

TOWARDS AN ACTION
PLAN FOR
NEW ZEALAND
WOMEN

SHARING YOUR IDEAS

This paper outlines some of the main issues affecting the lives of women and girls. Your feedback will help the government to develop a clearly articulated Action Plan for women in New Zealand and assist us in developing priority areas.

We invite you to have your say. Consultation will be based around this discussion document and involve:

- the Ministry of Women's Affairs working in partnership with the National Council of Women of New Zealand and Māori Women's Welfare League to develop the consultation process
- seeking submissions on the discussion document from December 2002 to mid-March 2003
- working with NGOs to conduct meetings across New Zealand, and focused discussions with target groups such as Māori women, Pacific women, migrant and refugee women, rural women, low income women and women with disabilities. These will be conducted during February and March 2003 and will focus on the questions in the discussion document.

Further details on the location and timing of the regional meetings will be provided on the MWA website – www.mwa.govt.nz.

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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

*“Kimihiā te ara tōtika
hei ōranga mō tō ao”*

*“Seek the right path
to benefit your world”*

The Action Plan for Women is one of the most exciting developments in my portfolio as Minister of Women's Affairs. The idea is to have an integrated approach to all of the issues that affect women's lives. This is what we are now calling a 'whole of government' approach with goals and policy priorities for women. In other words, rather than each different government department or ministry working in isolation, they would join forces and work together on issues that particularly affect women.

The Action Plan will take into consideration the changing economic and social conditions and the diverse lives and aspirations of women.

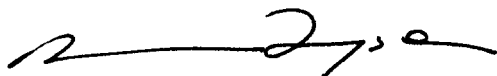
Over the past few decades women have made significant progress. Today, women are participating in many aspects of New Zealand life. However there is still significant inequality between men and women and between different groups of women in some areas such as pay equity and life-time earnings. Women continue to have their unpaid work and voluntary work in the community and home undervalued. They also face difficulties accessing resources and services, and experience significant risks to their independence, security, safety and health.

The purpose of this discussion paper is to seek your thoughts and feedback. It draws together research and previous consultation findings and explores some of the issues facing women today.

Underlying our deliberations we must acknowledge that one size does not fit all. For Māori women, in particular, not only are some of the issues different, but also some of the solutions.

This is your opportunity to tell us your ideas and suggestions. You can respond to this paper, questions have been raised to assist you, or you may wish to participate in one of the public meetings to be held early next year.

I urge you to make sure your voices are heard.



Hon Ruth Dyson

Minister of Women's Affairs

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INTRODUCTION

The government is developing an Action Plan for New Zealand women to set goals and priority actions to improve women's economic status and well-being now and into the future.

With advice initiated by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and others, successive governments have worked on many aspects of the issues affecting women's lives, for example childcare, paid parental leave, cervical screening and property relationships.

Women have made significant progress towards equality over the past few decades, but there is still inequality between women and men, and between different groups of women across a wide range of indicators.

The Action Plan will focus on areas where government can take effective action whilst fostering partnerships between community and non-government organisations (NGOs), local government, the private sector and individuals.

An invitation to share your views

We invite your comment on this discussion document. The document is based on:

- Ministry consultation with, and feedback from, women and women's groups and organisations over the past 16 years
- the Ministry's work with other government departments on policy that affects women, their families and their communities
- consultations for the 5th Report on the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)¹
- consultations with Te Korowai Wahine², established in 1999. This group has advised the Ministry in relation to Māori women for this discussion document.

To put women's issues in perspective, the document also provides some information about New Zealand society and how it is changing.

The issues affecting New Zealand women and girls are grouped around three inter-related themes:

- **Economic sustainability** – including adequacy of income, access to paid employment and education and employment outcomes.
- **Balancing work, family and community** – including caring for children or other dependents and building strong communities.
- **Well-being** – experiencing lifelong good physical and mental health, safety from violence, adequate housing and the special needs of different groups of women.

¹ The articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) are: Article 1: Definition of Discrimination Against Women; Article 2: Anti Discrimination Measures; Article 3: The Development and Advancement of Women; Article 4: Acceleration of Equality between Men and Women; Article 5: Sex Roles and Stereotyping; Article 6: Suppression of the Exploitation of Women; Article 7: Political and Public Life; Article 8: International Representation and Participation; Article 9: Nationality; Article 10: Education; Article 11: Employment; Article 12: Health; Article 13: Economic and Social Life; Article 14: Rural Women; Article 15: Equality Before the Law and in Civil Matters; Article 16: Marriage and Family Life.

² Te Korowai Wahine advises and supports MWA and the Chief Executive in relation to MWA's policy work on Māori women.

Next steps

This discussion document is the first step towards developing an overarching Action Plan for government that will include goals for women and priority actions to achieve these goals. After we have received your feedback, the Ministry will work with other government agencies, whose policies and programmes affect women, to develop this Action Plan.

The focus will be on government action. However while government has a major role to play in building a modern, cohesive and innovative society, a partnership approach is essential and community organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs), local government, the private sector and individuals all have a part to play.

In developing this Action Plan we will take a fresh look at the goals for women and at ways we can improve outcomes for women. It will also take into account how other government strategies, policies and programmes directly or indirectly affect women.

This paper raises some of the issues facing women and girls. We would like to hear your views about life for women and girls in New Zealand and your opinion on how government and the community can best respond. We would also like to hear about your contributions and achievements as well as where you would like improvements.

There are questions at the end of each theme to encourage discussion. Thank you for your input.

BACKGROUND

This section provides a framework so you can put the challenges and issues facing women in context.

This section includes:

- government's vision and goals
- goals for women
- how society is changing
- women's roles in New Zealand – 2002 and beyond
- CEDAW – Women's views. Some of the issues raised by women during the consultation process for the 5th Report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Government's vision and goals

The government has established clear expectations for reducing social inequality, modernising and transforming the economy, and effectively responding to the challenge of globalisation. This includes ensuring that all people are able to develop to their full potential. The government's goals for achieving sustainable development are:

- strengthen national identity and uphold the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
- grow an inclusive, innovative economy for the benefit of all
- maintain trust in government and provide strong social services
- improve New Zealanders' skills
- reduce inequalities in health, education, employment and housing
- protect and enhance our environment.³

Part of this vision is a New Zealand:

- where diversity is valued and reflected in our national identity
- that is a great place to live, learn, work and do business
- that is the birth place of world-changing people and ideas
- that is a place where people invest in the future.⁴

Government has already instigated a number of policies and programmes at different levels that will bring New Zealand closer to achieving the government's overall vision. Some of these policies and programmes affect women. They range from legislative change, for example the Property (Relationships) Amendment Act 2001, to programmes aimed at strengthening families, improving access to education, housing and health services and improving the knowledge base to ensure that government has relevant and up-to-date information on which to base policy development.

³ www.dpmc.govt.nz/publications/key_goals.html

⁴ Growing an Innovative New Zealand, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2001, p 6

GOALS FOR WOMEN

The Ministry of Women's Affairs (the Ministry) currently uses the following goals for women to guide its work:

- equity
- opportunity and choice
- full and active participation
- adequate resources
- no discrimination
- a society that values the contribution of women.

These goals can be described as follows:

Equity: A gender equity approach assumes that women and men, boys and girls should, where possible, have similar access to resources and experience similar outcomes.

Opportunity and Choice: Having opportunity and choice is being able to choose a life path and have the opportunity to pursue it.

Full and Active Participation: The goal of full and active participation aims to ensure that all women are able to participate in society as they choose and are not limited or constrained by discrimination (either direct or indirect), lack of opportunity or lack of adequate support.

Adequate Resources: Resources can include money, adequate time, education, health care, and support. All women should have adequate resources that are not linked to their dependency on another person.

No Discrimination: The right to be free from discrimination is guaranteed through the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993. This incorporates both direct discrimination and discrimination through structures or systems.

For some groups of women, Māori, Pacific peoples, immigrant, women with disabilities for example, the discrimination can be twofold as they may experience discrimination both for being a woman, and for their ethnicity or disability.

Society that Values the Contribution of Women: For women's contribution to society to be truly valued, value and recognition needs to occur at an individual, whānau, community and national level. This needs to incorporate the contribution women make through unpaid work and the value of the paid work women also do.

The Ministry developed these goals in 1988. They reflect key United Nations human rights instruments concerning women such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

These goals relate to and underpin the issues discussed in this paper. A set of goals will assist government to manage and measure its progress towards the achievement of the priority actions identified through consultation with you. As part of our discussions, we would like to obtain a greater understanding of what these goals mean for women's lives and if they still accurately reflect women's aspirations today and into the future.

Questions to consider

- What is your vision for New Zealand women?
- Are the current goals for women still relevant? If yes, why? If no, what goals would you suggest, and why?

HOW SOCIETY IS CHANGING

This section looks at changes in society in general and women's roles in particular. The information presented here is based on snapshots taken at a point in time, and current and future trends. Many issues highlighted in this section are dealt with in greater depth in the sections on: Māori women; economic sustainability; balancing work, family and community; and well-being.

As you read this section, think about what the changes happening in New Zealand society mean for a women's Action Plan that is relevant both now and into the future.

Demographic trends

Current trends suggest that New Zealand in the future will have an ethnically diverse, ageing and geographically mobile population.

Factors influencing our changing population are:

- decline in infant mortality over the same period
- continuing reduction in fertility rates (the number of children a woman has)
- changes in migration flows.

Ethnic diversity

The population is becoming more ethnically diverse. Migration – the inflows and outflows of people – is the most changeable part of population growth. Changes in immigration policy and world economic, safety and security trends affect immigration.

- Immigration is increasing ethnic diversity and immigrants are coming from a widening range of countries.
- In 1986, 1 in 10 children under 5 belonged to at least 2 ethnic groups. In 2001, 1 in 5 children under 5 belonged to at least 2 ethnic groups.
- The number of New Zealanders who identify with the “other” ethnic category has increased by almost 300 percent in the last 10 years.
- Although 80 percent of New Zealanders identify with European ethnicity, this group has grown only slowly over the last decade. Other groups are growing at a much faster rate.

The following table gives some information about the growth of Māori, Pacific peoples and Asian groups⁵.

Population growth⁶

Group	Population growth by 2051	Number of children by 2051	Over 65 years by 2051	Proportion of population by 2051
Māori	Increase by 81%	Increase by 27% - 35% of all children	Increase by 700% - 13% of all Māori	21%
Pacific peoples	Increase by 181%	Increase by 12% - 22% of all children	Increase by 60,000 – 11% all Pacific people	13%
Asian	Increase by 99%	Increase by 81% - 11% of all children	Increase by 22,000 – 7% of all Asian people	9%

Possible impacts of increased ethnic diversity

- More diverse society with ethnic groups having different lifestyles, cultures and ways of participating in society.
- A small proportion of the total population may place different demands on the education system as people need to change skills to remain or become more productive in their working lives.
- Increased need for diverse policy responses.

Ageing population

- At the beginning of the 20th century, New Zealand was a country of young people with half the population under 23 years of age. The population is becoming older and the current projections are for the median age to rise to 45 years by 2049.
- By 2051 around 40 percent of the workforce will be in the 45-64 years age group.
- People may spend longer in the workforce.

Possible impacts of an ageing population

- Older people are likely to have better health and may enjoy a longer retirement.
- An ageing population may consume more health care and social assistance.
- An ageing population may play a more active role in supporting families and communities.

Moving to the cities

New Zealanders tend to move around within New Zealand a lot.

- Although most people live in cities of 300,000 or more, some rural areas gained through shifts in population in the 1990s (for example Bay of Plenty, Canterbury and Waikato).

⁵ The Ministry acknowledges that the use of the word "Asian" is not generally acceptable to ethnic women. However, as the statistics we have used are produced in this way it is difficult to avoid use of the word.

⁶ This information is sourced from www.statsnz.govt.nz.

- Around one in three New Zealanders currently live in the Auckland region.
- In 2000, 56% of new migrants entered the country through Auckland and chose to live there initially.
- Auckland's population is projected to increase by 40 percent by 2021.

Possible impacts of a geographically mobile population

- The move to cities may put pressure on physical infrastructure and social services and stretch the availability of resources, such as water, land and housing.
- The changing population distribution will have implications for patterns of economic growth.

Fertility

It is unlikely we will ever see a return to the high fertility rates of 40 years ago.

- Ethnic, immigrant and religious groups who traditionally had larger families are quickly shifting towards smaller families.
- It is predicted that New Zealand women will have 1.9 children on average. This is about 10 percent below the level required for the population to replace itself without migration.

Possible impacts of low fertility

- There will be fewer young people to support and care for a greater number of older people.
- Changes in immigration policy.

Ratio between women and men

At the time of the 2001 Census:

- women outnumbered men by 105 to 100 in European, Māori and Pacific peoples ethnic groups. In the Asian community there were 110 women for every 100 men
- the male/female difference is most noticeable in the older age groups with women comprising 53 percent of those aged 70-74 years and 79 percent of those 85 and over.

Women's roles in New Zealand – 2002 and beyond

More women are in the paid workforce, but women are still the major carers in society

- Women and men do the same amount of paid work, but women, particularly between the ages of 35 and 39 years, do more unpaid work than men. Women are twice as likely to be involved in unpaid work outside their own household, including voluntary work.⁷

Women are having fewer children

- While most women are having fewer children (or no children) some are still having larger families. Children in large families can be disadvantaged at school, and have poorer health and social outcomes.

⁷ Statistics NZ/MWA (2001) *Around the Clock: Findings from the NZ Time Use Survey 1998-99*.

Women experience relative economic disadvantage

- The structure of the family has changed considerably. Women are more likely than men to receive income from the Domestic Purposes Benefit. Women receive less income from paid work than men. The biggest difference in income occurs in the 35-39 years age group where women receive \$17,300 less in median income than men. This is generally the life stage where women return to full-time paid work after child bearing and rearing.
- The need to balance home responsibilities with income earning means that women are highly concentrated in industries that offer more part-time employment. Many women combine unpaid work with part-time paid work. Health, community services and education remain the predominant industries of paid employment for women.
- Although young women are more likely than young men to be studying and more likely to have a post-school qualification they are less likely to receive the same level of income as a man with the same or lesser qualification.

More women need to provide for their own retirement

- There are more older women than older men and this trend is likely to continue. With the trend towards marriage and child bearing at a later age (or not marrying or having children at all), more women will need to provide for their own retirement without immediate family support.

Māori, Pacific peoples and other ethnic groups' experiences are unique

- Increasing numbers of young women are from Māori, Pacific peoples or other ethnic groups. These groups have a younger age structure and women tend to have broader family and community responsibilities.
- All ethnic groups have their own unique culture, aspirations and priorities.

CEDAW – WOMEN'S VIEWS

The Ministry held public consultations while preparing the 5th Report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW report) in 2002. These views highlight some current concerns and issues, but do not represent all New Zealand women, nor are they government policy.

Māori women

- The role of Māori women within whānau, hapū and iwi needs greater recognition.
- There is a need for closer, more durable relationships with government, with the emphasis on policy and solutions that draw on existing community strengths.

Women's partnership with government

- Meaningful dialogue and partnership is the key to successful interaction with government.
- Women's issues need to be seen within economic, as well as social policy frameworks.

Gender analysis⁸

- There is a need for greater gender analysis across government, for example in budgets, forecasts, proposals, policy decisions, services and programmes.

Data

- There is a need for accurate data that describes the situation of women, and women of different ethnicities, to inform policy and decision-making.
- Surveys and methods of data collection need to quantify the contributions of women to the economy.

Casualisation of labour

- There is a perceived increase in the casualisation of the female labour force with associated poor rates of pay and lack of basic employee rights, including information.
- There is a need for a cross-government approach to focus on developing a high-wage, high-skill and high-trust labour market with portable employee entitlements and further education of employers and employees about rights and responsibilities.

Economic autonomy

- Women are not employed in great numbers in areas identified by government as important to New Zealand's future economic development, such as information and communication technology and biotechnology.
- Many women have immediate concerns about issues such as access to credit, retirement income, access to and recognition of education, training and life-long education and the impact of caring responsibilities on lifetime income.

⁸ Gender analysis examines the differences in women's and men's lives, including those which lead to social and economic inequity for women, and applies this understanding to policy development and service delivery; is concerned with the underlying causes of these inequities; and aims to achieve positive change for women.

Homecare

- Women are the greatest providers of healthcare, both paid and unpaid. There is concern over the employment conditions of many homecare workers and the impact this has on those receiving care.

Health

- While there are several gender inequalities in health, one particular issue is the lack of accessible information and education about sexual and reproductive health for young women and men.
- Health services need to increase the focus on sexual and reproductive health and encourage young women to have a positive relationship with their body.

Violence

- The level of gender-based violence is still a concern.
- Society continues to focus on female behaviour in relation to rape and sexual violence, rather than on the male behaviour.
- There is a need to identify root causes of violence in order to effect social change.

Education

- There is a concern about access to, and the cost of, education, including the hidden costs of primary and secondary schooling, the student loan scheme and the cost of second-chance learning.
- The education system is often not responsive to different cultures and the differing needs of women at various life stages. Women prefer a focus on lifelong learning.
- The diverse needs of women in the early childhood sector need greater recognition.
- While young women felt all the issues in the CEDAW report affected them, they were particularly concerned about sex education, which they think should be compulsory in all secondary schools.

Women with disabilities

- There is a need for leadership development in the community and local and central government to create policies and strategies to deal with issues such as employment and raising community awareness about disabilities.

Pacific women

- There are a significant number of Pacific women holding multiple jobs. This has an impact on both the women and their families.
- Pacific women also do a significant amount of unpaid and voluntary work in their families, communities and churches.
- Workforce development and better-targeted health and social services for Pacific women are identified as ways to address these concerns.

Refugee and migrant women

- The key concern for refugee and migrant women is immigration status. They are not automatically granted permanent residence on marriage to a New Zealander, which can leave them stranded if the marriage fails or is violent.
- Labour market discrimination against women within migrant communities is often ignored.

- There is a need for a comprehensive settlement programme and a need for government and non-government organisations to take a partnership approach to solving the settlement issues.

Lesbians, bisexuality and transgender

- Society continues to discriminate against lesbian, transgender and bi-sexual women. Sexual awareness education in secondary schools is needed to help address this concern.
- Concerns were expressed about their invisibility in society and their inability to reveal their sexuality because of difficulties this causes for them in day-to-day life in the workforce, education and healthcare.

ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

Over the past few decades many advances have been made in women's equality. Today, women are participating in many aspects of New Zealand life including decision-making, paid work and tertiary education. Progress has been made in terms of human rights legislation and more women hold senior positions in work and public life.

Gaining equal rights at law

- Property (Relationships) Amendment Act 2001 was adopted to ensure more equitable division of the relationship property of couples following a marriage/de facto relationship breakdown or if one of the couple dies.
- The Human Rights Act 1993 prohibits discrimination on grounds such as gender and includes pregnancy and childbirth, marital status, family status and sexual orientation.
- The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 prohibits discrimination and confirms the right of minorities to enjoy their culture, profess and practise their religion and to use their own language.

Being seen and heard

- The Ministry of Women's Affairs was established in 1985 and continues to provide whole-of-government policy advice concerning women and girls.
- Women have increased their representation in a range of high-level decision-making bodies to 39 percent from 25 percent in 1993.
- Women currently hold the positions of Chief Justice, Governor-General, Attorney General and Prime Minister.

Need for Action

New Zealand's success, prosperity and well-being will be assured only when women are able to participate fully, freely, actively and sustainably in social, political, economic and cultural life. For this to occur, women need to have economic autonomy and to be secure, safe, healthy and treated justly.

While considerable progress has been made, there is still significant inequality between women and men and between different groups of women across a wide range of indicators. Women in general and some groups of women in particular, continue to have their voluntary and unpaid work and skills in the community, the home and the workplace, undervalued. They face difficulties in accessing the resources and services they need, and experience significant risks to their independence, security, safety and health.

With advice initiated by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and others, successive governments have worked on many aspects of the issues affecting women's lives, for example childcare, paid parental leave, cervical screening and property relationships. But major issues to do with women's economic status and overall well-being demand ongoing attention.

Māori women's unique role in whānau, hapū and iwi needs recognition by government. It is essential that durable relationships across government be formed with Māori women to ensure that their leadership contributions and solutions are valued, visible, recognised and incorporated into government decision-making.

In the Māori and Pacific peoples populations, a younger age structure, broader family responsibilities, concentration in lower paid work and a higher level of community work are placing additional stresses on women in these groups. The number of women in other ethnic

groups is growing and they also require specific recognition and consideration in policy development.

The focus of the Action Plan for New Zealand women will be on those areas where government can effectively take action to help bring about improvements in women's well-being.

MĀORI WOMEN

Māori women⁹ have already shown both innovation and drive to pursue, develop and control their own solutions and strategies to enable them to fully participate in the government's vision of an innovative New Zealand, capable of sustained social and economic development.

Often these achievements come in spite of, rather than because of, New Zealand's economic and social systems and structures. This situation prevents New Zealand from accessing the full extent of Māori women's skills, abilities, talents and innovations. The recent Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Study ranked New Zealanders as among the most entrepreneurial people in the world, noting particularly high rates of Māori entrepreneurship.¹⁰

What Māori women have achieved over the past few decades

Protecting and revitalising Māori culture

- Māori women were the driving force behind the kohanga reo movement.
- They are the greatest participants in culture and arts activities that maintain and pass on skills and traditions.
- More Māori girls than Māori boys speak Te Reo.

Being seen and heard

- The Māori Women's Welfare League is now in its 50th year.
- There is increased representation of Māori women in Parliament.
- There is increased participation internationally towards recognising the rights of indigenous peoples.

Educational achievement

- Māori women are increasingly gaining tertiary qualifications.
-

The situation today

Treaty of Waitangi

The Treaty of Waitangi has a unique place in New Zealand society. It underpins the relationship between Māori (as indigenous people of New Zealand) and the Crown (represented by the government of New Zealand). The government, along with Māori, actively participates in international discourse on indigenous issues.

Indigeneity

Previous experience, and international literature (particularly research on working with indigenous women) shows that policy issues for indigenous women should be addressed separately from policy issues for women generally, and should involve indigenous women at all levels of decision-making.¹¹

⁹ Issues that affect Māori women are also covered in the following three sections on economic sustainability, balancing work, family and community and well-being.

¹⁰ Growing an Innovative New Zealand, p 15

¹¹ For example, at the National Indigenous Women's Gathering as part of the 2002 Commonwealth/State Minister's Conference on the Status of Women, Darwin, June 2002, indigenous women developed a declaration

Importance of whānau, hapū and iwi

The source of individual well-being for individual Māori women is closely related to the well-being of their whānau, hapū and iwi. Māori women contribute hugely to maintaining Māori culture in their communities. They have the highest level of participation in Māori arts and cultural activities as student or teacher.¹² They are the most likely to be speakers of Te Reo at younger ages.¹³

Māori women are responsible for looking after approximately 49 percent of Māori whānau by themselves, and the vast majority of Māori women are responsible at a financial level for the education of their children and mokopuna.

Inequalities

Māori women consulted during the development of this document stated that they face particular inequalities in areas such as health, income, education and labour force participation.

Where to from here?

Being able to live as Māori

Māori women have identified two essential issues:

- **Economic autonomy** — the Treaty settlement process provides a starting place for many Māori in their quest to obtain access to resources. Māori have a large role to play in regional development throughout New Zealand and policy approaches could further foster this.
- **Education policy** — if a Māori girl is, after 12 years of formal education, totally unprepared to interact with te ao¹⁴ Māori, then no matter what else she has learnt, her education is incomplete.¹⁵

Stronger, durable relationships with government

During previous consultations, women have expressed their aspiration to fully contribute to economic, social and environmental development and indicated that they want durable relationships with government as partners, tangata whenua and citizens of New Zealand.¹⁶

Settlement process

The process of providing compensation for past grievances can be seen as a symbol of the Crown and society's commitment to righting past wrongs and creating a society inclusive of Māori. The settlement process is also an important and tangible mechanism for contributing to future Māori social, economic and cultural development.¹⁷

that included the statement that "Indigenous women are best placed to identify and address their issues, specific needs and solutions". This approach is confirmed in the developmental work for the UN Draft Declaration of Indigenous People's Rights.

¹² Ministry of Social Development (2001) *The Social Report*, p. 65.

¹³ *Ibid*, p 67.

¹⁴ *The Māori world*.

¹⁵ Durie, M. (24 February 2001) *A Framework for Considering Māori Educational Advancement*, Hui Taumata Mātauranga.

¹⁶ In the Speech from the Throne, the government recognised its commitment to strengthening its relationship with tangata whenua. This means fulfilling its obligations as a Treaty partner to support self-determination for whānau, hapū and iwi.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p 56.

Questions to consider

- Are the current goals for women (see Page 10) relevant for Māori women? If yes, why? If no, what goals would you suggest, and why?
- What do you think are the priority issues for Māori women?
- What barriers need to be removed to increase Māori women's full participation in New Zealand society? How can the government help remove these barriers?
- What can government do to progress its relationship with Māori women? Why? How do you see this happening?
- Can you give examples of initiatives that are working well in your community to advance the status of Māori women?

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

This section covers:

- Women and paid work
- Women and unpaid work
- Women's income
- Financial situation of sole parents
- Older women and superannuation
- Education

What we have achieved over the past few decades

Breaking down the education barriers

- In 2001, young women were more likely than young men to be studying and have a post-school qualification.
- More women than men are graduating from tertiary institutions at all levels, except at the doctorate level¹⁸.
- The areas of study for women are:
 - 5 percent study information technology (compared to 8 percent of men)
 - 11 percent study in education-related fields (compared to 3 percent of men)
 - 22 percent of women study health-related subjects other than medicine or dentistry
 - 22.5 percent study management and commerce.

Being treated fairly at work

- Paid parental leave of 12 weeks introduced July 2002 for eligible women.
- The Equal Pay Act 1972 was introduced to ensure that women received equal pay for equal work.
- Women's participation in the paid workforce increased to 47 percent by 2001, a rise of 9 percent since 1991.
- Over the past few decades, many women have experienced personal, professional and financial rewards from increased workforce participation.
- More flexible working arrangements, including permanent part-time work.

The situation today – women and paid work

Women work as many hours as men

Women put in as many hours of total paid work per week as men do. But while 60 percent of men's work is paid, almost 70 percent of women's work time is unpaid.¹⁹

¹⁸ Press Release by Aotearoa Tertiary Students Association, 17 September 2002.

Women now do more paid work

Women's increasing participation in the paid labour force has been one of the strongest employment trends in the post-World War II period.

- Women now compose 47 percent of the full-time paid workforce – 516,378 women in full-time jobs in March 2001.
- 64 percent of all women aged 15 and over are in the paid workforce, a rise of 9 percent since 1991.

Employment areas

- A third of all employed women work in 10 employment categories, most of which are low-paid. More than 25 percent of women work in health and community services and education.
- Over the past decade, the occupations that contributed most to job growth were caregiver, sales assistant and general clerk – all low paid, predominantly female workforce.²⁰
- 14 percent of women work in trades.
- Women are less likely to work as legislators, administrators and managers (11 percent of women compared with 15 percent of men).
- Half as many women as men (proportionately) received income from self-employment in the year to March 2001. Just 12 percent of women received income from this source compared with 22 percent of men.

Employment and ethnicity

- Workforce participation is slightly higher than average among European women and Māori women (both over 61 percent) and a little lower among Pacific women (59 percent) and Asian women (50 percent).
- Participation in full-time paid employment was proportionately highest for women in the European and Pacific peoples ethnic groups (37 and 35 percent respectively) and lowest for Māori and Asian women (33 and 30 percent respectively).

Employment and Disability

Achieving economic sustainability is even more difficult for women with disabilities. Society places limits on their opportunity and choice in terms of educational options and their ability to achieve economic sustainability. Separate and special responses have the effect of excluding women with disabilities.

Women with disabilities believe that their exclusion from full participation in society helps to foster stereotypical images concerning their abilities, and this has led to discrimination in the labour market.²¹

Women and part-time work

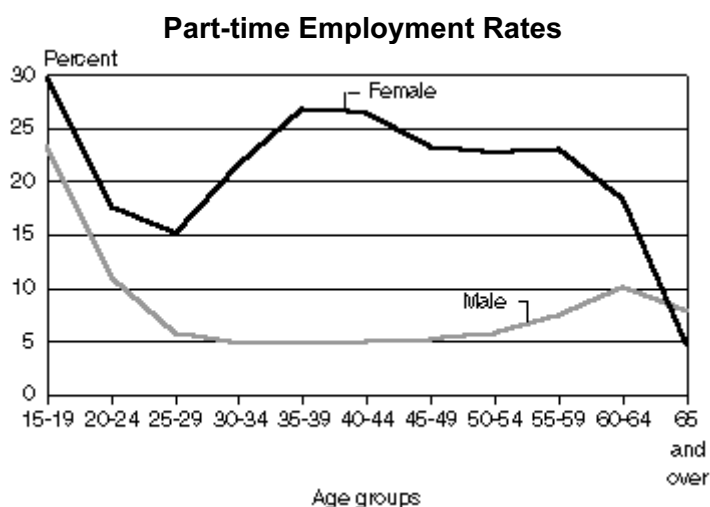
Many women combine unpaid work with part-time paid employment (less than 30 hours per week). For women, part-time work is a common way of balancing family responsibilities with the need to earn family income.

¹⁹ Statistics NZ/MWA (2001) *Around the Clock: Findings from the NZ Time Use Survey 1998-99*. The information about unpaid work in this section is from this survey. See also Statistics NZ (2001), *Measuring Unpaid Work in New Zealand*.

²⁰ Department of Labour (forthcoming) Occupational trends in New Zealand. 1991-2001.

²¹ CEDAW consultations 2002, MWA consultation with NGO Reference Group, May 2002

- Since 1991, the number of women in paid part-time work has increased 55 percent to 287,934 in 2001 (the number of men has increased 86 percent to 111,219).
- Almost half of the women working part-time said they looked after a child in the same household in the four weeks prior to the Census (compared with 32 percent of women working full-time or not employed).
- In 2001, 37 percent of all European women in paid employment worked part-time compared with 35 percent of Māori women, 31 percent of Asian women and 29 percent of Pacific women.
- There is a high concentration of women working in industries that tend to offer more part-time paid employment:
 - 63 percent of those working in the accommodation, cafe and restaurant industries are women.
 - 65 percent of those working in service and sales industries are women.



Women, unemployment and underemployment

- In the 2001 Census, 8 percent of women reported that they were unemployed, compared with 7 percent of men. Rates were lower for Pakeha women (6 percent) and much higher for Māori women (18.5 percent), Pacific women (17.6 percent) and Asian women (13.6 percent).²²
- In March 2002, 23 percent of women in part-time work wanted longer hours.²³

Women and growth industries

The government has identified information and communication technology (ICT), biotechnology and the creative industries as growth industries that it wishes to foster.²⁴

²² These unemployment rates are higher than the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) rates. The difference may be partly due to the international criteria used in the HLFS to define unemployment, which exclude, for example, women who do not register as unemployed because their partner's income excludes them from benefit eligibility, or women who are unavailable for work the following week because they do not have immediate access to childcare.

²³ Census 2001; Household Labour Force Survey, March 2002.

²⁴ Growing an Innovative New Zealand, p 7. Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2001.

In 1996:

- only 35 percent of all ICT employees were women –15 percent of these were non-European²⁵
- in biotechnology, 48 percent of all employees were women – 14 percent of these were non-European.

Women in business

Fewer women than men are self-employed (12 percent compared to 22 percent) although women are recognised internationally for their ability to make small to medium enterprises thrive.²⁶ Current economic policy includes the government assisting business growth by building and supporting confidence and positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship.²⁷ This includes funding for capacity building resources such as ICT.

The situation today – women and unpaid work

Women continue to be responsible for most unpaid work

While women and men participate in the paid workforce at comparable levels, women do more unpaid work than men.

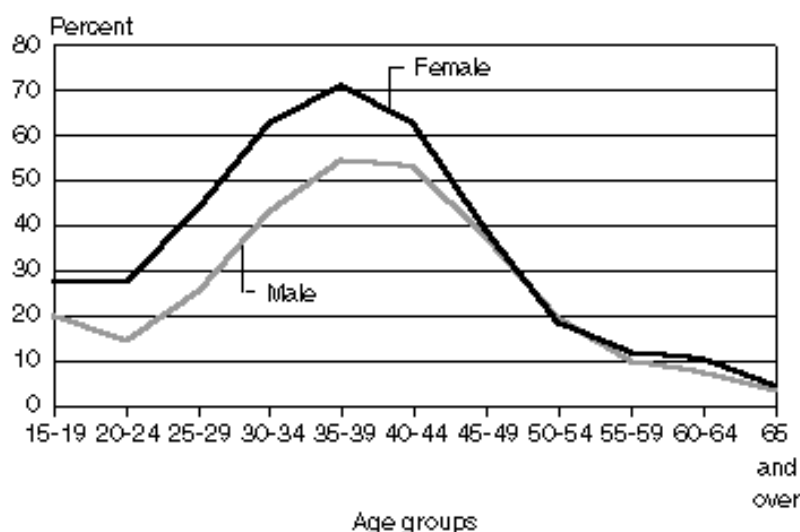
- 71 percent of women between the ages of 35-39 reported that they looked after a child who lived in the same household compared with 55 percent of men in the same age group.
- They reported that, in the four weeks preceding the Census:
 - 35 percent of women had looked after a child in the same household compared with 27 percent of men
 - almost half of all Māori women, 43 percent of Pacific women, 32 percent of Asian women and 32 percent of European women were looking after a child in their own household
 - women were twice as likely as men to have done unpaid work looking after a child in another household (20 percent of women compared with 10 percent of men)
 - women were twice as likely to have done unpaid work looking after someone in another household who was ill or had a disability (11 percent of women compared with 6 percent of men)
 - 89 percent of women did work for the household compared with 82 percent of men.

²⁵ Census 1996; Walker, E and O'Neill-Cooper L, Skills Shortage in the IT Industry: A Gender or a Generation Issue? The University of Western Australia, Graduate School of Management, 2001

²⁶ OECD, Women Entrepreneurs in SMEs: Realising the Benefits of Globalisation and the Knowledge-based Economy, Paris, 29-30 November 2000, Conference papers

²⁷ Growing an Innovative New Zealand, p 19

Looking after a child in the same household



The situation today – women's income

Women's income

Over the 1990s, a fall in real wages and household incomes²⁸, together with high male unemployment, have meant that women's incomes have become vital to the financial support and well-being of New Zealand families and communities.

There is still a wide gap between women and men in average hourly pay. This issue affects women with high qualifications as well as those with low or no qualifications. Women receive, on average, lower pay than men with the same education, including tertiary qualifications. This differential is being created before any career breaks for childbearing.²⁹

Median income³⁰

As at March 2001:

- The median income for women was \$14,500 compared with \$24,900 for men.
- Even in the younger age group, prior to the effects of breaks for childbearing, the median income ranged from \$3,100 and \$7,100 less than men for those women 20-24 years and 25-29 years respectively.
- Women aged 20-24 received \$20,900 compared with \$28,000 for men.
- The highest median annual income for women was in the 45-49 year age group at \$22,000.
- The biggest difference in median annual income between women and men occurred in the 35-39 year age group where women received \$17,300 less in median income than men (\$17,600 compared to \$34,900).

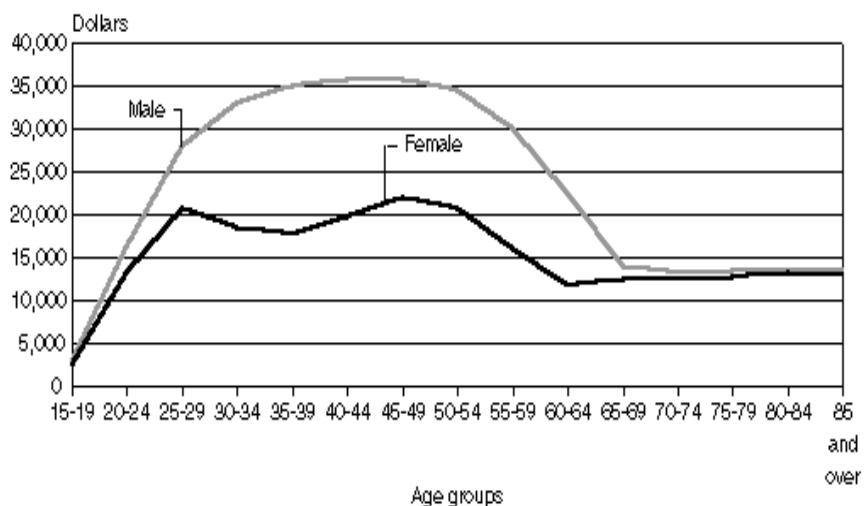
²⁸ M. Mowbray (2001) *Distributions and disparity: NZ household incomes*. Ministry of Social Policy; Statistics NZ (1998) K. Johnstone and I. Pool, *New Zealand families: Size, income and labour force participation*, Population Studies Centre, University of Waikato, p.108; D. O'Shea (2000) *The Changes in New Zealand's Income Distribution. Working Paper 00/13*, NZ Treasury www.treasury.govt.nz; Statistics NZ (1998) *Consumer Expenditure Statistics: Part 2: Household income and outlay*, Statistics NZ. www.stats.govt.nz

²⁹ NZ Vice-Chancellors' Committee (1999) and (2001), *University Graduate Destinations*.

³⁰ A median income is the middle income of an entire range of incomes.

- The smallest differences were for the youngest and oldest age groups (for those 15-19 and over 70 the differences were under \$1000).
- Asian women received the lowest median annual income of all major ethnic groups (\$8900), followed by Pacific and Māori women (\$13,000 and \$13,200 respectively) and European women (\$15,100).

Median annual income by age, group and gender



Sources of income

Paid employment is the key factor affecting women's access to income. As at March 2001:

- Among those aged 25-44, the number of women with no income of their own was four times that of men.
- Women aged 15 years and over were less likely to receive income from wages and salaries compared with men.
- Fewer women than men in the 15-39 year age group received income from wages and salaries, but more women than men received income from this source in the 40-59 year age group.
- Women were more likely than men to receive income from the Domestic Purposes Benefit (7 percent of women compared with 1 percent of men)
- Half as many women as men received income from self employment (12 percent of women compared with 22 percent of men).

Improved financial situation?

- Although some higher-earning older European women improved their economic situation between 1986 and the end of the 1990s³¹, most women did not. An increased share of income went to older, higher-earning European men, while the share of young people and of Māori, Pacific and Asian women and men fell sharply. Lower earning women of all ages have seen no improvement in real income over 20 years.³²

³¹ These women work predominantly as professionals, legislators and managers. HLFS 2001.

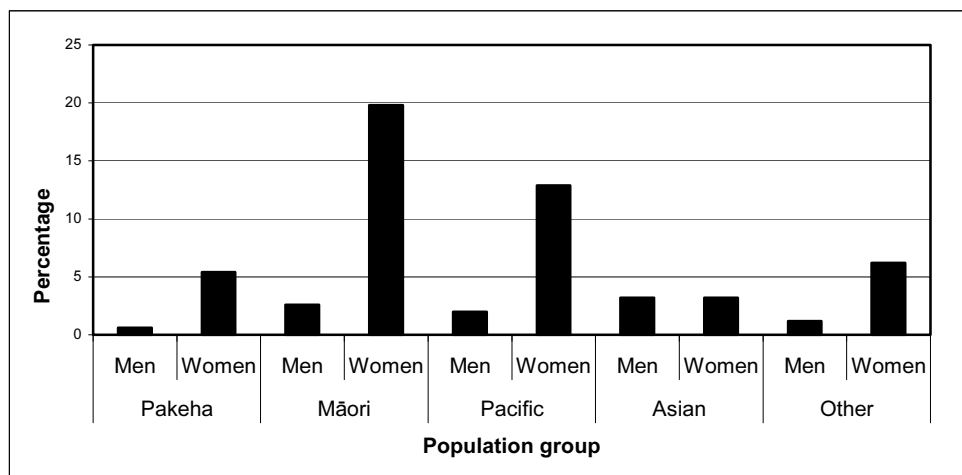
³² Mowbray (2001); L. Hill (2000) Globalisation and the effects of a low wage economic strategy on New Zealand women. *Women's Studies Journal* 15(1) pp.65-85; B. Martin (1997) *Income trends among individuals and families, 1976 to 1996*, Population Studies Centre, University of Waikato.

- Average incomes for households in which all the adults were women were consistently lower than those where all the adults were men, or where there were men and women in the same household. This was true regardless of whether there were children or dependent young people in the household. This gap widened during the 1990s.³³
- There is now a concentration of low incomes among women and children, particularly Māori women and children. A 1995 study of poverty showed that three-quarters of households with an equivalised³⁴ income lower than 60 percent of the median were households of women and their children.³⁵ In the June quarter 2000, 31 percent of Māori women with children were living in households with equivalised income of below \$20,000.³⁶
- Overseas studies show that the higher the proportion of women or people from an ethnic minority in an occupation, industry or work group, the lower the average earnings.³⁷

The situation today – financial situation of sole parents

- Over the past decade, the most striking trend in the living standards of households with children is the income decline for one-parent households. Their real disposable incomes remain below 1988 levels.³⁸
- Employment statistics highlight the impact of sole parent responsibilities for children on labour force status and hours of employment. The 2001 Census showed that among mothers with at least 1 child under 5, 29 percent of sole mothers were employed, compared with 52 percent of partnered mothers.

Percentages of population groups receiving Domestic Purposes Benefit by gender and ethnicity (from Census 2001 data)



³³ Mowbray, M. (2001) p.9, p.29.

³⁴ Household income data has been equivalised to take account of number of people in household.

³⁵ R. Stevens (1999) Poverty, family finances and social security. In J. Boston (ed.) *Redesigning the Welfare State in NZ*, Oxford University Press.

³⁶ MWA (2001) *Māori women: Mapping inequalities and pointing ways forward*, p.67.

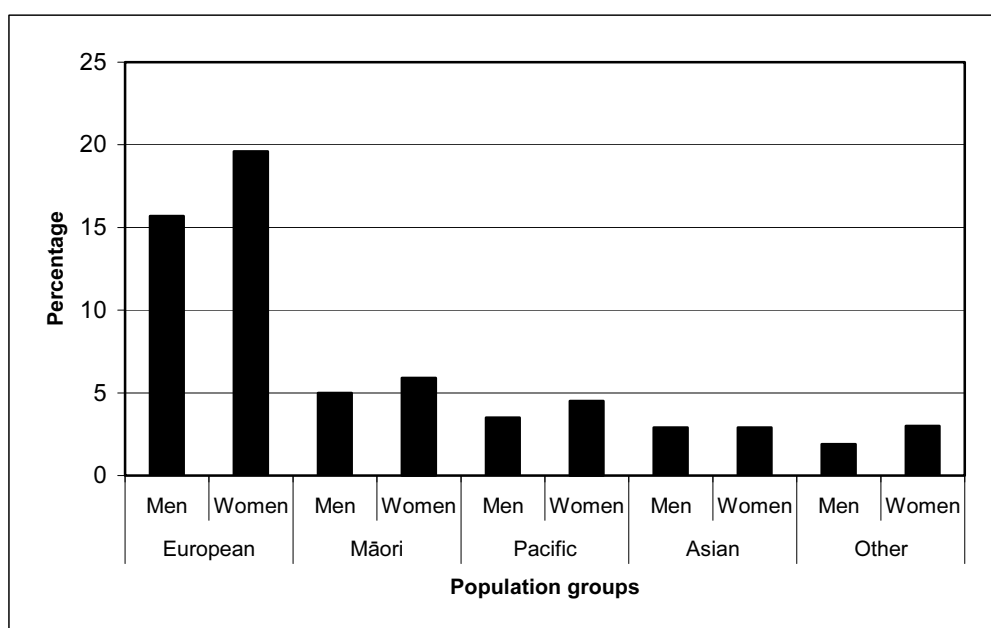
³⁷ B. Pocock and M. Alexander (1999) The price of feminised jobs: New evidence on the gender pay gap in Australia, *Labour & Industry* 10 (2), pp.75-86; D.M. Figart and P. Kahn (1997) *Contesting the market: Pay equity and the politics of economic restructuring*, Wayne State University Press; M.W. McCann (1994) *Rights at work: Pay equity reform and the politics of legal mobilization*, University of Chicago Press.

³⁸ MSD (1999) *Social Environmental Scan*, IAG Group, June.

The situation today – older women and superannuation

- 5 percent of the sample population were experiencing quite marked material hardship, and a further 5-10 percent had some difficulties.³⁹
- Factors contributing to being at risk of poor living standards included low lifetime income, no savings and lack of home ownership, with consequent high accommodation costs.
- The material disadvantages experienced by Māori and Pacific peoples extend into old age. These trends are also likely to be increasing among women from other ethnic groups, but the relevant statistical information is not yet available.
- Single people made up 53% of the study sample; 74% of these were women. There were marked differences in living standards for single and couples except for the level of state superannuation they receive:
 - three quarters of the single respondents had savings and investments worth less than \$37,000, whereas three quarters of partnered respondents had savings and investments worth less than \$100,000
 - only 68 percent of single respondents owned their own home, compared with 86 percent of couples.

Percentages of population groups receiving either New Zealand Superannuation or Veterans' Pension (from Census 2001 data)



The situation today – education

Women are more likely than men to be studying and have post-school qualifications

- As at March 2001:
 - 19 percent of women aged 20 to 29 had a degree or higher level qualification, compared with 14 percent of men

³⁹ All data in this section are from: Fergusson, D., Hong, B., Horwood, J., Jensen, J. & Travers, P. (2001) *Living Standards of Older New Zealanders, Te Noho o nga Kaumatua o Aotearoa*, MSD.

- the most common fields of study for women with a post-school qualification were health (22 percent compared with 5 percent of men), management and commerce, while engineering and related technology was the least common (2 percent compared with 33 percent for men)
- similar proportions of women and men reported that they had participated in full-time study in the 4 weeks preceding the 2001 Census (9 percent of women had undertaken full-time study compared with 8 percent of men). However, in the prime studying age group of 15-24 years, 38 percent of women had attended a full-time course compared with 34 percent of men.

Education and ethnicity

- In the 4 weeks prior to the 2001 Census, 38 percent of European women (33 percent of European men) 27 percent of Māori women (22 percent of Māori men), 25 percent of Pacific women (22 percent of Pacific men) had been studying full-time. For the Asian ethnic group, the proportion studying full-time was the same for women and men (43 percent).
- As at March 2001:
 - European and Asian women were less likely to have post-school qualifications than men (32 percent versus 36 percent, and 33 percent versus 36 percent respectively)
 - Māori and Pacific women were more likely to have post-school qualifications than men (22 percent versus 20 percent respectively, and 19 percent versus 15 percent respectively).

Student loans

- In 2002, women took out more student loans than men.
- It takes women considerably longer than men, on average, to repay their student loans – 11.5 years for women and 7 years for men⁴⁰.
- Further research is needed to establish why this disparity arises and how it affects women's study, life decisions and economic autonomy.

Where to from here?

Valuing unpaid work

Unpaid activities carried out by the household sector are excluded from most conventional economic statistics. As a consequence, unpaid work is perceived as having little value to the economy, and less value than paid work. Unpaid work is defined as non-market production, and is excluded from the System of National Accounts (SNA), whereas the same work done for pay (for example, household cleaning or childcare) is defined as market production and is included in economic statistics.

Valuing paid work

Women's paid work is an essential part of an innovative and sustainable economy. Women's earnings are important to their personal autonomy, and to the well-being of families and communities. Yet the portion of the gender pay gap that has been linked to occupational differences suggests that their skills are being under-valued.

⁴⁰ Ministry of Education, Inland Revenue and Work and Income New Zealand, *Student Loan Scheme Annual Report*, (2001)

New Zealand's anti-discrimination laws, as well as policies such as equal employment opportunities, paid parental leave, and the minimum wage, aim to reduce the gender pay gap. However, there are currently no policies that address the 20-40 percent of the gender pay gap linked to occupational differences between women and men.⁴¹

The government has released a discussion document on pay equity, which focuses on "equal pay for work of equal value".⁴² New Zealand has ratified international conventions on this principle, and is currently consulting on future action.

Change and innovation

We live in a rapidly developing technological world with a globally connected economy. The government has developed an innovation focus which emphasises biotechnology⁴³, information and communication technology⁴⁴ and the creative industries⁴⁵ because of their extensive influence on so many parts of the economy.⁴⁶ However, statistics show that in 2001, working women, and women studying, were concentrated in the health and education area (more than one quarter).⁴⁷

Encouraging involvement in small to medium business enterprises

Eliminating obstacles to the creation and development of business enterprises by women and creating an inclusive environment for women business owners is vital for a thriving entrepreneurial sector and important for national growth strategies. Women business owners are creating new niches for entrepreneurial activity and have the potential to become key players in the new, knowledge-based economy. However, to adapt to the changes in the way small enterprises do business, both locally and at the global level, women need access to training and finance.

Sole parents

Government has indicated that beneficiaries will be supported to find sustainable employment with appropriate support including retraining, access to transport and childcare.

Older women

The changing structure of the family combined with women's increasing participation in the paid workforce has implications for women in retirement.

Education

It is important that all women and girls are able to transfer their success in education and training to success in employment and long-term economic security. Many women have identified the need for a greater emphasis on lifelong learning and the need for the education system to be more responsive to the needs of different ethnic groups.

⁴¹ Sylvia Dixon (2002) *Pay Inequalities between men and women in New Zealand*. Department of Labour.

⁴² MWA (2002) *Next Steps Towards Pay Equity: A Discussion Document*. July MWA (2002) *Mahi Ōrite, Utu Tōkeke: Next Steps Towards Pay Equity for Māori Women*.

⁴³ This includes horticulture, genetic research, forestry, marine, wine, dairy, medical and natural products.

⁴⁴ This includes goods and services that use electronic means for information processing, transmission, display and communications.

⁴⁵ Those activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent, and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.

⁴⁶ *Growing an Innovative New Zealand*, p 49.

⁴⁷ See section on full-time work for further detail on full-time occupations for women.

Questions to consider

- Are the current goals for women (see Page 10) as they relate to economic sustainability still relevant? If yes, why? If no, what goals would you suggest, and why?
- What do you think are the key work, income and education issues for women and girls in New Zealand?
- What strategies can government and the community develop to address these issues?
- Can you give some examples of successful initiatives in your community that have improved the responsiveness of education, training and employment for women and girls?

BALANCING WORK, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Much of the supporting evidence and statistics in this section are covered elsewhere in this document.

What we have achieved over the past few decades

Recognising diversity of needs for work, family and community balance

- Recently introduced changes to the approaches taken to equal employment opportunities (EEO) for diverse groups of people in New Zealand.
- The Human Rights Act 1993 prevents discrimination on the basis of family status.
- Paid parental leave of 12 weeks introduced July 2002 for eligible women.
- Increased access to, and funding for, formal child care.
- Work/life balance project led by the Department of Labour.

Recognising the needs of families

- Development of the Commission for the Family.
- The Commissioner for Children.

Recognising the community and voluntary sector

- Government has formalised its relationship with the community and voluntary sector in a signed agreement.

The situation today

Building and leading strong communities

Women have always played a central role in building and shaping communities. Many women take on this responsibility over and above work and caring for their families. Much community building occurs informally, for example parent help in schools, and is largely unrecognised and unrewarded in any formal way. This view is changing with the growing recognition of the role of the local community in finding solutions to problems.

More women today than ever before are leaders in their communities, but most formal decision-making roles are still held by men. Māori women, Pacific women, and women from other ethnic groups play a key role in keeping their culture and language alive.

More women in the paid workforce

More women are in the paid workforce today than ever before, but they are still the main carers in society, contributing more unpaid hours than men to both their families and their communities.

Changing family structure

Women are having fewer children and there are a growing number of sole parents.

Caring for children

The care of dependent children is the unpaid work that impacts most on women's participation in paid employment and, consequently, on their economic autonomy. The 2001 Census shows that over 41 percent of New Zealand families with dependent children have a youngest child of preschool age (0-4).

- The cost of replacement childcare, combined with low earnings, is a major issue for women, especially sole mothers. The 1998 New Zealand Childcare Survey⁴⁸ found that the cost of early childhood education and care, and of care arrangements for school-age children, was the single biggest factor preventing many mothers from taking part in employment.
- Adequate, affordable out-of-school care services are wanted, but unavailable, for approximately 30,000 (6 percent) 5-13 year olds. Lower income families, sole parents, those working less than 20 hours a week and those with no formal qualifications are most affected.
- Many women have identified the need for quality childcare as an ongoing issue.

Role of older women in our community

An ageing population and more women in the paid workforce than ever before, may see older women having a longer retirement and playing a more active role in supporting families and communities.

Women with disabilities

A more inclusive and informed society will enable women with disabilities to be appropriately valued as part of our society. Moving towards such an inclusive society is the vision outlined in the New Zealand Disability Strategy⁴⁹.

Where to from here?

Supporting communities

All sectors of society have a role to play in recognising and resourcing women's community work. The challenge lies in valuing the contribution of all women and girls, providing flexible options for participation and supporting their choices.

Supporting changing family structures

The changes in family structures and the growing number of sole parents have placed financial and other pressures on many women. They need assistance to cope with the responsibilities and pressures of sole parenting. A combined government and private sector approach is needed to provide more family-friendly work policies and practices.

Encouraging shared responsibilities

New Zealand research has repeatedly identified the tension of trying to balance work and family responsibilities as a major concern for women and men.⁵⁰ Overall, women are finding it increasingly difficult to achieve and maintain economic sustainability, while meeting society's expectations that they carry the major responsibility for the family.

Enabling women and men to balance their work, family and community commitments and responsibilities is crucial if New Zealand is to value women's role as carers. Sharing the caring load is important if women are to have a better quality of life, including greater access to more secure employment and training.

⁴⁸ Department of Labour (1999) *The New Zealand Childcare Survey 1998: A survey of early childhood education and care arrangements for children*, Labour Market Policy Group. Information about childcare in this section is from this survey.

⁴⁹ Ministry of Health (2001) *The New Zealand Disability Strategy: Making a World of Difference; Whakanui Oranga*

⁵⁰ See, for example, A. Else (1996) *False Economy*, Tandem Press, which summarises a range of research on this issue.

Meeting the needs of women in all age groups

The “baby-blip” generation (born since 1980) must be cared for, educated, and in turn enabled to combine child-bearing, child-rearing and other unpaid work, paid work, and community contributions.

Older women’s needs also need to be met so they are able to participate fully in all aspects of society.

Questions to consider

- Are the current goals for women (see Page 10) as they relate to balancing work, family and community commitments still relevant? If yes, why? If no, what goals would you suggest, and why?
- How do you balance work, life, family and community responsibilities while at the same time achieving your personal or professional aspirations?
- What would make achieving this balance easier?
- What government strategies would make it easier for women to balance their work, family and community responsibilities?
- Do you have examples of initiatives that have worked well in your community to help women balance family and other responsibilities?

WELL-BEING

Well-being and good health is fundamental for a productive workforce, enjoyment of life and social interaction. This section looks at:

- health
- housing
- violence
- specific groups of women.

What we have achieved over the past few decades

Protecting ourselves

- Domestic and family violence was recognised as a significant legal issue through the Domestic Protection Act 1982 and the Domestic Violence Act 1995.
- Te Rito, New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy was released in March 2002.
- The government funds domestic violence services, child witness counsellors, male perpetrator programmes, domestic violence court-support programmes and New Zealand-wide services, including community education and support, and victim counselling.
- Women have been given further protection through the gradual acceptance of “battered woman’s syndrome” by the courts and expansion of the definition of rape.

Staying healthy

- There have been significant increases in the number of prevention and treatment services established around women’s health issues, for example, access to specialist prevention and detection services for cervical and breast cancer. There has been an increase in the number of women accessing these services.
- Promotion of and support for the acceptance of mental illness as something that can affect all New Zealanders at some stage in their lives.

The situation today – health

Women live longer than men and have more contact with the health system

Women’s health status is often measured in terms of their life expectancy. While women tend to live longer than men, they also report poorer self evaluation of health, have higher rates of acute illness, consume greater amounts of prescription and non-prescription medications and have more contacts with the health system than men.⁵¹

Life expectancy and health is related to socio-economic status

Life expectancy among social and ethnic groups is strongly related to socio-economic status.⁵² For females, life expectancy at birth varies from 75.4 years for those living in the most deprived areas to 82.1 years for those living in the least deprived areas.⁵³

⁵¹ MWA (2001) *Gender and Health: a literature review*, MWA.

⁵² MoH (2001) *The Health and Independence Report*, MoH.

Social, cultural and economic factors are the main determinants of health. Income, employment, education, housing, culture and ethnicity all affect health and health outcomes.⁵⁴

Māori and Pacific women

Māori women are less likely to be hospitalised, despite their greater need to access health care services, and do not use primary health services as frequently as their overall patterns of morbidity indicate is necessary.⁵⁵ The most common causes of hospital admissions and deaths among Pacific peoples are the effects of diseases such as diabetes, coronary disease and cancer.⁵⁶

Women as healthcare and homecare workers

Women are the greatest providers of health care, both paid and unpaid. Recent developments in the private health care sector have highlighted the issue of poor pay and working conditions for some groups of health care workers, particularly those caring for people with disabilities and older women.

The Ministry's 1999 report, *Homecare Workers – A Case Study of a Female Occupation*, shows that homecare workers, predominantly women, make up a significant proportion of those homecare workers who are poorly paid, and are increasingly required to provide complex care and face difficult working conditions. Lack of health sector standards and certified training of carers can compromise the safety of health care users.

The situation today – housing

Because of their generally lower incomes, women are more likely than men to face difficulties in getting adequate, affordable housing.

Sole parents are more likely to live in rented accommodation

Sole parent families, usually headed by women, are more likely to live in rented accommodation: 53.3 percent of children in sole parent families do so, compared with 20.6 percent of children in two parent families.⁵⁷

Māori and Pacific women

Māori women face particular difficulties. While many may have access to land, building on the land can sometimes run into problems because of the approach to ownership of Māori freehold land. This creates another barrier to home ownership. Recent amendments to the Te Ture Whenua (Māori Land) Act 1993 seek to address some of these issues along with the Papakainga programme which lends on land under multiple or communal ownership.

Unsuitable housing in terms of size is a particular issue for Māori and Pacific peoples households, which contain relatively more people than other households.⁵⁸ In 1996, 23.65 percent of Māori women and girls and 42.4 percent of Pacific women and girls were living in

⁵³ Salmond C, Crampton P, Sutton F, (1998), *NZDep96: Index of Deprivation*, Research Report No 8, Wellington, Health Services Research Centre. In this analysis, socio-economic status is assessed using a census-based area index of deprivation.

⁵⁴ National Health Committee (1998) *The Social, Cultural and Economic Determinants of Health in New Zealand: Action to Improve Health*, NHC; WHO (2000) *The World Health Report 2000 Health Systems: Improving Performance*, WHO.

⁵⁵ MWA (2001)

⁵⁶ Ministry of Social Development (2001) *Positive Ageing in New Zealand: Diversity, Participation and Change*

⁵⁷ www.statsnz.govt.nz

⁵⁸ HNZC are currently creating design guides for Māori and Pacific peoples houses

crowded households, compared with only 5.6 percent of other women and girls.⁵⁹ Low income often results in more than one family living in the same accommodation.

Women with disabilities

Because women live longer than men, they make up nearly 70 percent of all adults with disabilities in residential care, most of whom are in the older age groups. Among women with disabilities aged 65 and over, 13 percent live in a residential facility, compared with seven percent of men in this group.⁶⁰

The situation today – violence

Family violence continues to be the major issue for women's safety. It directly impacts on the health, economic status, social participation and general well-being of women, children, families, whānau, hapū and iwi. For example, it can affect women's ability to find and retain paid employment.⁶¹

Te Rito, New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy, highlights the fact that the perpetrators of the most severe and lethal cases of family violence are predominantly male, while adult victims are predominantly female. Māori women are disproportionately affected by family violence.⁶²

The situation today – specific groups of women

Rural women

Demographic projections predict a continued expansion of the main cities and a decline in rural populations.

Rural women, due to their isolation, often face difficulties accessing infrastructure such as telecommunications and electricity that most people take for granted. The lack of cost-effective network services can also mean that rural women are not easily able to participate in government processes and consultation.

Census data from 1996⁶³ indicates:

- labour force participation for women in regions that are largely rural is between 54 percent and 60 percent compared with 60-61 percent for women in regions that are largely urban. It also compares with a labour force participation rate of 70-78 percent for men in rural areas
- of women employed in rural areas, 38-40 percent are part-time, compared with 31-33 percent in urban areas and 12-15 percent of men in rural areas.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ MWA (2001) *Mori women: Mapping inequalities and pointing ways forward*, p. 104. Statistics for 2001 are not yet available.

⁶⁰ www.statsnz.govt.nz

⁶¹ T. Pouwhare (1999) *Māori Women and Work: The Effects of Family Violence on Māori Women's Employment Opportunities*, National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges.

⁶² Ministry of Social Development (2002) *Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*, MSD. Data for 1999/2000 on applications for protection orders under the Domestic Violence Act 1995 show that the rate of application was 7.1 per 1000 for Māori women and 2.6 per 1000 for non-Māori women. However, a review in 2000 of use of the Domestic Violence Act found that there might be some under-use of the Act by Māori women (see MWA (2001) *Mori women: Mapping inequalities and pointing ways forward*,).

⁶³ More recent statistics were unavailable at the time of writing.

⁶⁴ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry publications include *Barriers to Participation in the Economy: Rural Women* (MAF, 1994); *Matching New Zealand Rural Development Policy to a Changing Clientele: The Emerging Contribution of MAF* (MAF Technical Publication); *The Contribution of Women to the Rural Economy: Stage One*:

Women with disabilities

The New Zealand Disability Strategy adopts the social model of disability, defining it as “a process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have”.⁶⁵

Disability – age and ethnic group

- One in five New Zealanders has a disability and disability is closely associated with age. Although boys in the 0-14 age group are more likely to report a disability (13 percent) than girls (9 percent), in other age groups there is no statistically significant difference between the disability rates of males and females.
- Within each age group, the disability rates for Māori are higher than the national rates:
 - 15 percent of Māori children reported a disability compared with 11 percent of all children.
 - Over a third (34 percent) of Māori aged 45 to 64 years reported a disability, increasing to 61 percent for Māori aged 65 and over.
 - The comparable rates for the total population were 25 percent and 54 percent respectively.
- The disability rate for Pacific children was 8 percent, lower than the national rate for children (11 percent). The disability rates within other age groups of Pacific peoples were similar to those for the total New Zealand population.

Receiving assistance

Women are more likely than men to receive assistance with everyday activities as a result of a disability.

- Nearly half (48 percent) of women received assistance, compared with 29 percent of men.
- The most common task requiring assistance was heavy housework such as spring cleaning or gardening, reported by nearly 187,000 adults with disabilities (76 percent).
- Over 128,000 (53 percent) required assistance with everyday housework such as cleaning and laundry.⁶⁶

Where to from here?

A gendered approach to women's health

Policies which benefit women's health and well-being also benefit the health and well-being of all New Zealanders. Women tend to take a broad, holistic view of health, including mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. They form the majority of community workers, paid and unpaid. They are concerned with broad health issues such as the overall impact of all forms of violence, the role of women as caregivers, and the health of older women.

Scoping Report (92/4); Change and Diversity: Opportunities for and Constraints on Rural Women in New Zealand (97/11), and Relevant Government Policies and Programmes for Māori Living in Rural Areas (94/3).

⁶⁵ (2001) *An Overview of the Health and Disability Sector in New Zealand, The New Zealand Disability Strategy* November, p 7, MoH.

⁶⁶ www.statsnz.govt.nz

A “women’s health” approach risks seeing the health of women as confined to specific areas defined purely by biological difference, such as maternity care and breast and cervical screening. Biomedical and social research into the differences between the health of women and men has traditionally focused on their reproductive systems. While important, this approach tends to neglect the complex social, cultural and political construction of gender roles in society and how these influence, and are influenced by, the wider determinants of health.

A gendered approach to health policy, rather than a “women’s health” approach, is required to address the issues for women. It includes consideration of implications for women and men of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Women as health care and homecare workers

Women are the greatest providers of health care and homecare, both paid and unpaid. The primary issues are:

- Value society places on caring work. Progress on policy work on equal pay for work of equal value is particularly relevant in this context.
- Aging population structure in New Zealand.
- Lack of health sector standards and certified training of carers.

Housing

The private rental sector has tended to serve short-term, transitional housing needs. The probability that more New Zealanders may remain in private rental accommodation throughout their lifetime has implications for social and health outcomes.

Safety from violence

All people have a fundamental right to be safe and live a life free from violence. *Te Rito, New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*⁶⁷ sets out the government's key goals, objectives and principles for future developments and a five-year implementation plan for maximising progress towards the vision of families and whānau living free from violence.

Access to justice

To use the Domestic Violence Act to protect themselves, women must be able to access the justice system. The Law Commission project on Women’s Access to Justice, begun in 1996, culminated in a study paper, *Women’s Access to Legal Services* (1999), and a report, *Justice: the Experiences of Māori Women, Te Tikanga o te Ture te Matauranga o nga Wahine Māori e pa ana ki tenei* (1999).

The study paper concluded that there were substantial barriers to obtaining the legal services needed to invoke the justice system’s protection and made 71 specific recommendations on changes to the ways in which legal services are currently delivered. These are currently under action by a range of government agencies.

The report on the experiences of Māori women looked at the justice system as a whole, and put forward the three general principles of partnership entailing a co-operative approach and options; enabling Māori women to access mainstream institutions, Māori institutions or a combination of both; and participation, referring to strategies to improve Māori women’s access to legal and associated social services.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Ministry of Social Development (2002) *Te Rito, New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*

⁶⁸ The work that the Legal Services Agency is currently carrying out in developing its strategic plan is acknowledged.

Legal aid

Although women account for only a small percentage of criminal legal aid expenditure, they are the predominant users of civil legal aid. They are often disadvantaged by the current system, particularly the rules governing the repayment of civil legal aid. In principle, women can apply for an exemption from repayment, but in practice exemptions are rarely granted. Some women who have charges imposed on their homes cannot shift.

An evaluation of criminal legal aid has found that proportionately fewer Māori apply for legal aid at their own instigation, and duty solicitors or judges need to advise Māori, more than non-Māori, to seek legal aid.⁶⁹

Feedback from women of other ethnic groups, including migrant and refugee women, indicates that access to legal knowledge or assistance is a considerable issue for them also, given their lack of knowledge of New Zealand's legal system and the increasing incidence of family violence within their communities.⁷⁰

Questions to consider

- Are the current goals for women (see Page 10) as they relate to well-being still relevant? If yes, why? If no, what goals would you suggest, and why?
- What do you think are the main well-being issues facing women generally?
- What issues do particular groups of women face?
- What actions could the government and community take to address these issues?
- Can you give us any examples of initiatives in your community that have worked well to improve the well-being of women and girls?

⁶⁹ K. Saville-Smith, G. Allan, G. Newbold, B. Calkin, N. Parata, L. French, D. Young and B. McCombs (1995). *In the Interests of Justice: An Evaluation of Criminal Legal Aid in New Zealand*, Legal Services Board

⁷⁰ CEDAW consultations 2002, MWA consultation with NGO Reference Group May 2002

