

WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

Secondary Activities



Papua New Guinea.

Photo Credit: Richard Wainwright

CURRICULUM LINKS

Religious Education:	Apply Catholic moral teaching to local and global issues. Explore examples of Christian action which reflect justice and compassion. Analyse case studies which provide insights about actions based on justice. Prepare and participate in a variety of prayer forms from the Christian tradition.
Geography	The role of international and national government and non-government organisations' initiatives in improving human wellbeing in Australia and other countries (ACHGK081)
Civics and Citizenship	How and why groups, including religious groups, participate in civic life (ACHCK079)
Mathematics	Identify and investigate issues involving numerical data collected from primary and secondary sources (ACMSP169)

1. Inquiry questions

a) When have you experienced unfairness? For example, have there been sports or activities from which you have been excluded because of being a boy/girl?

- How did that feel?
- How would you feel if you were denied an education because of being a boy/girl?
- What opportunities are available to women in your country?
- What questions do you have about women's status around the world?

b) What is 'gender equality' ?

- "Gender equality means... the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community and their society. Gender equality starts with equal valuing of girls and boys." (*ABC of Women Worker's Rights and Gender Equality, ILO, Geneva, 2000*)

c) Are women always treated justly?

- No. Statistics show that women face discrimination in education, employment, healthcare, control of assets and participation in government. Living in poverty can also place women at greater risk of violence.

d) What is 'empowerment'?

- Empowerment is about people taking control over their lives. It is about people pursuing their own goals, living according to their own values, developing self-reliance, and being able to make choices and influence the decisions that affect their lives (*source: ifad.org/gender/glossary.htm*). UNESCO says that "Only the individual can empower herself or himself to make choices or to speak out. However, institutions including international cooperation agencies can support processes that can nurture self-empowerment." (*UNESCO GENIA Toolkit for Promoting Gender Equality in Education*)

e) Why is it important that Caritas Australia supports women in development?

- Kofi Annan, Former Secretary- General of the United Nations, said, "When women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life" and "there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women." Research has shown that women are more likely to spend their earnings on their household's needs and that increasing women's education level greatly improves mothers' and children's health.

2. Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching

"Women's dignity has often been unacknowledged and their prerogatives misrepresented; they have often been relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude. This has prevented women from truly being themselves and it has resulted in a spiritual impoverishment of humanity..."

- Saint John Paul II

"When it comes to setting women free from every kind of exploitation and domination, the Gospel contains an ever relevant message which goes back to the attitude of Jesus Christ himself." (Pope John Paul II, *Letter to women*, 1995, 3).

Ask groups to read one of the following: Jn. 4:3-42; Jn. 8:3-11; Mk.14:3-9. Discuss how Jesus' attitude to women differed from that of his day. What do you think Jesus would say about empowering women today?



Dinia with one of her piglet's, Bing Bing. In the background is the piglet's mother, Bing, who was Dinia's first pig and the leaders of her pig breeding program. Though this successful program, Dinia earns a livelihood and helps her neighbours earn income too by providing them with some piglets from Bing's offspring. The Hog Dispersal Program is a community system of sharing. Photo Credit: Richard Wainwright

3. Global statistics on men and women



Fill in the table below with the most recent global statistics on men and women. (NB: You may have to leave some cells blank if there are no statistics available). Suggested websites: [UN MDGs](#), [World Bank data](#).

- a) Look at your completed table. Write down one observation for each country. What strikes you? Discuss.
- b) Mathematics activity: Choose three categories from the table and decide the most effective way to represent each in a graph.
 - i. Create three graphs.
 - ii. In groups of three, compare your graphs.
 - iii. Discuss which graphs were most effective.

Country	DRC	Australia	Cambodia	PNG	Bangladesh
Country (millions)					
Male life expectancy (years)					
Female life expectancy (years)					
Male adult illiteracy (% of pop.)					
Female adult illiteracy (% of pop.)					
Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births					
Female labour force (% of whole labour force)					
% of seats held in national parliament by women					

4. Caritas Australia is supporting women



EDUCATION

Discuss why more women than men are illiterate and why educating women is such a critical step in breaking the cycle of poverty.

Watch '[Solomon Islands– Gender equity in education](#)' video and answer the following questions:

- Why were there not as many girls as boys attending secondary school? How did Caritas Australia and their partners support the young women? What impact did this have on the young women?

VIOLENCE

Globally, 1 in 3 women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, violence against women is common. Caritas Australia works with Caritas Goma to provide healthcare and counselling to victims of rape.

Watch [Isabelle's story](#) and read other stories in Caritas Australia's comprehensive report [Fearless Voices](#). Tragically, women are often targets of sexual abuse and domestic violence in areas where conflict is rife. Create a series of posters with messages that support gender equality and protection of women's rights.

LIVELIHOODS

Janaki is a young entrepreneur from Nepal, who has turned her life around. Growing up in a world of poverty and disadvantage, coupled with a forced marriage at the age of twelve, she was in a very vulnerable position. Even more so when her husband died just two years into their marriage. She's now running her own successful sewing business and has become an inspirational community leader. Janaki has 11 sewing machines and is running her own business, teaching others and is considered a community role model.

[Watch Janaki's story](#) and discuss how life has changed for Janaki and her community.

- In what contexts does child marriage become a violation of human rights? How can we help prevent human trafficking? What Australian legislation is in place to prevent human trafficking? How could these be strengthened?

[Watch Dinia's story](#) and discuss how the Caritas Australia supported program helped her learn skills to increase her family's food and income. Discuss how life has changed for Dinia and her community. Eg. Improved income and living conditions, increased educational opportunities, increased working as a community and new products being produced.

HEALTH

Caritas Australia works in partnership with Caritas Bangladesh to provide a [safe motherhood program](#). Watch or read [Salma's story](#).

- Identify three facts that show the difference being made to women's lives by this program.
- Write a short piece for your school or parish newsletter or website about the program.

4. Reflect and Act!

- Jesus said, "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." (Mt 7:12)
Talk about what this means for how men and women should treat each other.
- Use the International Women's Day prayer [PowerPoint](#) or have the students write their own prayer in groups. Each group could write a different type of prayer based on the theme of women: blessing, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise.
- Take action for justice in the DRC. Read [Fearless Voices: speaking up for peace, equality and justice in the DRC](#).
- Become an active online campaigner: join Caritas Australia on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.



Janaki with her students as she teaches them how to sew. Janaki started her business through a loan from the Children and Youth Empowerment Program and now has 11 sewing machines to use for her classes. Photo Credit: Richard Wainwright



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