

Key Idea 2 Poverty and inequality are created and addressed in many different ways.

Poverty arises from a variety of factors including the unequal distribution of wealth and resources. People may be poor because they have limited access to resources, unequal status, little power or control over their lives, or are vulnerable. The causes of poverty should be investigated through case studies of two contrasting named countries in which there is inequality between social groups.

Examples:

Israel: Employment issues for Arab Women

Context

In 2005, the Israeli national government and private sector contractors launched a job placement programme for 14,000 poverty-stricken unemployed households among Arab and Jewish minority communities. The aim of the programme, The Wisconsin Plan, was to help income support-dependent, long-term jobless individuals, to break out of the cycle of unemployment and poverty.

The problems with the system

Wisconsin participants were interviewed and carried out group work with Laborers' Voice in order to identify the obstacles Arab women face under the Wisconsin system. They obstacles were listed as follows:

- Forced to work without child care support
- Chronically low level of education and professional skills
- Lack of work experience
- Bad command of the Hebrew language
- Limited mobility due to insufficient public transport network
- Absence of industrial zones in Arab communities
- Lack of day care centres
- No demand for female Arab workers
- Low public standing

A minor victory

Oxfam (NGO) – caused part of this unfair programme to stop. They created an awareness internationally and put pressure on the Israeli government. The forced volunteer programme which forced women to work for benefits in Israel in exchange for benefits in particular came to an end in January 2006.

Pay in South Africa Oct 31st 2012

White South Africans still take home six times more pay than their black counterparts, 18 years after the end of apartheid and despite the incomes of black households surging 169 per cent in the past decade, the country's latest census has disclosed.

The survey, the first in 10 years, showed that despite a fast-growing black middle class boosted by employment laws designed to redress historic imbalances, there are still major disparities between the overall education and income levels of South Africa's different races.

South African President Jacob Zuma hailed the results as "the tale of our national pride," pointing to the halving of numbers of those living without basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity across the country since 2001.