



women's

RESOURCE & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Supporting Women's Groups and Networks Across Northern Ireland

Newsletter ~ July 2021

Feminist Recovery Plan Relaunched with New Evidence

"One year on from when the Feminist Recovery Plan was originally published, with many recommendations outstanding, the Women's Policy Group have decided to re-launch the plan, with updated data, evidence and recommendations, putting women's voices at its core."



In the past year, since the Feminist Recovery Plan (FRP) was initially launched, further evidence has highlighted what we have been stating from the beginning of COVID-19 - that **women have been worst impacted by the pandemic**. As we finally move towards a recovery from this pandemic, we need to reiterate our recommendations to take a gender-sensitive response.

This recovery plan will be based on all of the issues impacting women and specific policy recommendations will be made to both the Northern Ireland Assembly on devolved matters and to the UK Government on UK-wide issues. **Over the past year, we have made bespoke summary reports for each level of Government as well as departmental reports and key briefings.**

It is essential that all levels of government representing Northern Ireland are fully aware of the unique challenges in Northern Ireland; particularly as the UK government is the duty bearer for human rights in NI. **Women in Northern Ireland have suffered immensely due to a decade of Austerity, and over a year of the ongoing pandemic, and any COVID-19 recovery cannot come to the detriment of women's equality and economic wellbeing.**

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented challenge across the UK. It has put in sharp focus the value and importance of care work, paid and unpaid, and highlighted the essential nature of often precarious and almost always low paid retail work. Women undertake the majority of this work, and women will bear a particular brunt of this crisis; economically, socially and in terms of health. The WPG is calling on decision makers across the UK to take action to ensure a gender-sensitive crisis response as we transition from crisis response to recovery

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A Visible Force for Change



@WRDA_team



@WomensResourceandDevelopmentAgency



A Visible Force for Change



Member Profile

GLOW

(Giving Life Opportunities to Women)



What is the history of GLOW and where is it based?

Located on the street that connects the divided communities of the Falls and the Shankill, GLOW (Giving Life Opportunities to Women) was established in 2011 through a desire to help local women and girls who were suffering from a range of mental health issues stemming from trauma and/or social issues such as unemployment, low income and isolation. Chara Clarke, the visionary behind the organisation, identified an opportunity to help through the creation of personal development programmes that would encourage and guide participants in addressing mental health issues as well as setting realistic life goals that will provide a sense of purpose and fulfilment.

What does the group do and how have you adapted during Covid 19?

There are four core programmes which have been specially tailored to suit specific age groups:

- The Real Me (18+)
- LILY (10 – 13)
- Fearless & Female (14 – 17)
- GLOW Academy (18+)

All programmes are executed with the aim of achieving five outcomes for participants:

- 1.Increased Confidence & Self Esteem
- 2.Discovery of Purpose & Identity
- 3.Learn & Nurture Practical & Essential Life Skills
- 4.Guide you to living a lifestyle of positive mental health
- 5.Build Positive & Lasting Friendships

In addition to the programmes, GLOW also facilitate a Friday morning women's drop as well as evening youth sessions for girls. These sessions provide a safe outlet for women and girls to develop connections and friendships made from participating in the programmes.

In January 2019, Belfast charity GLOW received funding from the National Lottery that would enable them to establish You GLOW Girl, a social enterprise selling clothing, which would generate further funding to be invested back into the charity and the mental health programmes being delivered to women and young girls.

COVID-19 and lockdown measures have had (and continue to have) a major impact on GLOW as a charity.

Not only has the demand for our services increased, the stay at home message and social distancing measures meant our in house sessions had to move to an online capacity which can be off putting for those who do not feel confident using digital applications such as Zoom. The content within the programmes was also amended to facilitate Zoom sessions as practical activities and outdoor excursions were suspended.

Fundraising events had come to a halt too so we have had to come up with alternative ways to raise money as well as placing a heavier focus on the development of the social enterprise .

What do you think the three biggest issues facing women in your community are?

- 1.Unemployment
- 2.Anxiety and Depression
- 3.Low Confidence and Self-Esteem

How do you join the group?

Applications for our programmes are currently open via our website www.glowni.com. Simply go to the programme you are interested in and register your details on the form at the bottom of the page. A project worker will then be in touch to discuss available options.

Do you have an online presence?

You can keep up to date with the charity on the following channels:

Instagram: @glow_ni
Facebook: @glowni
Twitter: @Glow_NI

Feminist Recovery Plan Relaunched with New Evidence

The ongoing crisis affects men and women differently, and in many cases deepens the inequalities women experience on an everyday basis. These inequalities, along with key solutions, were highlighted in a Women's Manifesto issued by the WPG in preparation for the general election in December 2019. These solutions remain central for a long-term response, but the developing crisis has put a number of issues in sharp focus for urgent emergency action.

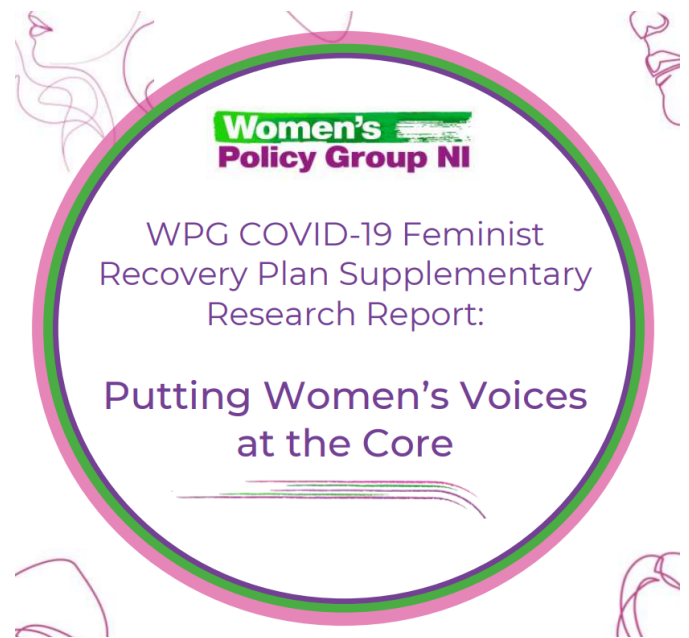
Not only does this crisis have a disproportionate impact on women, but that impact is worsened for women from particular backgrounds: for instance, black and minority ethnic women, disabled women, women with caring responsibilities, and LGBTQI+ women. The emergency action required, and any recovery programme put in place, must meaningfully take into consideration the institutionalised inequalities that exist within Northern Ireland, and must co-develop a roadmap forward with the communities affected.

Key findings from the new primary research include:

- **56.7% of respondents said Covid-19 had a financial impact on them**
- **34.6% reported struggling to pay bills**
- **31.5% reported that their Work has been affected by childcare responsibilities**
- **Just 15.1% of carers have been able to access Carers' Allowance.**
- **A striking 81.1% of carers said their caring responsibilities increased during the pandemic**
- **65.8% of rural women stated that their internet connection was not stable**
- **82.1% of respondents said that their mental health had declined during the pandemic**
- **57.9% of respondents said that their physical health had declined during the pandemic**
- **58.4% of all respondents had been victims of domestic abuse, stalking harassment, hate crime or assault**
- **21.2% had been targeted by online abuse**
- **71.3% of respondents supported a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland**
- **92.3% felt that their Relationship and Sexuality Education was inadequate.**
- **55.1% of respondents were concerned about the impact of Brexit on women's rights in Northern Ireland**

You can read the full relaunched plan [here](#) .

Putting Women's Voice at the Core - New Evidence



As part of the development of the relaunched Feminist Recovery Plan the Women's Policy Group produced a substantial body of primary research on the impact of the pandemic on women across Northern Ireland.

This valuable new research has been collated into a separate report, [WPG COVID-19 Feminist Recovery Plan Supplementary Research Report: Putting Women's Voices at the Core.](#)

The findings from this research paint a stark picture of women's experiences in Northern Ireland relating to health, employment, poverty, disability, racism, care work, violence against women and more

This primary research, alongside the full Women's Policy Group (WPG) COVID-19 Feminist Recovery Plan, highlights and reiterates the point that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on women and has exacerbated pre-existing inequalities faced by women across Northern Ireland.

It is clear from the case studies contained in the report how imperative it is that we take a feminist approach to pandemic recovery planning and urgently address the economic, health, social justice and cultural issues that women in Northern Ireland are experiencing.

Upcoming Events and Groups




Feminist Responses to Climate Change Discussion Group

Starting September 2021
email info@wrda.net to register your interest

This new reading and discussion group will start on Wednesday 22nd September 7-8pm and will run for 6 sessions. The topics we will cover include looking at the climate crisis as a type of gender based violence and exploring the patriarchal roots of climate change as well as looking at what our response should be as feminists.

1. **Responding to the Climate Crisis as a form of Gender Based Violence**
2. **Individual versus Collective Responses**
3. **The Reproductive Rights Response**
4. **The Food Sovereignty Response**
5. **The Consumer and Technology Response**
6. **What Can We Do? Panel Discussion**

This group is open to all women (cis and trans) and non-binary people. You can sign up by emailing Megan on info@wrda.net.

HELP SHAPE A UK FEMINIST GREEN NEW DEAL!

FEMINIST GREEN NEW DEAL WORKSHOP



**9TH SEPT
7PM - 9PM**

Join this **FREE** participatory online workshop to ensure women, people of colour and marginalised voices are included in UK climate policy and Covid-19 green recovery plan.

WOMEN AND PEOPLE OF COLOUR ARE OFTEN THE MOST AFFECTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE, BUT ARE THE LAST TO BE CONSULTED. WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR IDEAS AND CONCERNS TO HELP CREATE A FEMINIST GREEN NEW DEAL MANIFESTO, WHICH WILL BE LAUNCHED AT THE COP26 GLASGOW CLIMATE TALKS.

ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS

- Share your thoughts, ideas and concerns
- Learn about the Feminist Green New Deal
- Opportunity to feature in a Climate Sisters' film
- Opportunity to attend COP26 Glasgow Climate Talks.
- Receive a certificate of attendance

WORKSHOPS LAST 2 HOURS AND ARE FACILITATED BY ROSHINI THAMOTHERAM, CAMPAIGNS PROJECT COORDINATOR

Workshops will be interactive and lively with videos, activities and breakout sessions, allowing space and time to share your ideas, concerns and experiences.

BOOK:
<https://bit.ly/FEMGNDWORKSHOP>

Attendance is FREE plus you will receive 1 year membership to Wen and an entry into a draw to win an eco-friendly prize.

Part of the Feminist Green New Deal Project in partnership with

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women's RESOURCE & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Supporting Women's Groups and Tackling Inequality

Wen.