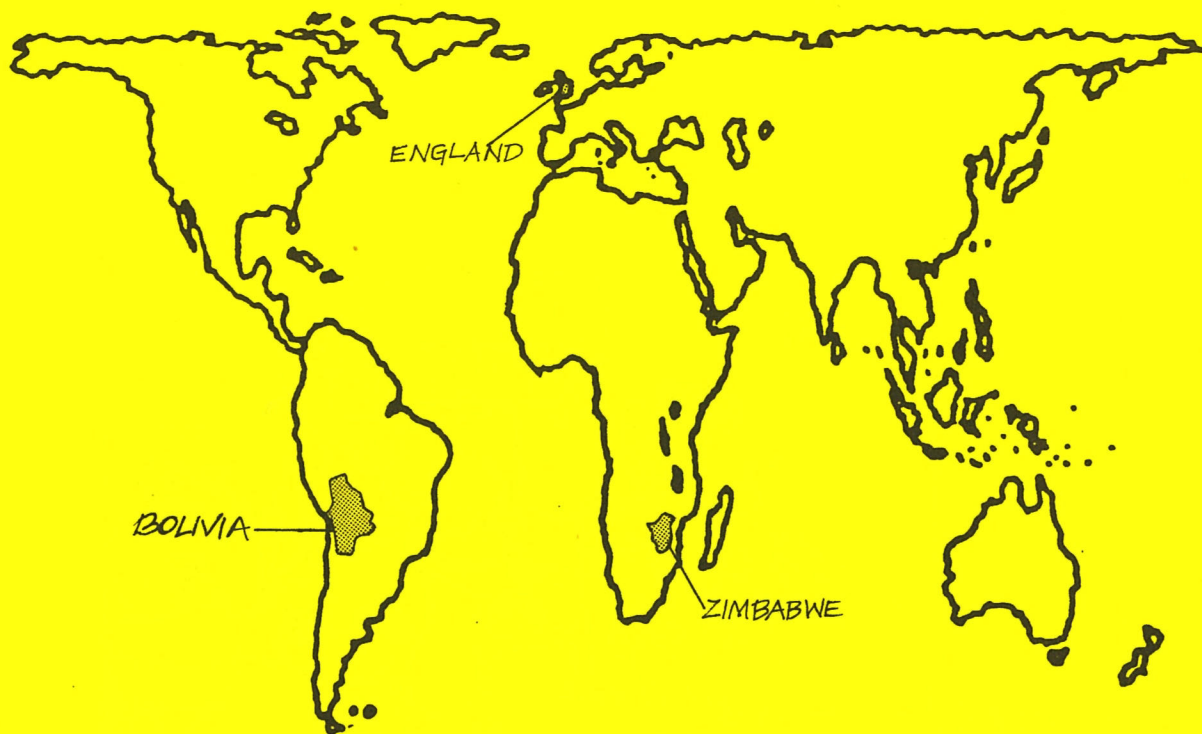


Finding Paid Work



This booklet is one in a series of eight. Together they make up a women's kit. Each booklet is made up of material about women's lives from the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa and England. The themes of the booklets are:

Women's Days
Childcare
Health
Housework

Finding Paid Work
Working Conditions
Violence in the Home
Women Working Together

The kit is intended for use by women in English as a Second Language classes, literacy groups and other women's groups. We hope the kit will help women to get together to think and talk about their lives.

The following women put together the kit: Gwen Davies, Amy Gottlieb, Jenny Horsman, Linzi Manicom. With help from: Rachel Epstein, Maureen Simpkins and Lynda Yanz.

Produced: June 1987 ISBN: 0-920907-16-4

Cover graphic from: SPEAK, Zimbabwe Publishing House

Women look for paid work to support their families and to get more control of their own lives.

It is often hard for women to find work.

This book shows what some women from Zimbabwe, England and Bolivia think about getting paid work.

Some women grow vegetables or make goods to sell. This is one way for women to earn some money. In many parts of Africa women sell their produce at the side of the road.

This story from Zimbabwe tells about some problems with this kind of work.

Women in Zimbabwe act out the story and use the questions to help them solve the problems.

From: Women's Problems, Zimbabwe Publishing House



Story to Act

Mai Mubaiwa would like to get more money for her family. But it is difficult. She does try and sell vegetables at the road sometimes. But often when she sells vegetables, there are other women selling the same vegetables, so she gets a low price and can't sell everything. She makes jerseys* to sell, and she has tried crocheting, but people don't often buy her things. Also she left school a long time ago and her arithmetic is poor, so she is not sure how much money she is making.

Discuss Together

1. What is happening in this play?
2. Why does Mai Mubaiwa have difficulties in selling things?
3. Do women in your area have problems selling their goods?
4. Why is it difficult to make a lot of money from this kind of work?
5. What can we do together to make more money?
6. How can we help women who left school a long time ago?
7. Will collective work help women make more money? Give reasons for your answer.

*Jersey means sweater

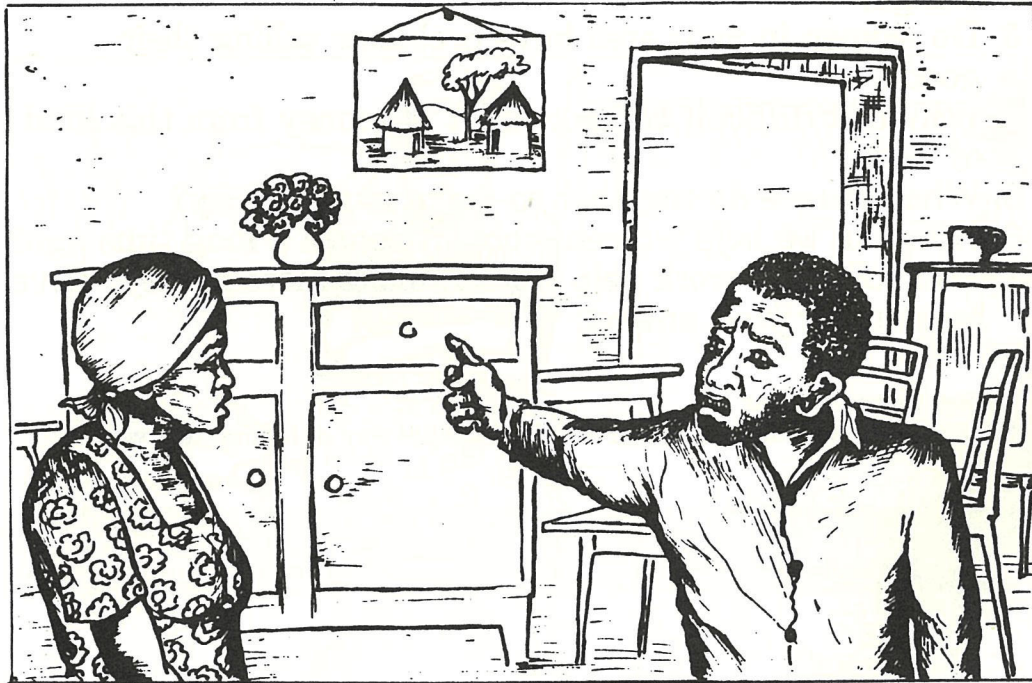
"Mai" in this story means mother which is a polite way of talking to a woman.

When women want to go out to work, sometimes their husbands will not let them. They do not want their wives to be independent.

The next story from Zimbabwe shows this problem.

It includes a scene to act and questions for discussion.

From: Women's Problems, Zimbabwe Publishing House



Story to Act

Mai Mubaiwa asks her husband if she can get a part-time job on a cotton farm. VaMubaiwa refuses. He says a woman's job is to look after her family, her home and her fields, as Zimbabwean women have always done. He is against these modern cheeky women who want to do things away from home. He says he is earning enough for the family, and Mai Mubaiwa must continue to look after the family and her fields.

Discuss Together

1. What did you see happening in this play?
2. Why did VaMubaiwa refuse to allow his wife to work?
3. Are there some women in your area who do not have permission to work or to do things outside the home?
4. What does your tradition say about a woman's place in society?
5. Is this tradition still acceptable to modern women in the 1980s?
6. Is it fair for men to refuse their wives the chance to work?
7. How can we together help women to do more things outside the home?

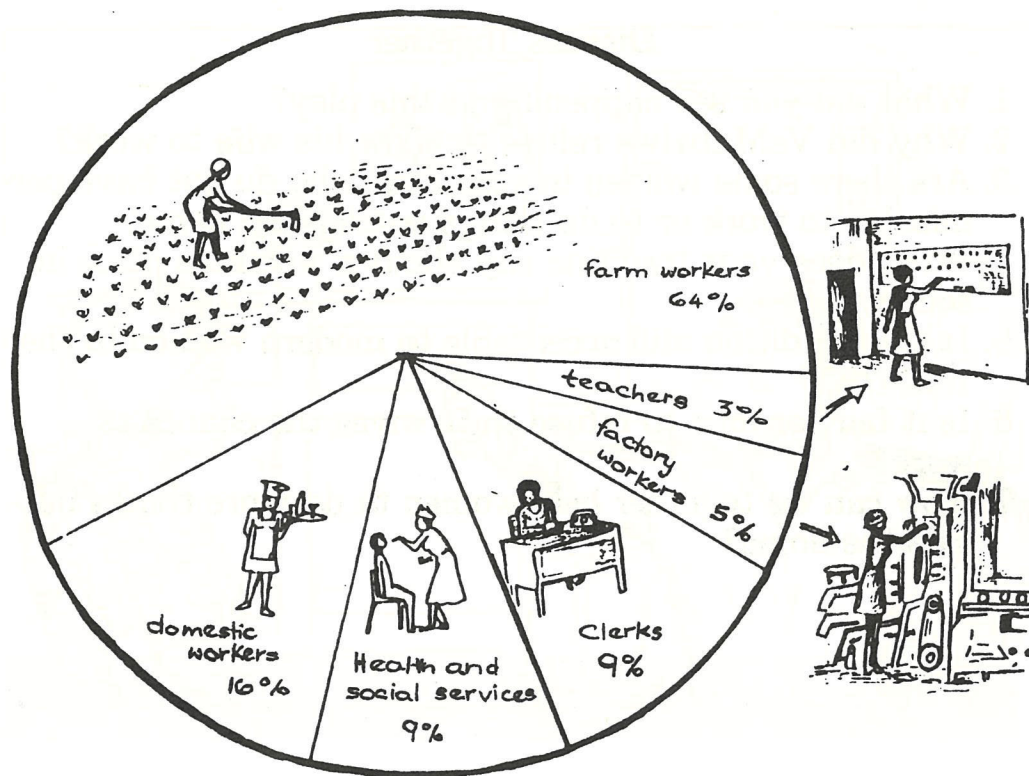
When women are not stopped from working by their husbands, they are still not free to choose a job that interests them. There are many reasons why they have to take jobs with low pay and poor working conditions.

The next story from Zimbabwe shows this problem.

Women in Zimbabwe act out the scene and discuss the questions.

The graph shows the kind of work women in Zimbabwe do.

From: Women's Problems, Zimbabwe Publishing House.



Story to Act

Mai Mubaiwa and Chipo think of looking for jobs. They really need more money and perhaps Chipo* could save some money for secondary school. But in the rural areas it's hard to find jobs. The only jobs they could get would be as domestic workers or farm workers, and they would have to work very long hours for low pay. They have heard that some women are earning less than \$50 a month. Also Mai Mubaiwa is so busy with her housework and fields that she doesn't have time for a full-time job. She and Chipo decide to do part-time cotton picking.

Discuss Together

1. What did you see happening in the play?
2. Why did Mai Mubaiwa and Chipo not accept the jobs they could get?
3. What work do most men do in your area?
4. What work do most women do in your area?
5. Do they earn the same money for the same jobs?
6. Are there women in your area earning less than \$50? If so, what can they do about it?
7. Why is it difficult for most rural women to get good jobs?
8. How can our daughters get better jobs?

*Chipo is Mai Mubaiwa's daughter.

In Canada many women do not have the qualifications that employers require. If they do find work it is often at minimum wage. Even women with good qualifications may have difficulty finding jobs.

This story about unemployment is from England.

From: *I Want To Write It Down*, Peckham Publishing Project, England

Unemployment

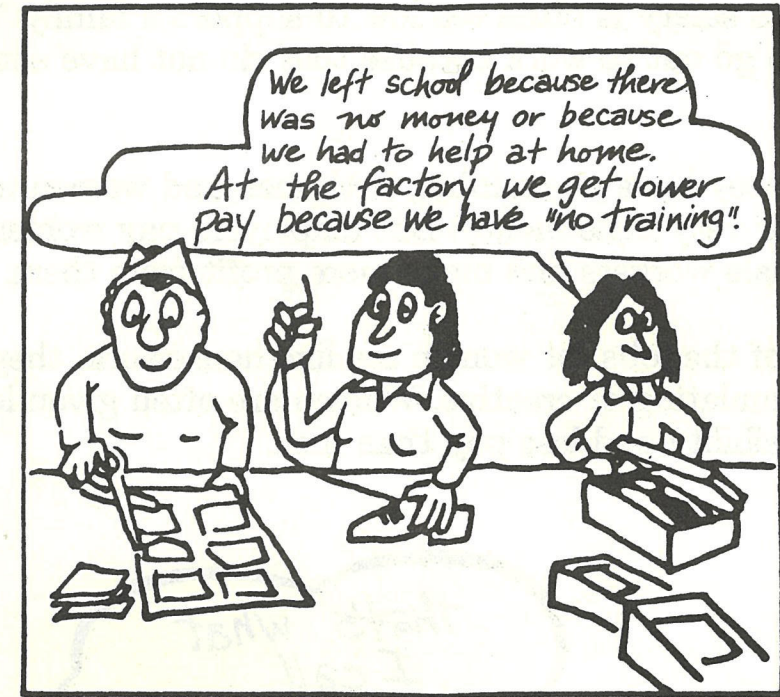
Since I left school five months ago I've never had a job for longer than a few months. At one job I turned men's ties inside out. I was pregnant at the time and so I had to work sitting down. When the boss came round he said, "You can't sit down, you're no different from anyone else," and I got the sack.

Another job was too far away. I couldn't manage the travelling. A third job was in a laundry but the working conditions were so bad and the work so back-breaking, I had to leave after three months. I've gone for other jobs, but they all ask me about qualifications and I haven't got any. A few weeks ago I went for an interview for a catering job. They said I was suitable and that I would probably get the job but I never heard any more. When I phoned up they said the post was filled. Sometimes I feel like giving up altogether.

Women often find it harder than men to get paid work. When they do find work their pay and conditions are often worse too.

Women from Bolivia talk about this.

From: Women Have a Way, Gregoria Apaza Women's Centre, Bolivia



A man's salary is often too low to support a family. Women have to go out to work because they do not have enough money.

When they have no training, both men and women work hard for very little money. But employers pay women less than male workers and make more profit from them.

Many of the jobs for women are like housework, they are not stimulating or creative. Women are often given less responsibility and less pay than men.





THANK YOU

Thank you to the many Third World groups who sent us material to use in the kit. Thanks also to the Writer's Voice group and Sally McBeth at East End Literacy; to learners, tutors and students at Parkdale Project Read and ALFA Centre; to English as a Second Language teachers: Pramila Aggarwal, Gay Bell, Nomi Wall, Brenda Duncombe and Maureen Hynes; and shelter worker, Susan Goodfellow, who all gave us feedback on the kit and helped us to improve it.

We would also like to thank CIDA, Public Participation Program for financial support.

ABOUT US

The Participatory Research Group (PRG) is a collective of activists, educators and researchers working for social change. Since 1976 we have produced a range of materials, including booklets, bibliographies and slide shows. We also produce a bi-annual newsletter, organize workshops and conferences and have a resource centre for public use. We work with literacy, women's and community groups, labour and native people.

The International Council for Adult Education, Women's Program is presently coordinated from the office of the Participatory Research Group, in consultation with representatives from various regions.

The Women's Program works with individuals and groups in different regions of the world who are exploring and developing popular forms of education which reflect and address women's issues. Our aim is to contribute to the development of a feminist popular education that makes connections between broad social struggles, and the personal issues and oppression women face daily.

Published by: The Participatory Research Group/ICAE Women's Program
229 College Street, #309
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5T 1R4
(416) 977-8118

ISBN: 0-920907-16-4
