



29 September 2022

To: Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee, Jenny Rathbone MS

Dear Committee Chair,

Feminist Scorecard 2022

We are writing to you to share key recommendations from our Feminist Scorecard 2022 that are relevant to the Equality and Social Justice Committee. The Feminist Scorecard 2022, launched in July this year, tracks the Welsh Government's progress towards advancing women's rights and gender equality in six policy areas:

- Fair Finance
- Caring Responsibilities
- Global Women's Rights
- Equal Representation and Leadership
- Tackling Gender Health Inequalities, and
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

Each area is rated using a traffic light system (red, amber, and green), indicating the level of progress towards equality for women and girls in Wales.

Your Committee portfolio crosses a number of areas and we would like to highlight actions needed to improve women's situation in each area below.

Fair Finance

Compared to the last Scorecard published in 2020, Fair Finance has regressed from amber to a red rating. Some positive steps, such as hybrid working, have been made but overall progress has been undone by the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. The scorecard recommends that the Welsh Government should:

- Take meaningful action to achieve the target to reduce the (full-time) gender pay gap to 7% by 2028.
- Address the prevalence of women in part-time work through better investment into childcare and social care, so that unpaid care work truly becomes a choice.
- Encourage employers to develop and improve flexible working policies to suit the needs of different employees, including women with caring responsibilities, disabled people and working-class women.



Caring Responsibilities

Like Fair Finance, the area of Caring Responsibilities has regressed from amber to red over the last two years. This shows the close connection between women's position in the labour market and the unequal distribution of care work in Wales. Welsh Government has made positive commitments around childcare and social care, but the pace of action does not reflect the urgency for change. We therefore recommended that the Welsh Government should invest in a care-led recovery as part of building back greener and fairer and to address the cost-of-living crisis. As part of this, it should build on existing plans to ensure social care and childcare as a profession is valued and improved, through measures like a sector-wide real living wage, better career progression, support for mental health & well-being of care workers.

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

The Welsh Government provided swift emergency funding during the pandemic. However, there is a critical need for sustainable funding for specialist services, especially for women with no recourse to public funds, which scored red in this section. The scorecard recommends that the Welsh Government should:

- Prioritise the establishment of a secure and sustainable funding model for VAWDASV specialist services including making clear how additional funds will benefit women with complex needs, disabled women, LGBTQ+ women and 'by and for' specialist services for racialised women.
- Ensure the commitment to joined up working across substance misuse, housing, social services and education is reflected on the ground, extends to the legal system and is supportive, rather than punitive for mothers leaving abuse.
- Urgently develop a Welsh solution to supporting survivors with no or limited recourse to public funds.
- Provide comprehensive and relevant information provided in a variety of formats on the full range of services available to help victims and survivors navigate the fragmented system of current services.
- Ensure the VAWDASV Strategy's commitment to intersectionality is meaningfully embedded to ensure the voice of marginalised survivors can feed in at the highest level.

Equal Representation and Leadership

While there has been some progress in this area, it maintained an amber rating overall. The commitment to gender quotas in the Senedd is a crucial step forward, but much more must be done to ensure political institutions fully reflect Wales's diverse population. Therefore, we recommend the Welsh Government :

- Ensure the Senedd Reform Act contains legally binding gender quotas with sanctions for non-compliance.
- Ensure that political parties have due regard to the diversity of their candidates lists representing all protected characteristics, including race/ethnic minority status, disability, age, sexuality and gender identity.



- Explore the introduction of intersectionally embedded quotas, in line with emerging global best practice to ensure fair representation of disabled women, racialised women, LGBTQ+ women and younger women.
- Extend the Access to Elected Office fund to cover caring expenses and explore how it can be expanded to support candidates with other protected characteristics, in particular socio-economic disadvantage.
- Improve the collection of candidate diversity data across the Senedd, local government and public boards

Global Women's Rights

We were pleased to see some progress in the area of Global Women's Rights, which retained its amber rating. However, urgent action is needed to support sanctuary seekers and those affected by climate change globally for Wales to be a nation of sanctuary and global solidarity. The Scorecard recommends the Welsh Government:

- The Social Partnership and Procurement Bill must include global solidarity in general, and human rights and women's rights specifically.
- Conduct human rights and gender equality assessments of existing and emerging trade policies
- Recognise and provide appropriate support for climate refugees.
- Act swiftly to fulfil its commitment to the enshrinement of CEDAW and CRDP principles into Welsh Law and commit to incorporating the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) to strengthen the protection of the rights of women who experience intersecting discrimination.

We would be grateful for the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we can work together to make the recommendations a reality, to ensure that women and girls in Wales will not be held back for many years to come. Please contact Fadhilah Gubari at Oxfam Cymru to arrange a suitable date for a meeting on fgubari1@oxfam.org.uk.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Rees'.

Sarah Rees
Head of Oxfam Cymru

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Fookes'.

Catherine Fookes
Director of WEN Wales