

Risks of More Focus on Criminal Justice over Economic and Social Justice

- 80% of women are imprisoned for economic related crimes.
- In 2003, welfare rates for single parent families in Canada ranged anywhere from 48% of the poverty line in Alberta to 71% of the poverty line in Newfoundland and Labrador. For single employable people the rates were even lower at 20 % of the poverty line in New Brunswick to 44% of the poverty line in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Lone parent families headed by women have by far the lowest average total income among families in Canada. Their average income of \$34,357 is less than half (43%) the average income of two-parent families with children (\$79,983) and 71% of lone-parent families headed by men.
- Statistics Canada has reported an increase in women lone-parent employment from below 50% in 1976 to 68% in 2004. However, women account for 70% of all part-time employees and two-thirds of employed women are still found within traditionally women-dominated occupations. Women are also more likely to be multiple jobholders, accounting for 55% of multiple jobholders in 2004, rising from 42% in 1987.
- In 2001, the National Council of Welfare stated that 45.4% of children living with single-parent mothers live in poverty compared to 20.6% who live with single-parent fathers.
- Considering the drastic federal cuts in 1995 in social welfare, only three out of every 10 women who lose their jobs today are eligible for benefits.
- The privatization of public services and natural resources further victimizes those most impacted by poverty – most notably women and their children.
- According to an estimate by the United Nations, 70% of the poor populations are women and girls.
- In 2003, the earnings of women who worked full-time for a full year averaged 70.5% of the average earnings of men working full-time for a full year.

- Men receive more income than women from all sources, including wages and salaries, investment, retirement, and other income. For example, women receive on average \$13,873 less than men in wages and salaries, and an average of \$7,463 less in retirement income.
- Three main factors have been identified as an explanation to the lower wage and rates of paid work for women. Discrimination against women in gaining access to paid work and a fair income as well as the sex-role stereotypes on women's involvement in paid work are the more obvious restraints women face toward unequal pay and access to paid work. Thirdly, women's high elasticity of attachment to the labour force renders them susceptible to government policies that foster fiscal incentives to unpaid work and hidden penalties to paid work. These hidden fiscal incentives and penalties can be found in tax laws and other fiscal policies such as welfare rules, pension policies, child-care benefits and unemployment insurance schemes.
- In 2004, women who were unattached or single parents have long had higher poverty rates than men who are unattached or single parents.
- Traditionally, women have higher poverty rates than men. In 2001, the poverty rate for women 18 through 64 was 14.7%, and the comparable rate for men was 12.5%. The poverty rate of women 65 and older was 21.2% and the rate for men was 11.1%. Since the 1980s, this pattern of poverty among women has been longstanding.
- Canadian governments increasing reliance on prudentialism, that is a government-at-a-distance phenomenon found in public policies, renders a shift from a social welfare state to responsabilizing individuals by providing them with the assets needed for self-governance. Although this social policy envisions equal opportunities for all, women have learned that equal opportunities for those in disadvantaged positions do not amount to equality in terms of outcomes.
- The widest gender gap in poverty levels is between senior men and women, with 21% of senior women living in poverty, as opposed to 11% of senior men.
- A primary reason for the persistently lower wages and salaries of Canadian women, and thus for their higher levels of poverty, is that they form by far the majority (70%) of part-time workers. The expectation that women will

quit paid work or work part-time to provide care for children has a direct impact on life-long earnings as well as women's eligibility for government transfer payments such as pensions and unemployment insurance.

- The national average welfare income for single parent families is only 39% of the estimated average income for single parent families in Canada.
- The 2003 Federal Budget provided the Department of National Defense with 1.6 billion in new funding for 2003-2005. At the same time in Canada, 41% of single women, 49% of unattached older women, 43% of Aboriginal women, and 37% of women of colour live in poverty.
- In the 2001 Census, more than 36% of Aboriginal women, compared to 17% of non-Aboriginal women, were living in poverty. The high poverty rate among Aboriginal people is due to a number of factors including the discrimination found in the hiring and employment, earn about one-third less in wages and are less likely to hold down full-time, year-round jobs.
- In 2003, 1.5 million Canadian adult women were living in poverty. Women aged 18 and over accounted for 54% of persons in low income.
- In the 2001 Census, 29% of visible minority women were living in poverty. Among these minority groups, the poverty rate for foreign-born women was 23%, and for immigrated women between 1991 to 2000 was 35%.
- In the 2001 Census, 26% of women with disabilities were living in poverty.

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