

# URARI - Equality

A CSPE/Citizenship Resource

Exploring gender equality through a global lens



This sidebar appears on a number of pages with the following relevant information



This icon is followed by a link to a related website that can be used for student research.



This icon is followed by an interesting and relevant quote.



This icon is followed by some interesting data/information on a related topic discussed.



This icon is followed by a discussion point.



## Why is Trócaire dealing with Gender Equality?

Today, the expectation both in Irish, UK and international law is that men and women are equal and treated accordingly. Yet gender inequality remains a feature in every region in the world. In developing countries where Trócaire works, this inequality is exacerbated by extreme poverty.

Women, not trains, planes or trucks, carry two thirds of Africa's goods. They are the primary carers in the home and of HIV/AIDS patients and orphans. The physical, emotional and financial burdens which they carry on a daily basis are enormous. And yet, these incredible contributions continue to be undervalued and undermined while their full potential and choices go unrecognised.

### Understanding Gender

People are born male and female but learn to be boys and girls who grow into women and men. Gender behaviour is something that we learn and this in turn makes up our gender identity and determines our gender roles. Through these, we are taught what the appropriate behaviour, attitudes and activities are for men and women. Those who act outside their gender roles may face disapproval.

Basically, when we talk about gender, we are talking about social roles and not 'sex' or biological characteristics. Gender varies from culture to culture and over time. In the Irish context the expectations for both men and women differ greatly from the 1950s to what they are now. For example, the bar on married women working in the civil service was only removed in 1973.

Clearly, the current make up of gender identities causes problems for both men and women. The overwhelming recruitment of men as fighters by both state and revolutionary forces puts them in great danger. Men in the West have a life expectancy consistently several years less than that of women, suggesting the costs of gender-related occupational and consumption patterns.

Globally however, women in their social roles and relationships suffer greater inequalities. Society is structured in such a way that undermines and undervalues the contributions of women around the world. The consequences of this at personal, social, economic and political levels are felt not only by women but by us all.

### Gender and CSPE/Citizenship Education

The topic of Gender relates to the CSPE course and syllabus in the following ways:

- links with the concept of **Rights and Responsibilities**
- it is expressly mentioned under the concept of **Human Dignity** in relation to **stereotyping** and equality
- a UN human rights Declaration and Instrument (the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women) are explored on Page 13 and are linked with the concept of **Law**
- Action Projects suggested (Page 8 & 9)

The resource has been designed in a way that you can choose how many classes you would like to spend exploring Gender with a selection of introductory activities and case studies to bring the issues to life. The Action component comes at the centre of the resource but we recommend that the students complete at least one of the activities on pages 4-13 before preparing for action.

For Citizenship in Northern Ireland, the topic of Gender relates to the concepts of Equality & Justice and Democracy & Active Participation

### Exploring Gender Equality in the Classroom

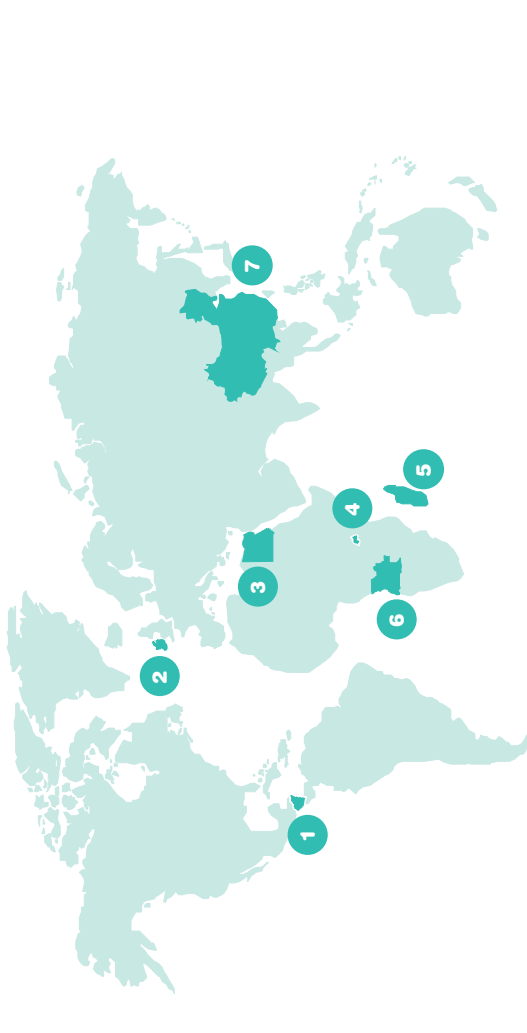
Gender is a complex issue and one that we all have personal experience of. As a teacher it is important to bear this in mind both in terms of your own experiences and those of your students. With this challenge however, you are also provided with an opportunity. Firstly, gender roles and stereotypes are learned and therefore they can be challenged and changed! Secondly, the issue of gender can first be explored from the personal context of the students, which will allow them to move onto a more meaningful exploration of the global situation.

In exploring Gender with your students, be it an all girl/boy or mixed group, we strongly recommend that you:

- Create a positive environment where all students can contribute and where views and opinions are respected.
- Make it clear that gender-based jokes and discriminatory remarks will not be allowed in the classroom.
- Continue to remind your students that gender does not only refer to women or men but to the relationship between both.
- Encourage all to explore that while gender inequalities hurt everyone, discrimination consistently deprives girls and women of power and access to resources. It is therefore essential to discuss the devastating consequences of this for women in the developing world.

If your students are having difficulty understanding gender inequality and injustice, begin by discussing another issue such as race, class or age. (see page 13)

# The World View



## 1. Nicaragua

The Association of Men Against Violence work towards reducing violence against women.



## 2. Ireland

In Ireland, the gap between the hourly working wage of men and women is at 15% (ESRI).



## 3. Egypt

In Ancient times, men did the weaving. Women handled family business. Women inherited property, men did not.



## 4. Rwanda

Almost 50% of the country's parliamentary seats are held by women.



## 7. China

80% of the garment industry workers in China are women under the age of 25.



## 6. Angola

Among certain tribes in Angola, it is the women who build houses and the men who do the cooking.



## 5. Sri Lanka

Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga served as President of Sri Lanka from 1994 to 2005. Her mother was the first woman Prime Minister in the world, elected in 1961.

## What is Trócaire Doing?

Often, a lot of the consequences of chronic poverty fall squarely on the shoulders of women and girls. Trócaire works with partners across the developing world to empower women through community development, helping women to have a voice in processes that affect them and their lives.

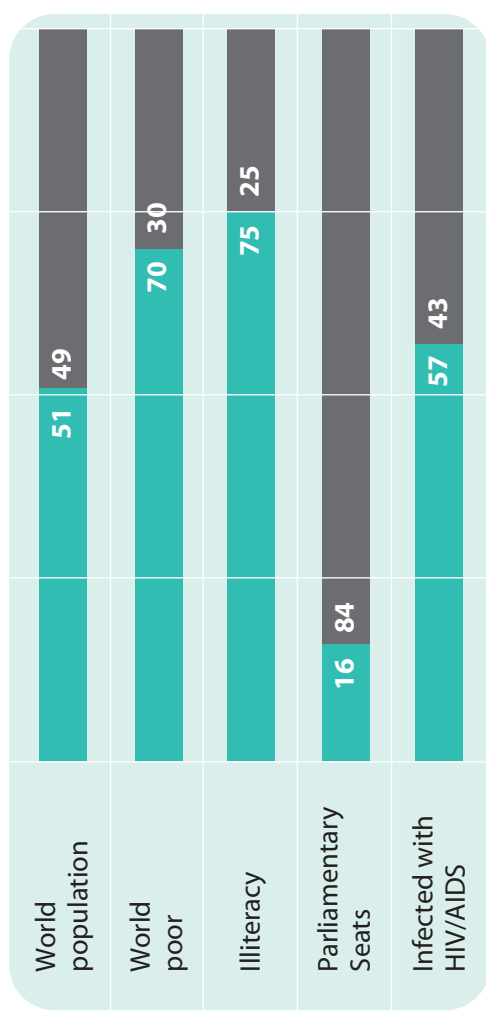
The empowerment of women and the alleviation of gender inequalities is an important focus for Trócaire's work in the developing world.

Trócaire also supports women and girls to cope with their local circumstances such as access to education, healthcare, land, water and finance. Our work on human rights helps women address and counter gender-based violence, discrimination and exclusion on the basis of gender. Gender based violence has a major impact on huge numbers of women in the developing world, particularly in emergencies, when they are more vulnerable and at risk.

Much of Trócaire's work regarding the issue of gender inequalities involves the role of women in community development and women's access to education. We also work with partners to strengthen the role of women in politics, decision-making and improving their access to resources.

For an example of Trócaire's innovative work on Gender check out Page 15.

### Female/male ratios ■ Female ■ male



Source: New Internationalist

# INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES



[www.whomakesthe news.org](http://www.whomakesthe news.org).  
A website which looks at mass media, who dominates it and what.



'The State shall endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home' – Article 41.2.2, Irish Constitution.



According to the UN, women are half the world's population, one third of the official labour force and do nearly two thirds of the world's working hours. They receive only 10% of the world's income and own less than 1% of the world's property.



Because I am a boy/girl I must...  
If I were a girl/boy I could...



## Activity One – Gender vs Sex\* \* Adapted from Oxfam's Gender Manual

### Aim:

To facilitate the students' understanding of gender as opposed to sex.  
To begin to explore how gender is a role given to us by society.

### Time:

40 minutes

### Preparation:

Photocopy Student Handout One (page 5), one for each student.

### Process:

Ask the class if they understand the difference between gender and sex when referring to men and women. Explain the difference simply (see Page 2).  
Distribute the handout and ask the students to discuss each statement in pairs and mark beside each one whether they believe the statement refers to Gender (G) or Sex (S).

### Answers:

1 = S, 2 = G, 3 = G, 4 = G, 5 = S, 6 = G, 7 = G, 8 = S, 9 = G, 10 = G.  
Discuss the answers with the whole group. Focus on the following questions and ideas:

- Did any statements surprise you?
- Do the statements suggest that Gender is something you are born with or learned?
- Gender roles differ greatly over time, in different cultures and societies (Celtic vs Modern Ireland).
- Women in every country experience power and oppression differently.

### Homework:

Ask each student to interview different female and male members of their family (mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters), to ask what their experience has been as a man/woman. Do the experiences differ? The students can feed back their findings to the class the following week.

## Activity Two – Exploring Stereotypes: A Media Audit

### Aim:

To explore how the media portrays men, women and children and how that impacts on our image/stereotypes of different groups of people.

### Time:

40 minutes

### Preparation:

Photocopy Student Handout Two (page 5), one for each student. Collect a number of different types of papers (broadsheet and tabloid), enough for one per each group of 4/5.

### Process:

Divide the class into groups of 4/5. Explain that you are giving each group a newspaper or magazine; each group must go through the paper, look at each photo, count the number of men, women and children in total and identify what they are doing; encourage the

students to examine all sections of the paper (news, features, business, sport and so on).

The students can use the handout to gather the information together.

Discuss the findings. Who is most represented? What is each group doing (are the activities active or passive)? Do all the papers have a similar approach? Are the photographers men, women or children? Does that matter? Do the photos reflect reality?

Discuss what photos/images the group feel would best reflect these different groups.

### Homework:

Divide the students into 3 groups (men, women and children) and ask each group to gather images/photos that would present a more realistic/desirable view of men, women and children.

## Activity Three – Exploring Gender in the Developing World

### Aim:

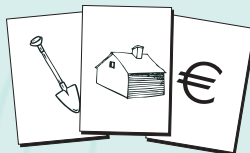
To look at how work, income and property are divided between women and men throughout the world.

### Time:

15 minutes

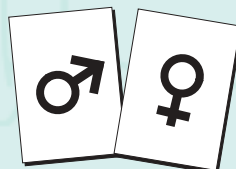
### Preparation:

30 sheets of A4 paper, with a spade on 10 sheets, a € sign on another 10 and a house on another 10.



### Process:

Ask for 10 volunteers from the class to represent the male (5) and female (5) population in the world. If your class is one sex, ask five to represent the other sex (make sure they are clearly labelled as so).



Explain that the first 10 sheets (spades) represent the number of hours worked in the world.

Ask the students to "guesstimate" how many sheets they think represent the amount of work done by men/women.

After discussion, distribute the sheets as described below which reflects the reality.

Girls = 7 spades, Boys = 3 spades

(A lot of work carried out by girls/women, though essential, is undervalued and unpaid).

Repeat this process for income and property.

Income: girls = 1 €, boys = 9 €

Property: give the boys all the houses except for one little corner of one page that is given to the girls.

(the world's women own less than one-hundredth of the world's property). Wait for the reactions!

### Discuss the findings with the class;

- How do you feel about how things are divided? Is it fair?
- Who benefits from the way this world is structured?
- Do any of the students accept these divisions? If so, how do other students respond?



# STUDENT HANDOUT 1

## Gender vs Sex

Read the statements below and mark beside each one whether you think the statement is referring to someone's Gender or Sex. See No. 6 as an example.

1. Women give birth to babies, men don't.
2. Little girls are gentle, boys are tough.
3. In one case, when a child brought up as a girl learned that he was actually a boy, his school marks improved dramatically.
4. Amongst Indian agricultural workers, women are paid 40-60 per cent of the male wage.
5. Women can breastfeed babies, men can bottlefeed babies
6. **Most building-site workers in Britain are men. (G)**
7. In Celtic Ireland, women were able to govern; they could be warriors, doctors, physicians, judges and poets. They could own property and remain the owner even when married. Celtic women could, and often did, lead their men into battle.
8. Men's voices break at puberty, women's do not.
9. In one study of 224 cultures, there were 5 in which men did all the cooking and 36 in which women did all the housebuilding.
10. According to UN statistics, women do 67% of the world's work, yet their income amounts to only 10% of the world's income.



## A MEDIA AUDIT

Using one newspaper, fill out the sheet below to record the number of times men, women and children appear in the photos and what they are doing.



# STUDENT HANDOUT 2

## NEWS

NAME OF NEWSPAPER	MEN	WOMEN	CHILDREN
Total number of .....			
What are they doing?			
Total number of photographers that are .....			

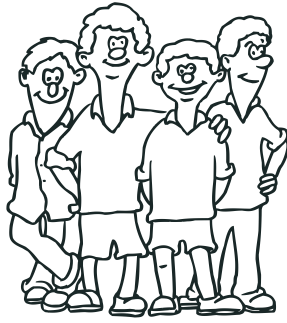
# Activity Four - GIANT STEPS: A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD?



[www.un.org/womenwatch](http://www.un.org/womenwatch) for interesting facts and stories.

## Aim:

To highlight for your students some of the obstacles faced by both men and women in achieving their full human development and potential. To explore the possible impacts of those obstacles for individuals.



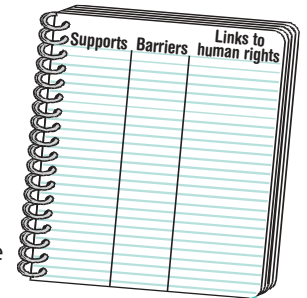
## De-brief:

Take the students out of their character roles and ask them to discuss as a class or in groups the following questions:

- Who got along the furthest? Why?
- Who got left behind? Why?
- How was the experience different for the men and women involved?
- Do you think this happens in reality?

Ask the students to write up a list of some of the supports and barriers to taking giant steps paying particular attention to the experiences of men and women.

- How are these linked to human rights?
- What do they think is the impact of this for the individual, a family/a community/ society?



## Time:

1 class

## Preparation:

A large clear space  
Photocopy the role cards on Student Handout 3 (page 7), one role card for each student in the class.  
Read the role cards carefully before assigning them to students – (M) indicates Male, (F) female.

## Process:

Distribute a role card to each student and ask them to read it carefully and to enter that role; think about who they are, where they live, their family, what kind of life they have and so on.

Ask the students to stand in character at the back of the room in a single row with their backs to the wall. They should not share their role card with the other students at this stage.

Explain that you are going to read out a number of statements (see across). After each statement is read out, the students can take:

- a giant step** if their character can do the action or if the statement fully applies to them,
- a baby step** if they can do it with difficulty or if the statement applies to them a little bit,
- no steps** if they can't do it at all.

At this point, it is important to point out to the students that the aim of the activity, is not to reach the other side of the room first (or at all) but to experience life for their character.

Begin to read out the statements. Allow time for the students to reflect on the statement and then to move or not. As the statements are read out, the students, should begin to spread out throughout the room, with some taking giant steps and others hardly moving at all. When all the statements have been read out, ask each student to stay in character and explain who they are and what statements particularly applied to them. How do they feel as that character?

## Statements:

- I live in a peaceful environment with a secure home
- I get plenty of extra help when I need it
- When I am old enough, I can marry whoever I like
- I could go to college when I finish school
- I am looking forward to my life ahead and my future is pretty secure
- I feel I am in control of my own life.
- I have enough free time to do the things I want to do.
- When I am sick, I can go for medical assistance
- It is likely that I have or will finish secondary school
- I have a voice and people ask for my opinion and listen to me
- I am paid the same wage as anyone else doing the same job.
- I can be myself without people judging me
- I get involved in things happening in my community
- I can wear whatever clothes and jewellery I like.
- I have the freedom to express myself and make decisions that affect me
- I have enough to eat and drink

## Homework:

As a group activity, students could take one or more of the aids/barriers highlighted, research the topic on the web and present the information to the class the following week.

## Action:

Write a letter to your local newspaper or school magazine to highlight these inequalities



'Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty'.  
Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General.



Over 70% of the world's poor are women.



Why do you think women are more likely to be poor than men?



## TOP TIP

This activity works as an excellent visual example of how certain individuals can take advantage of many opportunities allowing them to move further along, while others have very limited options. If space is limited, select 8 students to assume the characters. Distribute role cards to the other students also and ask them to try to identify which of the 8 selected students also has the same card. Finally, it is very important that you de-role the students once the activity is completed. This can be simply achieved by asking the students to shake their fingers and hands and "shake out" their character also.



### **Ramkumar (M), India**

You are 15 years old. Your parents work in a gem-polishing factory under sweat labour conditions which allows you and your brothers and sisters to go to school. Before you go to school each day, you help your mother with the household chores. In the evening, you play cricket with your friends. You are one of the lucky ones because other students in your school have to work in the factory before and after school.

### **Name Withheld, China**

You are a young woman working in the garment industry making clothes for the European market. The massive demand for new fashions in Europe creates a very busy and stressful work environment for you. You have to work very fast, because you are paid per each item you make. You are not allowed to take any breaks and you work long hours. You do not receive a fair wage which makes it difficult to provide for your family. You are afraid to speak out in case you lose your job.

### **Paul (M), Galway, Ireland**

You are doing your Leaving Cert this year. If you get enough points you hope to go on to college next year or maybe do some travelling first. It's a very important and busy year for you but you are getting full support from your family. You also get out and do football training twice a week so that helps you keep fit and healthy.

### **Pempho (F), Malawi, southern Africa**

You are 17 years old. Both your parents have died of HIV/AIDS and you now live with your older brother. Your brother was not happy for you to receive an education and refused to pay school fees, preferring you to stay at home and mind his child. You only eat one meal a day. You also feel that your choices are limited.

### **Almina (F), Darfur, Sudan**

Since 2004, you have been living in a UN Refugee camp with your 4 children. Your husband was killed when the militia attacked your village, destroying your home and plot of land. Now, in the camp, you live in a tent. You do not feel safe as it is too dangerous for a woman on her own. It is even too risky to leave the camp to fetch firewood for fear of rape. You have to depend on the UN for food. As the fighting continues, your future is very uncertain.

### **Alhassan (M), Sierra Leone, West Africa**

You are 12 years old. When you were nine you were kidnapped by rebels and taken to their base camp. There you were trained to be a soldier and for three years you fought on the frontline. Now that the war is over, you live in a Centre for former child soldiers where you are being trained in carpentry skills and where they are also helping you to find your family.

### **Abeba (F), Ethiopia**

You are 19 years old. Everyday you and your mother are the first to get up at 5am. You share the chores of gathering firewood or collecting water. You never had the opportunity to complete your schooling. You have many brothers and sisters and with limited money, your parents decided that you should stay at home to help your mother while the others went to school. You work hard all day, preparing food for the family, maintaining the crops or visiting the market. You earn no money of your own and with poor reading and writing skills, the options for your future are limited.

### **Noor (F), Kabul, Afghanistan**

You are 20 years old and currently living in a Women's shelter in the capital Kabul. When you were 17 you escaped from your family home in the middle of the night. That was a very dangerous thing for you to do as a woman but you felt you had to escape the constant beatings, cruelty and imprisonment that your husband's family imposed on you. Although the people in the shelter look after you, you are still afraid and your future is uncertain. If your family find you, your life would be threatened and if you left the shelter, you could be arrested, as women in Afghanistan are not allowed to leave their homes without a man or an elder woman.

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY &

## A SOLIDARITY DAY OF ACTION



[www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com)

### TROCAIRE CAMPAIGNS

Check out Trocaire campaigns at [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org) for more action you can take.



'I want to be President for all the people because I was elected by all...above all by the women of Ireland...who instead of rocking the cradle, rocked the system'. - Mary Robinson



### AWARENESS-RAISING DISPLAY

The students can use their own specific skills (computers, research, art, communications, creative writing, organisational) to organise a special day in the school on March 8<sup>th</sup> – hold a debate in the library using one of the discussion points in this resource as the motion or combine any of the actions below for added punch!



In 1975, International Women's Year, the UN gave official sanction to and began to sponsor International Women's Day.



### POSTER COMPETITION

Use the day to kick-start or culminate a poster competition in the school for the other CSPE/Citizenship classes. The theme can be decided by your students and should support Gender Equality. Tasks could include an organising committee, a judging panel, publicity, identifying an award.



Is there an International Men's Day? Is everyday a man's day?



### THE WORLD VIEW

Use the case studies within this resource and the images from the CD-ROM to create a visual display of Gender inequalities and advances in recent times. Create a factsheet to complement the display.



### CONTACT YOUR POLITICIANS

Use Activity 7, page 13, to contact your local and national politicians with regard to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and Millennium Development Goals 2,3 and 4.

International Women's Day is a perfect opportunity to take action on the day by exploring through tasks to complete a successful Action Plan. A range of tasks and potential activities are provided to complete the day.

**March 8<sup>th</sup> – International Women's Day**  
**May 15<sup>th</sup> – International Day of the Girl**



# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILY

## AND AWARENESS-RAISING

### CAMPAIGNS

Trocaire's Campaigns website – [www.trocaire.org/takeaction](http://www.trocaire.org/takeaction) to see what you can take in relation to gender.

International Women's Day or the International Day of Family provide opportunities for your students to explore issues they have been discussing in this resource and to participate in the Action Project with plenty of creative activities for all to complete.

**International Women's Day**  
**International Day of Family**



### SPECIAL GUESTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Are there people within the students' local community that could come to the school to speak about gender equality, women's rights or the family? It may be a member of a student's family, one involved in a local organisation, or an immigrant with a different view of gender equality.



### WOMEN AND MEN, PAST & PRESENT (refer to Activity 1, page 4)

In preparation for either day, your students could do some home-based research. Encourage them to interview female and male members of their wider family unit; explore what it was like to be a man/woman in the past (their mother's/grandmother's time) and how they see things have changed. Collate these findings and make them available to the school.



### THE ALTERNATIVE VIEW

Referring to Activity 2 on Page 4 (Media Audit), the students could display in the school their images of men, women and children – encourage them to extend the images to those of The Family. This display could be used as the launching pad for the Poster Competition.

### Trocaire's 24 Hour Fast

The Trocaire 2FM 24 hour Fast will take place on the 9th and 10th March 2007. The focus this year is on India (see case study on Page 11). India is the second most populated country in the world with a population of 1.1 billion. By participating in the Fast you will be making a huge difference to the lives of those struggling to survive on a daily basis.



# Addressing the Imbalance



[www.imaginingourselves.imow.org](http://www.imaginingourselves.imow.org) - an excellent visual website with lots of personal stories from women around the world.



'EU Court rules women can be paid less' - Irish Times headline, October 4<sup>th</sup> 2006



There is no country where women earn the same as men. Worldwide, women earn 69% of male wages.



What have men got to do with it?

## Activity Five – Personal Stories

### Aim:

To understand how some of the obstacles in Activity Four can impact on a real person's life and how they can overcome those obstacles.

### Time:

45 minutes

### Preparation:

Print the 3 sets of photos from **Activity 5 folder** (of the CD-Rom), enough so that each group of 4 has one set. Photocopy Student Handout 4 (page 11), enough so that each group of 4 has one case study.

You will also need large sheets of paper and felt pens, one for each group, and blutak.

### Process:

Divide the class into groups of 4 and give each group a set of photos with a large piece of paper and some blutak.

Ask each group to talk about their photos, to then stick them onto the paper and around them to write some key questions the photos have prompted.

Each group can then feedback to the class.

Follow this by handing out the relevant case study to each group. Ask the students to read the case study and to find the answers to some/all of their questions.

### Follow up:

What did you find most surprising about your case study?

What were the positive elements to the story?

What human rights were denied/protected?

What do you think needs to happen for the person in your case study to have a brighter future?

## Activity Six – A Community Responds

### Aim:

To facilitate the students through an exploration of the differing views as to why and how gender equality should be achieved.

### Time:

45 minutes

### Preparation:

Photocopy Student Handout 5 (page 12) and cut into 5 separate role cards.

Create a community meeting set up in the classroom – a top row to facilitate one member from each group, looking out onto the meeting's attendees.

### Process:

Divide the class into 5 groups. Explain that they are to imagine that they live in Malawi and that today, the community has come together to discuss gender equality and how everybody might be involved in their community's growth and development and the promotion of women's rights and the betterment of the whole community.

Give each group one role card and ask them to imagine themselves in that role and to prepare a statement for the community meeting. They will then have to nominate one person to speak on the panel at the community meeting. Allow 10 minutes preparation time.

Convene the community meeting. Provide each group with an opportunity to speak and then invite questions from the floor and further comments from the panel.

### Follow up:

Can the group agree on 3/5 basic principles as to how to achieve gender equality?

### Homework:

Ask the students to write a reflection based on their experience while they were in role.

## Malita's Story, Malawi, southern Africa



Hi! My name is Malita Amosi and I am 19 years old. I live in Malawi which is a very poor country where the average person can expect to live to 39. Food is often scarce. I come from a family of 10, 6 girls and 4 boys. In 1996, my father died from AIDS which made life even more difficult for my family.

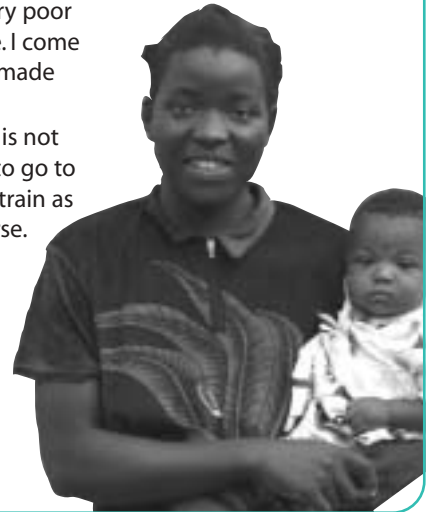
Life for me really changed 8 months ago when I had my baby girl, Lucy. Her father is not around so I knew that Lucy would depend on me to survive. I never got a chance to go to secondary school but I did get some education at primary school. I had wanted to train as a tailor but there were no courses in my area. The only option was a carpentry course.

I was very unsure of this as nobody in my area had heard of a female carpenter.

However, my mother encouraged me and I wanted to be able to care for Lucy.

Now that I am trained, I craft at least one item a week. Recently I sold a bed and table so with the money I make I can sometimes buy extra food and also I am building my own house at the moment!

Before I trained as a carpenter, I used to wish I was a boy because I saw that they had more options and could travel more. Now, I can support my own child, I am confident and I am hopeful about the future.



## Nukdai's Story, Orissa, East India



My name is Nukdai Digal. I am unsure of my age but believe I am about 45. I have one son and three daughters and we come from a group of people in India called the Dalit. Within India's caste system, we are known as the 'untouchables'. In my community, most of the people live on less than €1 a day and very few have enough food to eat each year. Farming is poor in my area and there are very few opportunities to earn any money.

I am a member of a self-help group of women and with the help of our village development community, we came together to rent a plot of land. We saved for 3 months and then we gathered our money together to buy some seeds. Now we grow ginger and turmeric and we sell these on to the local markets and shop owners. The group also helps and supports families who are experiencing difficulties such as domestic violence and death.

Before I joined the group, I felt cut-off from the rest of my community. Women used to stay in their homes and many of their husbands were abusive. Now, through the group's activities and their strength in unity, my husband helps me to grow the crops and he also accompanies me to the market. With the help of the group, my husband and I are closer and we communicate with each other more than ever before.



## Catherine's Story, Malawi, southern Africa



My name is Catherine Martin. I am 43 years old and HIV positive. My husband died in 1999 and I was left as the sole carer for my 6 children. Life can be difficult in Malawi. We depend on the food we grow to eat and sometimes, with more and more droughts occurring, food can be scarce. This makes it even more difficult for me to recover from an illness.

In many ways however, I am lucky. I get support and care from a HIV/AIDS centre in my local area. Not only do they provide some food, blankets and nim (a local, herbal painkiller) but they also have volunteers that visit my home and those of other people living with HIV. When we are too sick, the volunteers come and help us in our home. When I am well enough, I also care for others.

My family are also very caring. When I am too sick, my oldest son, Francis, cooks for me. He started when I had my first long illness for 6 months and he asked if he could help in some way. My own mother did not approve believing that to be women's work, but I encouraged him. He now has his own wife and daughter, Rufie, aged 2.





## World Bank Representative

Your organisation offers loans to developing countries to support projects that will help reduce poverty. You need to ensure that the money is spent as efficiently and effectively as possible. Over the years, your own research has shown that if women are involved in projects, money will be spent more efficiently and more people can benefit. In addition, if women are educated it has been found that the health of the family improves as can a family's income.



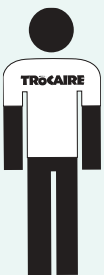
## Village Chiefs

As a group you have no legal powers but your opinions and actions are very influential on your community. In your villages, men and women's roles have been very clear over a long period of time – there are certain expectations and jobs for both groups. While you recognise the contribution of women in the home and with the family, you are slow to let them become involved in community issues.

## Women's Group

Your group was set up a number of years ago to support local women whose husbands had deserted them. This is very common in your area. When times are hard and food and money are scarce, many men cannot cope with the pressure and they leave the family.

Since then, your group has expanded, slowly men are becoming involved and you now support many women's issues – domestic violence, the burden of HIV/AIDS and the empowerment of women. You believe that women need to become more involved in the community. You understand how crops grow, what the needs of families and communities are and some of the challenges you face. You feel your opinions and observations should be valued and taken on board and that you should be able to choose how you would like to be involved in the community's development beyond that of your family's.



## NGO Representative

As an overseas development agency based in Ireland, you have promoted women's rights and gender equality for many years by supporting local communities in countries such as Malawi. In the past, it was believed that gender equality should be promoted because everybody benefited from women's involvement in development – children, families and the wider community. More and more however, the women you support want choices and opportunities. They do not just want to be used as a tool for development.

## Youth Group

As young people in your community you come together when you can for social activities but also to discuss issues which are affecting your lives. When you were set up, all your members were boys but more and more girls have started to join recently. They really have started to challenge the way you see men and women's roles within the community. Traditionally, girls have been kept out of secondary school and at home to help with chores and securing food for the family. Also, violence against women is quite common amongst families in your community and as a group you would like to appeal to adults to respect girls and women and look at other ways of resolving conflict.





## A UN Response to Gender Equality

### THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In the year 2000, 189 world leaders, the Taoiseach and the UK Prime Minister included, came together at the UN in New York and agreed to sign up to a set of goals. By the year 2015 these goals aim to eradicate poverty and hunger and improve the lives of hundreds of millions of people around the world. There are 8 goals in total, each of them referring to basic human rights, each of them essential to positive world development.

3 of the goals refer specifically to gender equality and women's rights. They include;

- Achieve universal education for all
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Improve the health of mothers

Unfortunately, progress on these targets has been slow and uneven.

For more information on the MDGs, check out **Chinya** in the resources section of Trócaire's website, [www.trocaire.org/education](http://www.trocaire.org/education).

### The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The UN's Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), was adopted in 1979. It was the first Convention to address women's rights within political, economic, social, cultural and family life. It emerged after the first conference on Women in 1975 in Mexico. CEDAW brings together principles from other human rights principles such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and brings them further creating an official method for addressing discrimination against women.

CEDAW recognises that a change in the traditional role of men as well as women in society and the family is needed to achieve full equality between men and women.

#### What does CEDAW say?

- Article 1:** Defines discrimination against women
  - Article 2:** Encourages states to condemn and legally protect against discrimination
  - Article 3:** Encourages states to take special temporary measures to accelerate equality
  - Article 4:** Encourages states to take action to guarantee women's rights
  - Article 5:** Cultural practices, common responsibility for childrearing
  - Article 6:** Trafficking of women
  - Article 7:** End to discrimination in political life
  - Article 8:** Right of women to represent governments
  - Article 9:** Equality re nationality on marriage/nationality of children
  - Article 10:** Equality in education
  - Article 11:** Equality in employment
  - Article 12:** Health – limited free health care
  - Article 13:** Family benefits, bank loans, recreational activities
  - Article 14:** Rural women
  - Article 15:** Equality before the law
  - Article 16:** Equality re marriage rights
  - Article 17:** Establishment of CEDAW evaluation committee
  - Article 18:** Establishment of schedule of reporting to the Committee
- (Adapted from Maeve Taylor's CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action)*

While the Irish government has signed and ratified the Convention, it has not been brought into domestic Irish law. This means that while lawyers can refer to CEDAW's rights in argument, it is not binding in court.



#### Activity Seven – Write a letter

Why do you think the Irish government should bring this Convention into Irish law? Discuss as a group. Why not write a letter to Minister of Justice, or the UK Home Secretary, outlining your reasons and seeking his comment.



[www.hrw.org/campaigns/cedaw/](http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/cedaw/)  
and  
[www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)  
or check out Ireland's Equality Status Act on [www.equality.ie](http://www.equality.ie)



'Progress must be made...otherwise the ringing words of the Millennium Goals will only serve as grim reminders of the human needs neglected and promises unmet'  
**Kofi Annan**,  
former UN Secretary General



185 members of the UN have signed up to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)



Have you ever been discriminated against? If so, how did you feel? What were you able to do about it?

# People for Change



## Activity 8 – Research and Peer Presentation

Each group takes one Person for Change, researches and then presents back to the group under the following headings.

- What did your Person for Change see as the key issues/obstacles?
- How have they responded?
- What has been the impact/result?

### Muhammad Yunus – ‘Banker to the Poor’

Muhammad Yunus was born in 1940 in an area that is now part of Bangladesh. Both his parents encouraged him to pursue his education and to have as many experiences as possible. By the age of 31, Muhammad was working as a Professor of Economics in his local university.

Muhammad loved teaching the theories and principles of economics but as he looked around at the rural poverty in his own country, he began to question what was keeping the poor poor. From his experience, most of them were landless and 50% of them were women who were totally ignored.

He sent two of his students to do a survey in the local village of Jobra. They examined people who eked out a living on a day-to-day basis, from hand to mouth. What they found was that these people were generally women who did many jobs but they never profited from their labour. Women were working hard, but someone else was taking the profit.

Muhammad believed that what these poor women needed was access to small amounts of money that would allow them to set up small business like making furniture or selling goods.

As a result of this research and findings, the Grameen Bank Project was initiated, offering loans to the poorest of the poor without the need for collateral. In 1983, the project was transformed into an independent bank by government legislation. As of May 2006, it has 6.74 million borrowers, 97 percent of whom are women



[www.grameen-info.org](http://www.grameen-info.org)  
[www.grameenfoundation.org](http://www.grameenfoundation.org)

## Mairead Corrigan Maguire – Peace People

Mairead's sister Ann lost her three children as a result of a car accident after its driver who was shot by a British soldier ploughed into them. The family had been walking on a footpath along a busy road in Belfast. The deaths prompted a series of marches and demonstrations throughout Northern Ireland and further afield, all demanding an end to the violence.



This was in 1976, the 7th year of the Troubles in the North and 1,600 people had already lost their lives. During those difficult days, Mairead was interviewed by the media. She used this opportunity to make an appeal for an end to violence.

This was to be the beginning of a long and on-going involvement in peace-building work. This work, in the midst of a society torn apart by violence and sectarianism, called for great courage and determination.

As a co-founder of the Peace People movement, Mairead shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976 with Betty Williams. The organisation also went on to play a part in helping the Northern Irish people move towards today's peace process.



[www.peacepeople.com](http://www.peacepeople.com)  
[www.paxchristi.co.uk](http://www.paxchristi.co.uk)  
[www.nobelprize.org](http://www.nobelprize.org)

## The Association of Men Against Violence – 'What have Men got to do with it?'

Violence against women and men takes place in every corner of the world. Yet in 2004, the World Bank found that domestic violence is the biggest cause of injury and death to women worldwide. Gender-based violence is an abuse of human rights and power. It happens when women are discriminated against and they are denied their right to equality, liberty and security.

The best way to prevent violence against women involves challenging the attitudes of women and men, boys and girls, young and old. In Nicaragua, in Central America, this is exactly what a group of men are trying to do.

The Association of Men Against Violence was set up in 2000. The aim of the association is to reduce violence against women by developing ways of working with men on issues of masculinity and violence. This includes re-education and therapy for men who use violence against their partners.

The association works in rural and urban areas and begins its work by visiting communities to see if the male members are interested in forming a group to look at this issue. The association then organises 10 workshops for the group – 9 for men alone and the final one for both women and men. At the end of each workshop, the men commit to making some changes in their lives and the next week, they speak honestly about whether or not they were able to change their behaviour – for example, more help with the child care, household duties and so on.

Some men in the communities react angrily to the group at first when they feel their power and role in the community is being threatened but the workshops help them to work through those feelings. Men who have attended the workshops report that they now have better relationships with their wives, mothers and sisters. They have learned to let the women make more decisions. They also feel calmer and better able to deal with their anger.



[www.nationmaster.com](http://www.nationmaster.com)  
[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/issues/gender/gem/index.htm](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/issues/gender/gem/index.htm)



## 'Log On'

Log on to our new Website @ [www.trocaire.org/Education](http://www.trocaire.org/Education).

Our website is packed full of information:

- All of our most recent resources are now available to **download** directly from our website. This is just one of many new initiatives on our Education website.
- Find out all about our Pamoja programme! Click on the link to our dedicated Pamoja website - Pamoja is a Human Rights programme that we run with Senior School Students.
- Send us your comments! Click on our new link and **Send us your Comments**. Any feedback you have would be appreciated!



## CD ROM

Included in our education and action pack this year is a CD ROM with a number of power-point presentations related to the resource and also a general one for use at assemblies. There is also an additional folder of photographs on the CD that can be printed out and used as part of classroom or school displays. Why not give the CD to your students and ask them to create a photo collage!

## Young Social Innovators

Trócaire is a proud Gold Partner of Young Social Innovators. If you and your students are exploring global issues as part of a YSI project, why not contact us for materials and support.



## Useful Websites

### General

[www.nationmaster.com](http://www.nationmaster.com)

An excellent site for facts and statistics about countries around the world. Great for comparisons.

[www.newint.org](http://www.newint.org)

The New Internationalist website – good for issue-related articles and country profiles

[www.bbcworld.com](http://www.bbcworld.com)

Up-to-the-minute news and information from around the world. An excellent website and resource

[www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/](http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/)

The UN's excellent website for youth, making all things UN-related relevant and accessible for students and teachers.

[www.avert.org](http://www.avert.org)

Excellent website on HIV/AIDS with educational materials, statistics and case studies. A must if you're looking at this issue.

### Gender

[www.banulacht.ie](http://www.banulacht.ie)

[www.newint.org/issue373/facts.htm](http://www.newint.org/issue373/facts.htm)

[www.newint.org/issue373/silence.htm](http://www.newint.org/issue373/silence.htm)

[www.newint.org/issue373/keynote.htm](http://www.newint.org/issue373/keynote.htm)