effects most harshly. Unpaid work such as bringing up children, doing housework or caring for the sick or elderly, is often seen by governments (and the economists who plan development strategies) as actually drawing man-power away from the “real” economy, when in fact it underpins it entirely, accounting for 35–55 per cent of a country's total economic output. And, as we know, while many women in poor and rich countries alike manage to do paid work alongside their household duties, their need for shorter hours or more flexible working patterns means that they are paid less than men, even where women are doing the same jobs.

Flawed perceptions of this kind lead to policy decisions that ignore women's needs. Access to water for growing crops might be improved, but household water needs are ignored, meaning that women in poor villages continue to walk miles each day to get enough water to fulfil their families' basic needs. Similarly, loans might be available for buying cattle but not for more efficient and safer cooking stoves. It's vital that government policies and development plans take account of women's (and society's) real needs.

Participation in decision-making

As we saw in the chapter about inequality, powerlessness and lack of voice is a key non-material feature of poverty.

United Nations Millennium Development Goal 3

Promote gender equality and empower women

Indicator 1 (no targets):

Share of women in wage employment in the non-agriculture sector.

Progress

Women's participation in the labour force has been increasing in all developing regions.

Challenges

- Quality of employment is not measured.
- Closing gender gaps in earnings are not measured.
- The double burden of employment and care work is not taken into account.

Indicator 2

Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments.

Progress

As of January 2007, women made up just 17 per cent of parliamentary representatives globally, up from 13 per cent in 1990.

Challenges

Progress towards this goal has been mixed. Fewer than 1 in 6 parliamentarians is a woman. While women's representation in Rwanda is 49 per cent, ten countries have no women in parliament at all.

N.B. This is the solitary "women's goal" amongst the eight MDGs. As we continue to see, equality for women is a key factor to be addressed in order to achieve all the other Goals.

Women's relative absence from parliamentary roles is mirrored in women's lack of participation in a variety of decision-making arenas. Women's participation increases where there are vocal and strong national women's movements, political will from governments, and pressure from the international community. Change happens when action is taken by the citizenry (people demand their rights), and governments see the benefits – or are spurred on to see the benefits by international pressure.



Ideas for action

Write a letter to your MP or Welsh AM to find out their policy on promoting gender equality internationally.

Being part of campaigns in the UK does make a difference: it supports the actions of women who are demanding change in their own countries. International pressure also helps governments to justify standing up against ingrained social and cultural beliefs when other vocal elements of their citizenry may be against such changes: governments find it hard to take unpopular actions in democratic countries for risk of losing power.

Women's participation summary

- 1 When women earn money they tend to spend more on their family's welfare than men, and ending gender discrimination in the workplace increases business productivity.
- 2 Women's work is undervalued around the world. Unpaid caring and household world is utterly essential to society yet is rarely counted.
- 3 Women's participation in the political arena is improving slowly, but this needs to be mirrored in all decision-making arenas.



Laura Naison, 39, lives in Chitobe, Machaze, Manica, Mozambique. Laura is part of a group of men and women living openly and positively with HIV.
Photo credit: Steve Simon/Oxfam

Overcoming prejudice and claiming our rights

In many developing countries, women are working together to change their lives. Here is one example of the way in which working with others is strengthening women.



Real life stories

Women farmers unite, give us our rights.

India has the world's largest number of people living in poverty: more than 350 million people live on less than \$1 a day. In Uttar Pradesh, in northern India, Oxfam funds "Samarpan Jan Kalayan Samity" (SJKS), a local organisation working to help women farmers in the region, including the villages of Samarpan and Parmath. SJKS has worked here since 1995, focussing on mobilising and empowering poor rural women and other least privileged groups in society. They work to raise awareness among women that by working together, they can increase their knowledge and skills, and make a valuable contribution to their communities, and in so doing, be recognised for the valuable role that they play in society. Much of this work also involves ensuring that women are aware of their rights and entitlements in society, such as social security and maternity benefits, which, when claimed, have an impact on living standards for the whole village.

On this particular day in January 2007, women farmers were climbing onto bullock carts, and calling people to rallies where they demanded the right to be recognised for the work that they do. Meenakshi Singh, an Oxfam Programme Officer, said: *(Continued on the next page)*

Real life stories

Women farmers unite, give us our rights.

“The key purpose of the rally was to establish women as farmers. There are some initiatives for equal rights to ownership of land in our society but people don’t know about them, so they are not being rolled out properly. This is what Parmarth and Samarpan [villages] are also trying to change through raising awareness of what people are entitled to.”

Bindeshweri, a local female farmer says: “Yesterday I bought a two-wheeler but when I got home I found that it wasn’t in my name. I went back the next day and requested that the two wheeler was in my name. He asked me for 600 rupees extra to make the changes to the document. I said ‘no, I have never given extra money to anyone and I won’t start now’. It is my right and you will change the name at my request only. He then only charged me 66 rupees, and I didn’t have to pay the other 540 rupees, which was a good outcome for me. I had a tough time and had a good argument with this man.”

Ram Katori (left yellow) and Girijar (centre blue) during rally in Biona Ranja village, Uttar Pradesh, India. Photo credit: Rajendra Shaw

The future for women

Where women are relatively powerless, they have power when they come together. Women in poor communities around the world are struggling for their rights, much as the Suffragettes struggled and underwent personal hardship so that women in the UK now have the right to vote. In the UK, that first, hard-won victory for justice paved the way for the strengthening of women’s rights across many pieces of legislation, and in poor communities, and countries women are taking those first steps to changing attitudes towards women.

Development efforts by poor country governments and international donors must place women’s rights at the heart of everything they do.

A young girl with short dark hair, wearing a light-colored short-sleeved shirt, is seen from the side, reaching up to hang a large piece of dark, patterned fabric on a blue metal structure. To her right, a white garment with a colorful floral pattern is also hanging. The background consists of a weathered blue metal wall with some wooden planks visible on the left. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting daylight.

Lucy hangs up washing at home in Nairobi, in Kenya, East Africa. In 2003, she worked more than 60 hours a week at a factory, machining pockets for a Wal-mart brand of jeans. Lucy worked more than 60 hours a week, with shifts on Saturday morning and often on Sunday.
Photo credit: Ami Vitale/Oxfam

Chapter 3

Summary

- 1 Women face massive inequalities because of gender discrimination, our roles in society, and our relative poverty.
- 2 When relatively powerless women work together they provide each other with support, strength in numbers and can challenge gender-based injustices.
- 3 The challenge is to tackle the underlying values and attitudes that mean women are treated as second class citizens.

Questions for reflection

- 1 If you could talk to the farmers from Uttar Pradesh, what would you like to ask them? What would you want them to ask you about yourself, and what would you tell them?
- 2 What responsibility do rich countries have for the challenges you are reading about? And what responsibility do you feel for the decisions your country makes?
- 3 How are the challenges you are reading about similar to challenges you have faced?
- 4 Which of the women you have read about would you most like to reach? What would it mean to you to reach them?
- 5 Faced with the challenges you've read about, how do you think you would respond?



Further reading and resources:

Women's Institute: www.theWI.org.uk

Campaign to End Violence Against Women: www.theWI.org.uk/campaigns

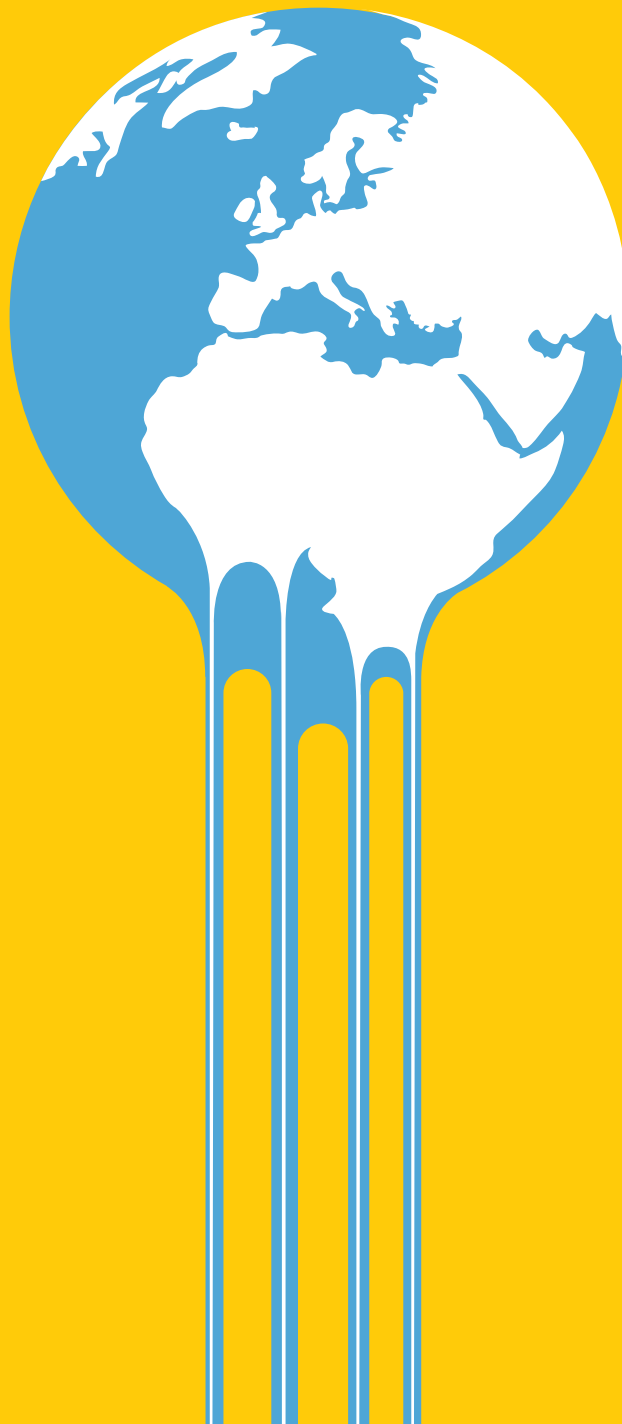
We Can campaign: <http://www.wecanendvaw.org/>

Women Watch (UN): www.un.org/womenwatch

Oxfam: www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam_in_action/issues/gender

CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women): <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

Gender and the Millennium Development Goals, Oxfam Focus on Gender Series (2005) – download free from the Oxfam website: www.oxfam.org.uk/resources



4. Climate change

At the back of this book you'll find a DVD, *Sisters on the Planet*, with four video clips on it. They tell the stories of four women and climate change. These serve as a great introduction to the way climate change is already affecting women around the world. If you haven't done so already, watching these films is highly recommended. Among them is the story of Martina from North Uganda, who says: "I have seen for myself that things have changed... In the past, there were lots of trees and they used to give us lots of fruits. Now the land is bare."

The preceding chapters have hopefully given you food for thought about the crucial and complex nature of the gender dimension of fair and just development. Similarly crucial to development, and to achieving the MDGs, is tackling climate change: it will affect us all, could reverse the benefits of development we've seen to date, and will affect poor women disproportionately.

It is clear that unchecked climate change will have impacts on everyone – rich and poor, developed and developing countries, men and women, rural and urban-dwelling alike. But climate change hits the poorest hardest, not only because poor countries and communities are the least able to cope with the changes it will bring to all our lives, but also because changes in rainfall, temperatures, plant and animal life particularly affect people who use their environment to make a living and sustain themselves – which is true of many of the poorest people on our planet. Since women are more likely to be poor, and because of our particular role in many societies, women are the most vulnerable.

The science of climate change

In 2007, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – involving more than 2,500 eminent scientists - found that there's a 90 per cent likelihood that human actions are the main cause of climate change, and greenhouse gas emissions are the problem¹⁵.

So, the credible view, held by more than 90 per cent of the scientific community, is that climate change is real, threatening, and caused by human activity. You may already have noticed the effects of climate change in the UK. The life-cycles of plants and animals are changing due to the small differences in our climate, sometimes resulting in “mis-matching” between co-dependent parts of nature's cycle.



Ideas for action

Lend your support to the WI's women and climate change initiatives.

People in poor communities around the world are also telling us that their climate is changing. These creeping changes could actually set back human development, reversing the small gains already made towards achieving the MDGs, and costing a global fortune in lost lives, opportunities and, of course, money.



Business as usual in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in South Asia as vendors and customers try to adapt to the floods of 1998. Changing rainfall patterns caused by climate change leads to more flooding, affecting both rural and urban coastal populations.
Photo credit: Shafiqul Alam/Oxfam

How will the planet change?

The IPCC predicts the following events by 2080 – only seventy years away – if greenhouse gas emissions continue unchecked. These changes will adversely affect poor women.

It is clear that unchecked climate change will have an impact on everyone – rich and poor, developed and developing countries, men and women.

Less land for homes and livelihoods

Predictions say that sea levels could rise by half a metre. Land, homes and, with them, people's livelihoods will be gradually submerged. Twice as many people as now would be liable to the regular effects of severe flooding from waves commonly created by storms out at sea. As land becomes inhabitable, people will be forced to move to survive.

Impact on poor women

Since girls are disproportionately denied access to education, and women's participation in decision-making and local information-sharing arenas is often restricted, women will be less well-placed to adapt their livelihood choices to changing weather patterns. Women's relative lack of control over money and access to loans and financial support mean that they have less ability to finance changes of any sort.

Increasing food shortages

As seasonal rains become less predictable (see the Sisters video about Martina), crop yields could decrease dramatically, while increased drought and flooding will cause loss of lives and livelihoods. In the UK, DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) is already warning farmers to be ready to adapt their practices to take account of climbing temperatures and changes in rainfall¹⁶. In developing countries, subsistence farmers will face major food shortages as crops fail and small farmers will suffer as they find it harder to make a living.

Impact on poor women

The majority of poor women who are farmers don't have secure land rights. Their lack of ownership to put up as collateral makes it harder for them to get credit, to pay for changes in their farming habits or the types of animals they wish to raise. Having relatively less education and higher levels of illiteracy than men, poor women will also find it more difficult to keep informed about new technologies and farming strategies that might allow them to cope.

Clean water gets harder to find

More than three billion people in the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent could face shortages of clean water. Changes in rainfall patterns will bring less predictable periods of flooding and drought. Flooding often contaminates water sources and brings disease. Drought of course brings the health problems associated with not drinking enough water, along with the likelihood that people will be forced to drink whatever they can get their hands on, even if it's not clean. Finding water for crops, to give to livestock, and to use in cooking becomes more difficult.

Impact on poor women

Poor women tend to be responsible for collecting firewood and water, and climate change threatens the availability of these vital resources. As women are forced to walk further to find wood or water, they will come under increasing strain. Apart from the obvious health and social implications of women spending longer and walking further to get the basics, girl's education could well suffer. Already in Africa, women and children spend 40 billion hours collecting water every year, equivalent to the entire workforce of France. Many girls are expected to do these chores as well as get an education – and the longer the chores take, the less likely they are to be able to concentrate in school, or go to school at all. Climate change could actually reverse the recent gains made in getting more girls into school: poor countries may succeed in making schooling more freely available, only to find that climate change makes it less likely that girls will go.



Increasingly scarce resources mean that women like Martina (second from right) from Caicaoan village, in Uganda, East Africa, must walk further each day for the essentials.
Photo credit: Geoff Sayer/Oxfam

More and worse “natural” disasters

The frequency and intensity of extreme-weather events, such as cyclones and hurricanes, could increase. This would of course lead to loss of life, but also to injury, disruption, redevelopment costs, population movement (mass migration from disaster-hit areas), instability across borders, and economic disaster for poor countries. “Shocks” – from natural disasters such as floods, ill-health or the loss of a job – have a bigger impact on poor people in general because they have less ability to cope: less access to savings, less likelihood of any form of household insurance, and less likelihood of having the money or education to invest in new forms of making a living. Unchecked climate change will increase the risks of natural disasters, as well as ill-health, making poor people increasingly vulnerable.

Impact on poor women

There is evidence that women’s exposure to shocks and risk is increased by existing inequalities: for example, in Bangladesh women’s lower nutritional status before disasters occur means that they are more likely to become more ill during a crisis¹⁷.

Importantly, the ongoing social impact of disasters can sometimes be detrimental to women, even where loss of life isn’t disproportionately high among women. Shocks and family crises can lead to increased violence against women (as is also the case in developed countries). Development planning that makes a specific effort to understand the gender dimension of needs after disasters can have a positive effect on women’s status and rights post-disaster, and help manage some of the tensions around women’s shifting roles.

Health will worsen

Temperature increases, water shortages, food shortages, increases in air pollution...they all lead to health problems. And where people are less well, diseases such as malaria could proliferate.

Impact on poor women

Women have less resistance to disease, and less access to healthcare. As both flooding and drought become more prevalent, clean water sources become difficult to find. Children, pregnant women, elderly people and those already suffering from ill-health are particularly susceptible to diseases that thrive in dirty water, leading to illnesses caused by viruses, bacteria, and parasites. Women’s relative lack of access to health services compounds the effects of any illness on women, as does their role caring for the sick.

Kita Zedor stands on the waterfront in Bainet, Haiti, in the Caribbean, where homes and livelihoods were washed away by Hurricane Dean in August 2007. At the time of writing (September 2008), more than 300 people have been killed by hurricanes in Haiti. There are still 11 weeks of the hurricane season to go. Photo credit: Abbie Trayler-Smith/Oxfam



While poor people will suffer most, climate change has consequences for us all

So poor people, and women in particular, will bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change, but there will be knock-on effects on all our lives. We live in an interconnected world, and share a fragile planet. We are already seeing rising food prices because of various factors, some inextricably linked to climate change. Changing weather affects crops, and coupled with increasing shortages of water and disaster-safe, fertile land, there are likely to be more food shortages globally, not just in poor countries. In addition, land previously used for food crops has already been given over to growing biofuels.

Women have less resistance to disease, and less access to healthcare. As both flooding and drought become more prevalent, clean water sources become difficult to find. Children, pregnant women, elderly people and those already suffering from ill-health are particularly susceptible to diseases that thrive in dirty water, leading to illnesses caused by viruses, bacteria, and parasites.

It is worth remembering that, lacking the ability to adapt, people who can move are likely to move. It is thought that nearly one-third of today's urban poor were forced to move because their livelihoods were no longer viable due to changing environmental conditions¹⁸. Continuing migration on a huge scale could destabilise much of the globe socially as well as economically. On one estimate, the rise in sea levels due to the melting polar ice caps could result in 200 million people being forced to move¹⁹. The social pressures caused by mass migration within and between countries could lead to conflicts and increasing pressure on already-stretched resources in cities and countries. Should rich countries try to hold onto what they have, creating an even more fractured, unequal world? Or should everyone accept that we need to work together to combat climate change now, to avoid these scenarios happening?

The rest of this chapter will look at strategies for combating climate change, adapting to its effects, and for financing what needs to happen. But tackling the underlying discrimination that consistently means poor women are denied their rights is essential to all strategies, if women are to feel the benefits.

Mitigation is about curbing our impact on the planet by reducing our carbon emissions: you probably already know a lot about this. The WI has recently run a number of educational campaigns and practical projects (such as the EcoTeams and Carbon Challenge) to support WI members to learn more about climate change and take action to reduce carbon footprints. Mitigation strategies need to be developed on a massive scale, from the level of people's personal behaviour, right up to setting ambitious global targets to reduce emissions. We'll look at this in more detail shortly.

Poor people, and women in particular, will bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change, but there will be knock-on effects on all our lives. We live in an interconnected world, and share a fragile planet.

Adaptation is about ensuring that poorer countries and communities are able to adapt to and avoid the ravages of climate change in the short to medium term. In the UK, the government can afford to spend millions to improve flood defences, help farmers adapt to environmental changes, and support citizens whose livelihoods are adversely affected. In poorer countries, governments don't necessarily have the money, technology, infrastructure, or sometimes the will to do this (as is also the case in developed countries – remember the US government's patchy response to the flooding in New Orleans?).

But adaptation isn't mainly about helping governments to prepare to protect their citizens when disasters strike: it's about the smaller actions that, as we've seen, can make a huge difference to the lives of poor women and men.

Adaptation strategies need to include

- Enabling people living in poverty to adapt their lives to changing conditions;
- Providing better security – whether that's protection from conflicts or ill-health – so poor people can move around freely if their environment changes;
- Ensuring freedom from discrimination, giving poor women and men the power to make choices in their best interests.

This is why development organisations like Oxfam are campaigning about climate change. An added injustice is that poor people and countries have contributed least to the damaging emissions that have got us here.

Paying for pollution

When world leaders put their mind to something, they can be really effective at making change happen. A really good example of this was the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak of 2003. Existing international monitoring systems quickly identified the outbreak and assessed that it could become a pandemic if left unchecked. There was instant international co-operation, task forces swung into action, governments financed initiatives to share information and contain the disease. As a result, while 800 people died, there was no global outbreak.

Climate change threatens the world similarly, and demands equally decisive action. There are internationally agreed targets (even if they're contested by some nations and not as ambitious as many people would like), but there seems to be a massive sticking point about who should pay for the adaptation and mitigation that needs to happen. One irony of this is that the 2006 Stern Report²⁰ showed that it will cost the world less to do something about climate change now than to act too slowly and try to put things right later. It's cheaper to act now!

Taking the view that those most responsible for climate change and those most able to pay should pay most, Oxfam has developed an Adaptation Financing Index (AFI). The AFI assesses the financial contribution each country ought to make for the changes needed to combat climate change and protect those already affected. The criteria include:

- contributions to CO2 emissions
- population
- the country's position in the Human Development Index (a recognised tool to compare how developed countries are in relation to each other)

Based on these criteria, the USA ought to put up 40 per cent of the money needed, with the EU responsible for funding 30 per cent, and Japan 20 per cent. See the further information section at the end of this chapter for a link to the full report and a list of suggested contributions country by country.




Difficult decisions: Can developing countries develop without making climate change worse?

With economies like China, India, South Africa and Mexico all developing fast, their energy needs and greenhouse gas emissions are also growing rapidly. It's a tough situation: we need to cut global emissions, but how can we do it without damaging fledgling economies, and holding back the life chances of billions of women and men? Would it really be right for the world's developed countries to try to stop others from going through the industrialisation, and development, that we enjoyed?

Mitigation is about curbing our impact on the planet by reducing our carbon emissions. Mitigation strategies need to be developed on a massive scale, from the level of people's personal behaviour, right up to setting ambitious global targets to reduce emissions.

These aren't easy issues for anyone, but perhaps the principles are relatively simple. Developed countries are those most responsible for climate change and most able to pay for mitigation and adaptation strategies. We need to get our own houses in order, not start imposing conditions on the development of other countries. We'll only have the legitimacy needed to influence developing countries' transitions to less carbon-dependant economies if we're willing to lead by example. Supporting energy-efficient and "cleaner" industrial change in developing countries is part of the jigsaw: imposing unrealistic conditions that hold back poorer countries' development isn't. Sharing technologies and research into carbon alternatives will help; keeping innovations in the hands of multi-national companies won't. Having clear global targets and being willing, as those most responsible, to bear the bigger part of the burden, seems essential.

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and dark pants, is crouching in a rice paddy field. She is surrounded by rows of young green rice plants growing in shallow water. She is looking towards the camera with a serious expression. The field is vast, with rows of plants stretching into the distance.

Srey Sap Sak, aged 24, in her rice paddies in the village of Thmey, Cambodia, in East Asia. Her rice crops have been subjected to extremes of weather. "Rice planting this year is not going well", she says. "There is not enough rain and when there is rain it just comes too late." Photo credit: Jack Picone/Oxfam

United Nations Millennium Development Goal 7

Ensure environmental sustainability

Target 1

Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Progress

On almost every indicator for this target, there's been no progress. Mostly, things are getting worse.

Challenges

- The proportion of land covered by forests (which “capture” greenhouse gases) has fallen from 31 per cent to 30 per cent globally between 1990 and 2005.
- Rates of deforestation in biologically diverse regions are increasing the most rapidly.
- Specific costed targets to reduce global emissions are not yet in place, and the G8's loose commitment to a 50 per cent reduction by 2050 is nowhere near the 80 per cent reduction needed to avoid catastrophe.
- There's been no specific inclusion of gender issues in any agreements about tackling climate change.

Target 2

Halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

Progress

6 billion people need better access to sanitation and drinking water between now and 2015 to meet the target. At current rates of progress, 600 million people will miss out.

Challenges

- Women will be adversely affected because of their household water-collecting roles.
- During pregnancy and with small children, women are particularly vulnerable to diseases caused by dirty water.
- Women's caring roles mean that they bear the brunt of family illness.

What's already happening?

So where are we in terms of taking action to reduce damaging CO2 emissions?

It is really obvious that the UK's major political parties have all swung behind the public concern about climate change: the public led, and they followed. Whoever is in power, we need to make sure they put their words into action. It's easy to make green noises but we need to let governments know we're serious. Which means telling them we're prepared to change our behaviour – and probably to pay a bit too, or take a small fall in our standard of living – to meet targets on reducing CO2. And given that the current targets set by world leaders are generally felt by climate change campaigners to be way below what we actually need to achieve, public pressure and vocal support for greener international policies will need to continue.

Developed countries are those most responsible for climate change and most able to pay for mitigation and adaptation strategies. We need to get our own houses in order, not start imposing conditions on the development of other countries. We'll only have the legitimacy needed to influence developing countries' transitions to less carbon-dependant economies if we're willing to lead by example.

Taking local action

There are so many excellent sources of information about cutting your personal carbon emissions that it seems superfluous to repeat them all here. You'll find a variety of links to explore in the "further information" section if you want to know more about reducing your household's carbon footprint.

We should all be taking action now, and as we'll see in the final chapter, we should also be using our power to influence other people, businesses, organisations and our local councils to take action to introduce environmentally friendly practices and policies.

The most important challenge, however, will be whether we can get binding, financed global agreements in place, which recognise the burden of responsibility on developed countries to finance mitigation, support developing countries in adapting to climate change, and acknowledge the gender dimensions of the issue. You can use your power to help achieve this too. Please read on.

Protestors at the Global Day of Action Against Climate Change Rally, part of Oxfam's campaigning work at the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali, December 2007.
Photo credit: Swan Ti Ng/Oxfam International
Photo credit: Jack Picone/Oxfam



Chapter 4

Summary

- 1 Climate change is happening and we can do something about it. We are seeing more and more stories from all over the world that demonstrate its impact on the world's poorest people. Poor women in particular are already bearing the brunt of the ill effects of climate change, and will continue to be the worst affected.
- 2 Poor countries have contributed least to climate change and can least afford to pay to adapt to the changes it is bringing. Richer countries have a responsibility to help finance their adaptation strategies.
- 3 There are no binding agreements to reduce emissions. Progress has been made on recognising the need to help developing countries adapt, but there has been no real commitment to finding the cash.
- 4 Taking personal actions to reduce your own carbon footprint is vital, but you can also use your collective and individual power to push larger bodies such as local councils and businesses to take steps to reduce emissions too. Most vitally, we need to keep pressure on governments to set more ambitious targets and provide the money needed.

Questions for reflection

- 1 Have you experienced any impacts of climate change yourself or seen them in your community?
- 2 What conversations are you planning to have with your community about the impacts of climate change on the lives of women?
- 3 Does reading this make you more worried about climate change?
- 4 What actions are you taking or planning to take personally to reduce your impact on the planet, and how will you contribute to the call for clear global targets?



Further information

UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: www.ipcc.ch/

Nicolas Stern Report on Economics of Climate Change: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/sternreview_index.cfm

Act on CO2: www.dft.gov.uk/actonco2/

Oxfam on climate change: www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/climate_change/index.html

BBC Climate change: news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in_depth/sci_tech/2000/climate_change/

World without jam: WI website <http://www.theWI.org.uk/standard.aspx?id=11536>

Adaptation Financing Index, Oxfam: www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/climate_change/bp104_climate_change.html

Nature's Calendar/Woodland Trust: www.naturescalendar.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/E58D7E9E-0C9B-4ACD-AB54-14203125C5A3/0/report_spring_2007.pdf

From Poverty to Power, Duncan Green (2008) – pp257-267



5. Getting active

Before you get moving on sharing this information, making connections and getting active, it's worth considering how your personal actions can make a big difference to the way the world moves forward in the future. Being an activist can sound overly political and off-putting, but really it's just about making your opinions heard (and there are lots of ways you can do this – depending on what you're comfortable with), and living your life by your principles. There are so many ways to help change things. Let's look at a few.

Put your money where your mouth is

Consumer goodwill is of course the backbone of businesses, large and small. If enough consumers demand something, businesses catch on pretty fast when there are profits at stake. A clear example of this is the growth of the Fairtrade movement: the WI is no stranger to Fairtrade, as a founder member of the Fairtrade Foundation. Fairtrade continues to have a very positive impact on the lives of many small farmers. And the benefits are not just financial: Fairtrade co-operatives tend to promote better working conditions, encourage unionisation, and give small producers a say in the way co-operatives are run and how the profits are invested. Fairtrade can be seen as a by-word for securing fair working conditions, just as we expect in the UK.

As supermarkets woke up and smelled the coffee (sorry), twice as many Fairtrade products were sold in 2007 compared to the previous year. Because of increased demand, more shops and cafes now stock Fairtrade products, and more local authorities and businesses are buying it for their staff²¹. We asked for it, we bought it, it makes sense for businesses to stock it, and now it's more easily available, so even more people are buying it! The UK leads the world on the amount we spend per person on Fairtrade products, while the US now accounts for around 30 per cent of all Fairtrade sales, and demand continues to grow²².

There seems to be a similar shift in consumer views in relation to taking action on climate change. Consumers are increasingly aware of the amount of packaging on the products we buy, the distances products travel to reach us, and about the amount of food we waste (the WI has run recent campaigns on these very issues). Supermarkets have bowed to consumer pressure over plastic bags, and are beginning to change their ways on packaging too.

Consumer goodwill is of course the backbone of businesses, large and small. If enough consumers demand something, businesses catch on pretty fast when there are profits at stake. A clear example of this is the growth of the Fairtrade movement. Fairtrade has a very positive impact on the lives of many small farmers.

Political pester power

The WI and Oxfam were both founder members of the Make Poverty History movement of 2005. Perhaps you marched in Edinburgh, wore (or still wear) a white band, or maybe you were one of the dedicated WI members who stayed up all night serving coffee in Westminster during the Trade Justice vigil. This huge coalition of seemingly different groups of people showed the UK government that hundreds of thousands of the voting public cared about these issues, giving the government the impetus to ensure global poverty was high on the agenda at the Edinburgh meeting of the G8. Promises were made to provide more aid, debt relief, and make trade fair. As we've seen, these promises need to be kept.

Difficult decisions: Save on “food miles” or support poor farmers overseas?

It's sometimes hard to choose the best ways to fight injustice and climate change. We all want to do our bit to stop unnecessary carbon emissions, and buying food that is locally produced sounds like an essential part of this: if goods travel shorter distances, there are less environmental costs of transporting them. But what about the impact on poor farmers if we all stop buying food from developing countries?

There are two things you might consider here. First, it is really clear that the growth in airfreight needs to be checked if we are to control carbon emissions, but we should keep things in perspective. If everyone in the UK replaced one 100-watt light bulb with a low energy equivalent it would, in one year, save five times more CO₂ than stopping buying fruit and vegetables imported from sub-Saharan African countries. Second, should we really penalise small African farmers first as we make choices about how to cut carbon emissions? These poor farmers are among the least responsible for climate change. When there are other things we can do, and they are already being hit by the impacts of our pollution, is it fair also to make it harder for them to earn a living?

In addition, food miles are not a good way of measuring carbon emissions – they do not take into account the energy consumption of the product through its life.

Perhaps this is a debate you might like to continue with other members.



Making connections, spreading the word

Women Reaching Women can change the world. Starting with simple but meaningful connections, we can help create a swell of opinion that says “no” to a world where women are treated as second-class citizens and where climate change threatens all our lives and livelihoods. We can create a better world for all our children.

If you feel your energy waning, that people aren’t listening, or that you’re a long way from your goals, you might find it useful to think about the important changes that people have fought for and won in the past. Imagine a world where people hadn’t fought to abolish slavery or to get votes for women. Movements of people have made real and lasting changes to our world. It takes hard work, and sometimes a long time, to change things. But people drive change, and it is up to us how we want our world to be in the future. Believe that change is possible, no matter how many times our efforts are ignored or rebuffed. Climate change and inequality are the biggest challenges facing the world today. They’re a modern slavery, the current apartheid.

Mahatma Gandhi wrote:

“The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world’s problems.”

We think he was right.

The remainder of this pack will provide you with practical advice on how to reach more people with the ideas you’ve heard here. Good luck, and here’s to many fruitful discussions and lots of action!



Chapter 5

Summary

- 1 The world changes because of human choices and actions. Your personal choices and actions contribute to the direction of that change.
- 2 Your power as a consumer and voter are clear examples of how you can have an impact on the world. Use your power.
- 3 It's not always easy to know the best ways to act to change the world for the better. Discussing ideas, reading, and researching are important to help you come to a clear view.
- 4 Believe in yourself and in the power of working with others. Make connections and join together: women are a mighty force for change.
- 5 Change takes time. Don't give up.

Questions for reflection

- 1 Despite the differences highlighted in this text, there are many fundamental ways in which we are all similar. Which similarities have the greatest impact on you?
- 2 Which elements of this book have had the most impact on you?
- 3 How easy or hard is it to feel connected to the women you have been reading about in this material? What are the things that make that easier or harder?
- 4 How does the fact you are a woman affect the way that you read and respond to this material?
- 5 What conversations are you planning to have with your community about this material?



Footnotes

1 The Charter states: “We the people of the United Nations determined: to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.” Drawn up at the foundation of the United Nations in 1945, the UN Charter is something like a vision of a better world, identifying the aims of human progress, and intending the UN to be a place where all nations can discuss ways to reach these goals. The optimism that abounded at the UN’s formation that nations could work together is now tempered somewhat!

2 *Voices of the Poor*, (2000), World Bank

3 *The World’s Women* (2005), United Nations

4 *State of World Population* (2005), United Nations Population Fund

5 *The Millennium Development Goals Report* (2007), United Nations

6 *The Millennium Development Goals Report* (2007), United Nations

7 *The World’s Women* (2005), United Nations

8 Oxfam website: http://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam_in_action/issues/gender.html

9 UN figures, 2005 estimates: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2005/pop918.doc.htm>

10 Home office, Domestic Violence Unit: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/domestic-violence/>

11 *From Poverty to Power* (2008), Oxfam, p.4

12 Interestingly, *We Can* and *Women Reaching Women* are based on very similar methodologies. *We Can*’s change makers encourage people to talk about violence against women in their communities, bringing the issue into the open, where it can be discussed and recognised as an issue. This is a “bottom-up” approach – hoping to change attitudes and beliefs, and ultimately behaviour – through citizens talking to citizens.

13 *Homes divided*, (1989), J. Bruce, *World Development* 17(7).

14 *Women’s Economic Empowerment: Gender and Growth* (2006), A.Verschoor, A. Covarrubias, and C. Locke (2006),

15 Read the report for yourself, here: <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

16 DEFRA, <http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/environment/climate-change/index.htm>

17 *Gender and climate hazards in Bangladesh* (2002) T. Cannon, T.,) Gender & Development, vol. 10

18 Dr. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=22498&Cr=commission&Cr1=sustainable>

19 GCAP website: <http://www.whiteband.org/resources/issues/poverty-and-climate-change>

20 *Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change* (2006): http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/sternreview_index.cfm

21 *Fairtrade Foundation press release* (2007): http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/press_office/press_releases_and_statements/archive_2007/feb_2007/hot_beverage_business_piping_hot_in_the_run_up_to_fairtrade_fortnight.aspx

22 *Food Business Review* (2008): http://www.food-business-review.com/article_feature.asp?guid=284FC7F1-DE33-48B1-861A-63F2447B3DE6



Further Information

Women Reaching Women is part funded by the Department for International Development (DFID).

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6. Action pack

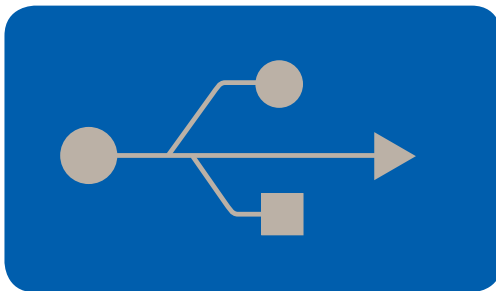
This section provides you with a range of guidance, tips and resources to help you make the most of the Women Reaching Women project in your federation. Throughout the following pages we often refer to the memory stick. The memory stick contains an additional set of resources, which are most useful to you if you can access them on your computer (things like logos and templates). Here is a quick guide to using the memory stick if you haven't done so before.

What is a memory stick?

A memory stick acts in the same way as a floppy disk or CD, although it can hold a great deal more information and is more reliable. To use the enclosed memory stick, rotate the logo section and the metal tip which is revealed is inserted into the computer.

How do I use a memory stick?

When you insert the memory stick into the USB port (look for the symbol below) of your computer, the computer will recognise an additional drive just like a floppy disk or CD. The USB port is generally found on the front or back of computers or the side of laptops. Once the device is plugged in you will see an additional drive listed in "My Computer" under "Devices with Removable Storage": You should then be able to open the files.



What will I find on my memory stick?

- Women Reaching Women Logos
- Sample agendas/activities
- Guidance on media
- Possible speakers
- NFWI expense claim form
- Reporting and evaluation forms

Can I reuse my memory stick?

Yes, the NFWI will produce more resources each year of the project which will be uploaded on your memory stick at future training days.

Your roles

Communicating with your federation

You are the federation representative for Women Reaching Women and it is up to you to make sure everyone knows about it! This project is about raising awareness at all levels of the WI, not just holding events but also encouraging discussions at the federation level. Right from the start, get in touch with someone on your Federation Executive and tell them about the project and what you have planned. Try to get an agenda item for their next meeting so that the aims of Women Reaching Women become integrated into your federation's strategy. If you don't have any plans to promote it just yet, raise some questions for discussion. When was the last development event? Why did it work/not work? What types of events gain the most interest? Are there any other community groups they have worked well with recently? Does the federation source Fairtrade products for the office? Does your federation have an ethical policy? These are all useful topics to explore right from the start so you can map out the best way forward.

Also try to get a section in your federation newsletter dedicated to the project so that all your WIs will be aware of your plans from the start and you'll have a better turn out at your events. You can use this space to promote your event and also write short articles about the topics covered in this workbook. Some key statistics, a news article summary or even questions for discussion are all good ways to keep the Women Reaching Women profile high among your WIs.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring your federation activities is vitally important to the success of the three-year project. Continual feedback helps us to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the project, adapt the methods we use to suit everyone's needs and get the most out of this experience. As federation representative you will be responsible for completing a report form every six months to keep the NFWI updated on your efforts, and ensuring evaluation forms are completed by participants at your events. These forms are all included on the memory stick. The NFWI will remind you when it's time to carry out the various stages and submit your forms.

You are the federation representative for Women Reaching Women and it is up to you to make sure everyone knows about it! This project is about raising awareness at all levels of the WI, not just holding events but also encouraging discussions at the federation level.

Coordinating events

Whether it's one big conference or many smaller initiatives, we want you to coordinate some exciting new events for your WI members and communities. These can take any format that you think will be most effective for your federation. The main aim is to get people together to learn about global poverty and particularly how women are affected. This first year we are focussing on climate change and have provided you with Oxfam's Sisters on the Planet report and DVD to include in your event. Below are a range of suggested dates, venues and formats with tips on how to start planning.

Key project aims

Raise awareness among WI members of climate change impacts on women across the world

There are more poor women than men and climate change affects the poorest most. WI members have spearheaded work on women's rights in the UK and now we are inviting them to be at the forefront of supporting the efforts of women all over the world to achieve recognition of their rights and redress the imbalance.

Empower people to take action in support of international development efforts

WI federations will provide an educational opportunity for WI members and their communities to learn more about international development and poverty and in particular, how women are affected and working to claim their rights around the world. By promoting an understanding of the role that individuals in the UK can play, people will make more informed choices with the knowledge of how their actions impact on the world around them.

Build a network to bring together WI members with like minded women across the world

Communication with women's groups around the world on the impacts of climate change is a way of impressing on members the urgency of this work and sharing good practise about ways to tackle the problem. Working together we are stronger!



Key project aims

Raise awareness among WI members of climate change impacts on women across the world

Empower people to take action in support of international development efforts

Build a network to bring together WI members with like minded women across the world

Key dates

Why not plan your event around a day of international significance and tie it in with one or more of the Millennium Development Goals? This could provide a theme for the day as well as create a hook to get speakers, participants and the media on board.

23 February – 8 March Fairtrade Fortnight 2009 MDG 8	8 March International Women's Day MDG 3	22 March World Water Day MDG 7	7 April World Health Day MDG 4 & 5	22 April Earth Day MDG 7
5 June World Environment Day MDG 7	20 June World Refugee Day MDG 8	11 July World Population Day MDG 4 & 5	21 September International Day of Peace MDG (All)	15 October World Rural Women's Day MDG 3
16 October World Food Day MDG 1	17 October International Day for the Eradication of Poverty MDG 1	25 November End Violence Against Women Day MDG 3	1 December World Aids Day MDG 6	10 December Human rights Day MDG 3 & 2

How to plan for the events

- Form a group to work on this together (i.e. a few interested and keen WI members, your Public Affairs committee or your Federation Executive)
- Make a list of what needs to be done, create a budget, and set a timeline.
- Identify a location, date and someone to chair the event.
- Assess risk, health and safety and licensing requirements.
- How will you take registrations?
- Do you want to cook in house or hire a caterer? Remember to look into ethical practices to ensure your event sends out all the right messages.
- Allocate tasks widely. Delegation is important! By involving people, you will make them feel they have a stake in the event's success.
- Once a date and location have been decided upon and a room booked, start contacting appropriate speakers (see suggested speakers on memory stick).
- Get in touch with your Oxfam regional contact to let them know what you're planning (see Oxfam section).
- Make sure you notify people in your area about the event, using the promotional materials provided by NFWI, word of mouth and media (see media section).
- Invite your MP, MEP or AM to the event. They may be more willing to attend if they have a platform to speak so you could allow an extra 5 minutes to the agenda, alternatively offer them a 15 minute slot and allow 15 minutes for questions to allow participants to voice their concerns. Tell them you are going to publicise it by taking photos and inviting the local press.
- Send out event information to delegates no later than three weeks prior to the event. This information should include: draft agenda, map and directions. Other papers including speakers' profiles, final agenda and evaluation forms can be distributed on the day.

The venue

You know your area best. Find out where your federation normally holds events that get the most bums on seats! Choose a venue which is big enough, has disabled access, is central and well known and suits your needs. Town or village halls, pub function rooms, libraries, universities, conference centres and living rooms can all provide you with different sized spaces. Costs will vary and it's important to consider this in your budget.

Conference

A conference can last any length of time but we would recommend a day event, running from 11am to 4pm. This gives people enough time for their return travel during off peak times. Saturday's are a good day to hold your event to include those that work during the week. The event should be chaired by a WI member and can involve a range of sessions including: an overview of what development initiatives your federation is planning in the coming months/years, expert speakers, the Sister's on the Planet DVD, a panel debate, an afternoon workshop or skill building session, a raffle, a clothes swap or any other interesting element you can think of that will contribute to a successful day.

Debate

Depending on whether you're holding a debate as part of a conference or on its own will determine the length of time you should allocate. The debate should be no longer than 2 hours in length and chaired by a WI member or perhaps a local journalist, allowing time for at least three speakers. The Chair should introduce the issues and provide an overview of why the WI is interested in these topics. Suggested speakers include: academics, politicians, project worker or campaigner from the charity sector, or a journalist. If you have any trouble finding any of these, you can always ask a confirmed speaker whom they would most like to debate. Each speaker should be invited to speak for approximately 15 minutes on their perspective on the issue.

After the three presentations, the debate should be open to the floor for a discussion lasting for a further 45 minutes. At the end, either the Chair, or someone identified by the Chair in advance, should summarise the conclusions and thank the panel for their contributions. The times for this can be altered according to your agenda.

Workshop

Workshops are a great way to get participants moving around, talking and ultimately learning from each other either as part of a conference or a stand-alone half day event. For a conference, right after lunch when people feel sleepy is the best time to hold them. Usually an hour is long enough. There are many ways of running workshops with facilitators, but we would recommend trying a different more participatory approach. The 'Butterfly Effect' is a great way of encouraging conversation by letting people lead the sessions themselves. Through your introduction, encourage people to write their questions down on post-it notes. Once you have introduced the topic, invite those questioners to host groups of interested people to discuss and answer their own questions. It's a great way to start debate and people often find the best answers to learning from others experiences. The rules are: stay in a group for as long as you need to. Once you've learned as much as you can, be like a butterfly and flutter to the next.

Other activities

Clothes swap: get everyone to bring at least one good quality, clean item of clothing, or an accessory, that they'd feel proud to hand on. Set up some tables or rails to lay clothes out. Explain the rules once everyone arrives (you can make up your own rules!). See the swishing guide on the memory stick.

Dinner party: this can be a great evening affair in a village hall. Set up a projector and watch the Sisters on the Planet DVD, then treat everyone to some yummy fairtrade home cooked food (and wine!). This will create a great environment for everyone to talk about the film and lead to interesting conversations. See the community meal guide on the memory stick.

Movie night: If you don't want the hassle of cooking dinner, do the same as above and hold a drinks reception afterwards with some light snacks. It's good to also have a guest speaker to discuss and introduce the issue in more detail.

Raffle: Everyone loves to win a prize! You can either buy an ethical gift and charge for the tickets to cover your costs, or approach a company and try to get something donated. Many companies will happily donate prizes for a raffle if the event theme compliments their ethos and you offer them the opportunity to provide promotional leaflets on the day.

Chairing

The Chair of the meeting is in charge of the way it will be run. Choose someone with experience and authority. The Chair's job is to ensure the meeting starts and finishes on time, to make sure the speakers keep to time and to invite questions from the floor.

Making a presentation or speech

There are no rules to giving a good presentation: present in a way that makes you feel comfortable! Be passionate about your subject: if you are passionate, your audience will be too. Every speaker develops his or her own style, but there are some tips, which can help you communicate with your audience more effectively:

- Relax: take deep breaths or even yawn before going on stage.
- Take a few moments to look at all the audience before you start speaking.
- Introduce yourself and say what you intend to talk about.
- In smaller groups, make eye-contact with everybody. In large groups, slowly scan the room. Also smile.
- Do something else to gain your audience's attention at the start. Experienced speakers will often use jokes, anecdotes, analogies or questions at the start.
- Avoid jargon, clichés, technical language and confusing figures or statistics.
- The pause can be very powerful. Pausing helps to highlight a point and gain attention. Pause regularly throughout your presentation.
- Emphasise key words or phrases with your voice.
- Avoid repeating words (e.g. OK, you know, isn't it) constantly.
- If you can, try not to use notes. If you have to use them, keep to a few short prompts, rather than writing down every word.
- Be prepared for questions and be honest. Don't try to bluff if you don't know the answer – you can't know everything!

How to fund the events

As part of our project funding from the Department for International Development, we have received a £400 allowance for each federation, each year of the project. This money is for you to spend on your events' venues, catering, speakers, travel and administration costs. The NFWI will reimburse your federation once we have received your signed expense claim form with receipts attached in the post (the template is on your memory stick). If you require advance payment, please contact the NFWI to discuss. Please note that the NFWI generally processes all expenses at the end of the month. There is a 30-day turn around for processing your claims which begins when the NFWI receives your signed expense claim form in the post.

N.B. You may charge for tickets for your event to cover additional costs and ensure attendance; however due to our funding terms, you are not permitted to make a profit.

Speaker contact list

Decide how many speakers you want, what they should talk about, and for how long. Find out their fees (if any), transport needs, dietary requirements, and their presentation outline. Make sure they have been told well in advance what is required of them, your aims for the event, and what the other speakers are going to say. On the memory stick you'll find a list of professionals working on gender and development. They are aware of this project and are willing to discuss participating in your federation events.

Publicity

We want everyone to know that the WI cares about global poverty and international women's rights! Take every opportunity to promote Women Reaching Women and your federation events. Mail or e-mail all your members and contacts well in advance of events with the date, time, venue, and names of speakers. Make sure you advertise the event to the public, alliances, and other local organisations in order to ensure a good turn out. The NFWI will be providing you with promotional materials (posters, leaflets) after the training at Denman College. Once you've booked your event, let the NFWI know so they can help you promote it to the wider membership through WI Life and the NFWI website.

How to spread your message in the media

Whatever activity you are planning, it helps to have the local media on your side. They can help you spread your message and engage support. The greater the publicity, the greater the chance there is of more people becoming involved, and hearing the messages. There are many potential opportunities: news stories, features and in-depth interviews, letters to the editor, phone-ins, photo stories and filming opportunities. You'll find interview and press release tips on the memory stick.

Media tips

- Send a notice of the event and details of the speakers etc to local newspapers and radio stations two weeks before your event.
- One week before your event, follow up with a phone call to ask if they will be sending a reporter/photographer or if they would like a written report or interview.
- On the day, ascertain if press are present. If so, ask what they need and try to provide it. If not, nominate someone to make contact after the event and provide a written or verbal report and photos of the day.
- The media, especially at local level, have to deal with a hundred and one issues on almost a daily basis; do not expect them to be experts. You will most likely need to explain the issues as clearly and simply as possible. If you help the media, the media will help you.
- Be patient with photographers!

After your event

- Send thank-you letters to all speakers and stall holders
- Write up your event in your federation newsletter
- Complete your reporting forms for NFWI (include photos of the event!)

What if things go wrong?

- Don't panic! Coordinating events is always a challenge, but the more people on hand the easier it is to deal with surprises. So make sure you involve enough helping hands from the start.
- Be flexible. Right up to the last minute plans will change. Speakers sometimes pull out, the media might not show, your registration list will fluctuate. Remember there's not only one way to do things.
- Be prepared. It's never a bad idea to have a back-up plan. When looking for venues, speakers, catering etc make a short list that you can come back to if plan A fails.
- Have fun! Remember why you're doing this event and how much everyone will gain from the experience.

Random reminders!

- You will need a liquor licence if selling alcohol, as well as a food preparation certificate if cooking food.
- Don't forget to ask participants to sign the attendance sheet on arrival and complete an event evaluation form before they leave so that you can gauge the turn-out and success of your event.
- Once you've booked your event, let the NFWI know so we can help you promote it to the wider membership.
- The NFWI is here to support you. Please get in touch if you ever have any queries or need a hand.

Oxfam support

Get in touch with your regional Oxfam contact to let them know what you're planning. They may be able to offer ideas, support and help publicising your event.

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