

- **Struggling to cope on a low income or unable to work?**
- **Worried about people you advise being pushed into poverty?**
- **Feeling that your voice is being ignored?**
- **Frustrated at dealing with the system?**

**If this is you or someone you know or advise,
please tell us about your experiences!**

AdviceUK is working with Oxfam's UK Poverty Programme (<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/ukpoverty/>) to find out what the current changes to welfare benefits and social housing mean to people who are living on a low income, including people who are receiving benefits because they can't work or find work.

To do this, we need evidence from those experiencing these changes first-hand. We're starting to do this by collecting stories as case studies. We're also asking local community-based advisers to pass on their experiences and the stories of their clients.

What we need from you – the basics:

- Name and location of advice service or organisation
- Contact name and address of advice centre worker who we can contact if need be
- A case study of no more than one page, that:
- Either (a) tells the story of a particular individual; or (b) gives information from the advice service or organisation summarising the issue or concern (for example, including the number and type of enquiries they are getting)

And for individual case studies:

- The person's real name - or an alternative, saying that the name has been changed
- Tell us whether the person would be willing to consider telling their story to a journalist (with appropriate support, advice and coaching from Oxfam)
- A clear description of what problem or theme the case study illustrates (such as difficulties in moving from Incapacity Benefit to JSA)
- Describe the change in the person's circumstances, what happened to them, the impact this has had on them (financial, emotional and other impacts)
- Provide direct quotes from the person if possible

And for case studies about the advice centre:

- Clearly indicate time period which the case study covers (eg. last six months)
- Attempt to describe changes in number and type of clients seen
- Attempt to attribute the change to particular factors (eg. economic recession, welfare reform, public sector cuts, government policy)
- Direct quotes from centre workers are also useful

NB: Oxfam would hope to use some of the case studies in upcoming papers or reports in the future. Oxfam would always check back with the advice centre on the use of any case-studies. Oxfam may also try to follow up case studies by suggesting that the centre worker, or individual concerned, could blog about the issue on Oxfam's blog or talk to a journalist.