



29 September 2022

To: Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee, Jayne Bryant 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 Children, Young People and Education 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 several 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. This strongly affects mothers and is a driving factor behind Wales's rising levels of child poverty, especially for children who are raised by single parents and families who experience intersecting discrimination. The Scorecard recommends that the Welsh Government should:

- 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.
- Monitor and report annually on the effectiveness of the Economic Action and Employability Plans and Economic Contract in narrowing the gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps.

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 child poverty, women's position in the labour market and the unequal distribution of care work in Wales. The Welsh Government has made positive commitments around childcare, but the pace of action does not reflect the urgency for change. We recommend Welsh Government:

- Make the Childcare Offer affordable and accessible for parents of all children from six months.



- Invest in nursery and early education provisions to ensure they are accessible to all parents who are eligible, when and where they need them. This should particularly address the lack of provision during atypical working hours, provisions for disabled children and those with additional learning needs as well as provision in rural areas.
- Expand childcare provisions to unemployed parents to support them in seeking employment and to asylum seekers to allow them to take ESOL classes and prepare for getting refugee status.
- Collect robust equality data as part of the evaluation and monitoring of the Childcare Offer to ensure equality of access and eligibility.
- Ensure both childcare and social care 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. 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. We welcome the Welsh Government's commitment to coordination across policy areas like substance misuse, housing, social services and education, but it is critical that this is accompanied with a secure and sustainable funding model for Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse, and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) specialist services. We recommend that the Welsh Government ensures that the commitment to joined-up working is reflected on the ground and consistently embodies a supportive, rather than punitive, approach towards mothers leaving abuse.

Participants at a community launch of the Scorecard also highlighted the risk that children are exposed to domestic abuse from not receive support when the mother is exposed to violence and demanded more investment to improve the coordination across the VAWDASV support system and to leave no one behind.

We would be grateful for the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we can work together 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