

WHAT SHE MAKES

IS KEEPING HER IN POVERTY



Photo: GMB Akash/Panos/OxfamAUS

**GEOGRAPHY
TEACHER NOTES
YEAR 7–8**

AN EDUCATION RESOURCE FOR OXFAM AUSTRALIA



OXFAM
Australia

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What She Makes: Education Resource has been created in collaboration with Social Education Victoria (SEV) and the Geography Teachers Association of Victoria (GTAV) and Oxfam Australia. It has been developed to support the delivery of a flexible and engaging curriculum to support the What She Makes labour rights campaign, to increase intercultural understanding and awareness of the lives of garment workers in Bangladesh and an intensive and thorough examination of the determinants of living wage equity. This resource aims to inspire young Australians to take action against popular brands to pay a living wage to the women who make our clothes.

What She Makes: Education Resource has been mapped to support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Available online for free download, the resource includes:

- Specific mapping to the Australian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship Levels 7–10, Geography Year 10: Geographical Knowledge and Understanding required by Unit 2: Geographies of human wellbeing, and Year 7 Place and Liveability and Year 8 Changing Nations;
- Background notes for teachers to ensure teacher knowledge of context whilst supporting teacher professional judgment within the local context;
- Tablet- and print-friendly Student Activity worksheets;
- Detailed Lesson Plans with support for assessment tasks decisions by the teacher. What She Makes helps students explore the barriers facing garment workers seeking a living wage, how wellbeing is affected by poverty, and how students can get involved to pressure brands to address these issues.

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Disclaimer: Reference has been made to the Australian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship and Geography. Teachers should also refer to state jurisdiction for local curriculum context. This resource was originally published in October 2018. All information and links correct at the time of publishing.

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What She Makes – the campaign

An educational resource for Oxfam Australia.

These resource suggestions can be used in the Year 7 or Year 8 geography classroom.

What She Makes campaign and associated resources best fits the content descriptors Year 8 Changing Nations (ACHGK054) and Year 7 Place and Liveability (ACHGK043) from the Australian Curriculum.

This resource discusses how to incorporate the What She Makes resource material into your Year 7 or Year 8 classroom. The material is self-contained or can be complimented by other online resources. Making the material geographical allows for inquiry, exploration, comparison and discussion of the issues that relate to the content – the lives of garment workers in developing Asian nations.

To complete these tasks you need to access the online resource *What She Makes: power and poverty in the fashion Industry*.
<http://whatshemakes.oxfam.org.au/resources/>

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Year 8 – Changing nations

Curriculum content descriptions

Causes and consequences of urbanisation, drawing on a study from Indonesia or another country of the Asia region (ACHGK054)

Elaborations

- Discussing urbanisation as a shift in where, how and why people live where they do
- Exploring the connections between urbanisation and economic and social opportunities
- Examining how urbanisation can positively or negatively affect environmental quality (for example, carbon emissions and water consumption)

The garment workers in Bangladesh shown in the What She Makes resource provide examples of the consequences of urbanisation for “another country of the Asia region”.

Background

One of the reasons for urbanisation in Bangladesh is the availability of jobs in factories, including clothing manufacture. Both men and women are drawn to higher-paying jobs, better health and educational facilities and a lifestyle that they perceive will be better than the mostly agricultural jobs available to them in the rural areas where they were raised. These economic and social opportunities are the pull factors that connect people to a possible better life in urban areas or cities.

Work in factories, such as the global textile industry, has not just resulted in social and economic opportunities for the workforce, but has also created environmental problems. In the countries where these new factories are located, scarce water and electricity resources are guaranteed to the factories and the local residential communities are left with only short hours of supply of both electricity and water to their homes. The waste generated by the manufacturing processes is often poorly disposed of. Housing for the workers is often poorly planned and can result in unsanitary slums and shanty settlements on the edges of urban regions.

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ACTIVITY 1

Discuss the above ideas with students and view the short clip below to explain the environmental impacts of the garment and textiles industry in Bangladesh.

The cost of Dhaka's booming textile industry

<http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/1534718/the-cost-of-dhaka-s-boom>

Students to take notes while watching the clip.

Background

The cheap clothing provided to the world's wealthiest countries has become disposable. Fashion and style change quickly and outfits "need" to be replaced by this season's latest colours and designs. Disposal of clothing waste is now a problem. Not only is the water and energy used to create the clothing lost, but where does this clothing end up? Maybe landfill? In fact, a lot of this clothing is packed into shipping containers and sold back into the clothing markets of Asia and Africa for local consumption, often destroying local or traditional clothing industries.

How could the manufacture of cheap clothing in Bangladesh be used to explain the causes and consequences of urbanisation?

The causes of urbanisation

Briefly explain to students the push and pull factors that have resulted in the rapid growth of urban regions in Asia. The pull factors are the dreams, hopes and aspirations of such a move, like better lifestyle, favourite music and entertainment venues, or better weather. The push factors are that it is the only place where you could get specific medical or educational services if your parents kicked you out of home or there is no work in your local area. This can be partially answered by asking your students to list why they may wish to move to Sydney, New York, London or Melbourne or be forced to make that move. Use the table below for students to record the factors.

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ACTIVITY

2

Students to list some push and pull factors for young Australians moving from regional or rural areas to cities, or from smaller to larger cities in the table below.

Push factors	Pull factors

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The consequences of urbanisation

A day in the life of a minimum wage earner in Bangladesh

www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QSC_9c6qCQ

Students to watch the above film clip, which explains what life is like for a garment worker who lives in Dhaka, and then fill in the questions below.



1. Has she always lived in Dhaka?

2. What does she say are the good things about living and working in Dhaka?

3. What does she say are the not-so-good things about living and working in Dhaka?

4. Does she plan to stay in Dhaka forever?

5. Briefly describe her daily life.

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ACTIVITY 4

Watch the clip below and then work in pairs to answer the following questions.

What She Makes: www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfVWt3Z1d3g

This clip describes the life of three garment workers in Bangladesh: Anju, Florida and Fatima.

1. What is the evidence that their work does not provide them with a living wage?

2. Have each of these women come to Dhaka to work by choice? What are their push or pull factors?

3. Describe their daily lives.

4. Describe their homes.

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ACTIVITY 5

Comparing quality of life

Use the Gapminder website to compare the lives of a couple living in an urban environment with a family who live in a rural environment.

- Rickshaw driver with a wife who works in the garment industry. Living in Dhaka. Income \$175.
www.gapminder.org/dollar-street/family?place=56057b4f6872a18820d19575&zoom=3
 - Extended family of farmers living in the rural district near Dhaka. Income \$58.
www.gapminder.org/dollar-street/family?place=56056a7fcd8f1e9a207bb4f7&zoom=3
- a. Compare these two families. Does there seem to be much difference between their quality of life? Use examples like clothing, food, shampoo and what their house is made of. Add more factors to compare in the table below.

Examples	Urban family	Farming family
Food		
Transport		
Building materials		

- b. The difference in their incomes is huge, but what do you think must cost more each week if you live in the city?

- c. From your investigation, do you think the consequences of urbanisation in Asia are positive or negative?

- d. Why might the growth of cities continue? The aspirational home of the rickshaw driver and his wife may give you your answer.

Follow-up

To relate this content to your students' life experience, it is worth considering their personal involvement in the global clothing trade.

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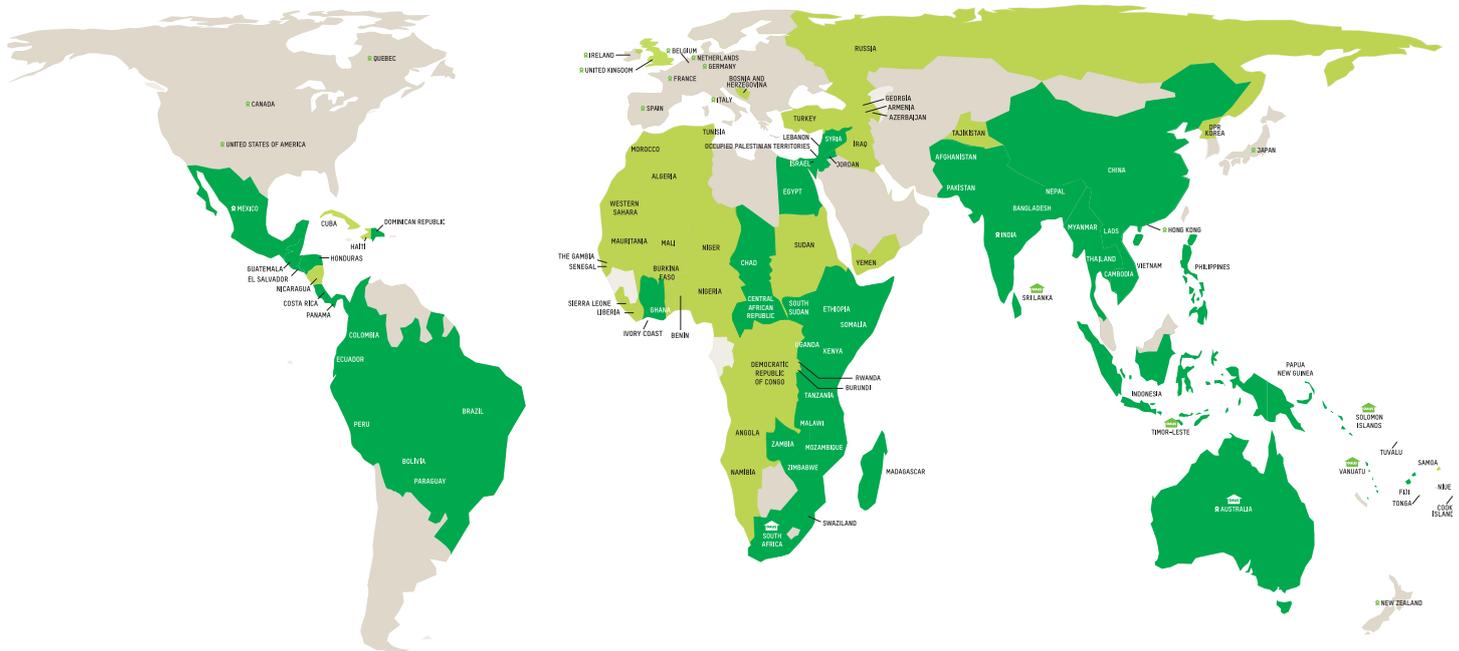
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ACTIVITY

6

What She Makes

Students to list the manufacturing country of origin of their wardrobe as a homework task to allow them to see just where the clothes they wear come from. This could be represented as a map or graph, which would inject a spatial skill into your use of What She Makes.



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Australia imports more than 96% of all garments sold in our retail shops. Globally, 80% of garment workers are young women aged between 18 and 25 years. Most textile and clothing industries have closed down in Australia and other high-wage countries. Consequently, production has moved to developing countries in Asia, such as Bangladesh.

Disposable, low priced fashion, has become the norm in our shops as cheap-priced imports flood local retail outlets. The low prices are due to the low wages and lower costs of offshore production. Local manufacturers have been unable to compete with the cheap imports. As consumers, we've become used to paying \$10 for a t-shirt or a few dollars each for bras and briefs.

As you can see in the graph below, on average, only a very small percentage of the price we pay for each garment actually goes to the person who made it.

AVERAGE COST STRUCTURE OF AUSTRALIAN CLOTHING PRICES



Note: *GST is 9% because the 10% GST is added to the pre-GST cost of an item. This means, as part of the total retail price of an item, GST usually makes up 9%.
Source: Deloitte Access Economics for Oxfam Australia, *A Living Wage in Australia's Clothing Supply Chain*.

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ACTIVITY

7

Bring in to class a small selection of clothing manufactured in Asia. Label each piece with its purchase cost.

Ask students to calculate the wages paid to the workers who manufactured this clothing. Discuss the possible difficulty of the construction or time taken to create these items of clothing. Discuss how long the clothes might last in their wardrobes and what they might do with them next year?

Together with the international union movement and many other International Government and non-government organisations (NGOs), Oxfam Australia has become heavily involved in campaigns to increase the wages of the poorly paid women who work in the global textile industries. When workers do not earn a living wage, they become trapped in a cycle of poverty which is hard to escape.

Much emphasis has been placed on the specific human wellbeing issues encountered by the textile workers of Bangladesh, particularly after the disastrous factory fire of 2013. Interestingly though, the large international textile factories have now begun to move to even cheaper-waged locations in Africa, such as Ethiopia.

Photo: GMB Akash/Panos/OxfamAUS

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ACTIVITY 8

What could your class or group do to advertise the issues identified in the What She Makes campaign? Discuss issues like cheap or disposable clothing, the poor wages paid to create our cheap clothing, and the poverty living conditions created by the underpayment of garment workers.

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Yr 7 Place and liveability

Curriculum content descriptions

Factors that influence the decisions people make about where to live and their perceptions of the liveability of places (ACHGK043)

Elaborations

- Investigating their and others' interpretations of the concept of liveability and choices about where to live (for example, connections to cultural groups, adolescent "bright lights" attraction, retiree tree change and families with children locating near schools, and other facilities).
- Discussing the concept of liveability and the ways it is measured and comparing objective measures, such as transportation infrastructure with subjective measures such as peoples perceptions.

Using the resources identified within the Year 8 classroom ideas above, especially the Gapminder website, a class can look at the liveability within Bangladesh of people in rural and urban places. The same website allow students to compare the life of people in Bangladesh with people living in another country.

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Liveability and reflection

ACTIVITY 9

The stories of Anju, Florida and Fatima are good case studies of liveability in poorer Asian countries that can easily be compared with liveability in the United States of America, Sweden or the United Kingdom, using the Gapminder website.

www.gapminder.org/dollar-street/matrix

Students to compare housing, transport, food and furniture between different countries and people who have different incomes.

Ask your students to explain how the concept of livability may vary depending on where people live.

Country	Housing	Transport	Food	Furniture	(Optional other factor)	(Optional other factor)

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ACTIVITY 10

Students create posters of aspirational or actual liveability in one of the countries they investigated.

Livability themes students could focus on:

- Social cohesion
- Environmentally friendly
- Inhabitants involved in city initiatives
- A feeling of “this is my city”
- Everyone is included — people with low incomes, people with disabilities and elders — as part of the social fabric of the city.