



Get the Facts to Get Heard

How to use statistics in your workshop

Presenting statistics at the start of your Get Heard workshop is a good way to start a discussion and to make sure that everyone in the group has the same basic information.

Where to get statistics

The easiest way to find statistics is to search in a local library or on the internet – but you have to be sure that the information you get is reliable (especially on the internet) and is not deliberately biased, and is produced by an independent organisation. These are some statistics that other Get Heard workshops have used:

How the picture has changed over the last few years

The 2004 *Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion Report* by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and New Policy Institute (NPI) looked specifically at how poverty had changed since 1997, according to a number of different measures, and concluded:

- Poverty in Britain is continuing to decline. But while fewer families and pensioners are living on low incomes, the number of childless working-age adults below the poverty line has increased.
- Between 1997 and 2003, the number of children living in poor households fell over the same period from 4.3 million to 3.6 million.
- The number of pensioners in poverty stood at 2.2 million in 2002/3 – a fall of 500,000 since 1996/7.

- However, the number of working-age adults without dependent children living in households below the poverty line increased 300,000 from 3.6 million in 1996/7 to 3.9 million in 2003/3. Income Support for childless adults below retirement age has only risen in line with prices for the past decade, and fallen increasingly far behind earnings. By contrast, Income Support has increased by a third in real terms for couples with two children since 1998, and a quarter for couples with one child.
- In 2002/03, 12.4 million people were living on incomes below the level of Income Support. This number has dropped by 1½ million since 1996/97.
- In 2002/03, there were 8 million people living on incomes less than 60% of 1996/97 median [average] income. This represents a drop of 6 million since 1996/97.

The report covers the whole of the UK. NPI also publishes a number of other reports on poverty and social exclusion in regions of the UK. You can download the accessible summary, a press release and the full report from: www.poverty.org.uk, or telephone: 020 7721 8421 to order a printed version.

Children's experience of poverty

The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) produces a summary each year of the annual UK survey by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) of "Households of Below Average Income" (HBAI). These are some of the latest results:





- Child poverty grew very rapidly in the 1980s, more slowly in the 1990s and has since begun to fall: In 2003/04

3.5 million children were poor [living in low income households]; since 1996/97 the number of children who were poor has fallen from 4.2 million to 3.5 million - 700,000 fewer children in poverty; between 2002/03 and 2003/04 the number of children in poverty fell by 100,000.

- 77% of children in households with no adult in work are poor compared to 10% of children in households with all adults in employment.
- Of children who were poor in 2003/04: 42% lived in lone parent households and 58% lived in a couple household; 48% lived in workless households and 52% lived in families with one or more parent in paid work; 37% lived in owner-occupied accommodation and 47% lived in social housing; 68% lived in households with no savings and 89% lived in households reporting less than £3,000 savings; 44% lived in households where the youngest child was under 5 years of age.

You can download this and other information from their website: www.cpag.org.uk - look in the "About Us" and the "Information and Resources" sections, or telephone 020 7837 7979. Download the full HBAI report from: www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai/hbai2004/contents.asp.

- In the UK, the rate of persistence of poverty for children (how long they stay poor) is quite high – research published in 2000 showed that 10% of children in the UK stayed poor for 5 years in a row. The same study found that in Germany the rate was about 2%.

From UNICEF Innocenti Working Paper No. 78, quoted in PRUS Notes from

Poverty Research Unit Sussex University. Download from <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/PRU/notes1.pdf>.

Growing up and growing old poor

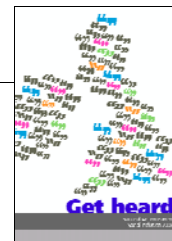
Research by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) found that there were a number of factors supporting intergenerational poverty – i.e. there are lots of reasons why children from poor families grow up to be poor themselves. For example:

- growing up poor reduces young men's chances of achieving A-level or higher qualifications
- people who had lived in poor households as children leave home earlier than those who grew up in better off households – these adults are then more likely to form new households, and start families, younger
- where a mother has had higher education, her daughter is less likely to have children herself before she is 21.
- From DWP Research Report No.158. Download from: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/158summ.asp>.

Black and ethnic minority communities in poverty

A survey by the government's Office for National Statistics (ONS) in 2002 found that minority ethnic groups have lower levels of household income than the white population, and that people from minority ethnic groups were more likely than white people to live in low-income households. The survey found that:

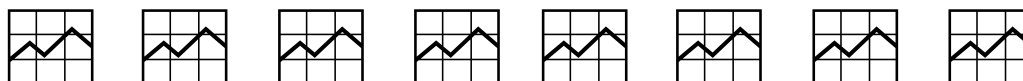
- Almost 60% of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis live in low-income



households (calculated before costs were deducted from total income).

- 49% of Black non-Caribbean households lived on low incomes (as calculated after costs were deducted from total income).
- Benefits made up 19% of total household income for Pakistani and Bangladeshi households; wages and salaries made up only around 36% of these households' total income (the figure was around two-thirds for other ethnic groups).
- Benefits were also a considerable source of income for Black households, amounting to 15% of total household income.

You can find more information about this survey and these figures from the ONS website <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>, and download the publication at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/social_focus_in_brief/ethnicity/ethnicity.pdf.



How to present statistics

Statistics are famous for being very hard to present in a way that makes them interesting. So here are three ideas for ways to present statistics. Remember that this is not the most important part of the workshop so you don't want to spend too long on it.



Stick It To 'Em:

Write the statistics you choose on a big sheet of paper and stick it to the wall. Read them out then go round the group and ask people if they are surprised by any of the statistics and if they agree with them.

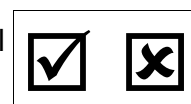


Pin Up Statistics:

Pick a range of statistics about different groups of people and different issues and find a picture to go with each one. Before the workshop, write each statistic on a slip of paper and stick the pictures on the wall. When everyone has arrived, give each person a statistic and ask them to stick it onto the picture that they think it goes with. Have a quick discussion about whether participants agree with each others' choices.


True or False:

Write a mix of facts and made up statistics on a large sheet of paper and as you read each one out, ask the group to show by putting their hands up how many think the statistic is true or false. Write down the number who think it's true and the number who think it's false next to each statistic. At the end reveal which ones are true facts and which are made up – and discuss how surprised the group is about each one!



For more information, contact: Clare Cochrane, Get Heard Coordinator

 48 Addington Square, London SE5 7LB

 020 7252 7355

 cocchrane@oxfam.org.uk