



## FEMMES ÉQUITÉ ATLANTIQUE



Socio-economic equity among Acadian and Francophone **women** living in minority situations in the Atlantic Provinces

*Giving everyone a fair opportunity*

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# Did you know that....

## **Benefits and pension plan >>**

The pension received upon retirement is based on only part of the income earned during a person's working life. Women who earn a low salary have a higher risk of spending their retirement in poverty. In Canada, 21.2% of women 65 years or more live in poverty versus 12.5% of men.

## **Employment insurance >>**

A large number of women work in temporary jobs, part-time jobs, for minimum wage, or do unpaid work (take care of children or seniors at home). Therefore, many women do not work enough payable hours to receive employment insurance. People on employment insurance currently receive an average of 55% of their salary.



## **Total average income of Francophone Women >>**

According to the 2001 census, French-speaking women in the Atlantic Provinces earned an average income of \$19,303, whereas French-speaking men in the same region make an average of \$29,182.

In 2001, the percentage of French-speaking women making under \$15,000 a year was:

- 64% in Newfoundland and Labrador
- 53% in Prince Edward Island
- 52% in Nova Scotia
- 54% in New Brunswick

## **Education >>**

Women living in rural communities in the Atlantic Provinces have less of a chance to continue their education due to lack of:

- transportation
- daycare and early childhood services
- money
- support, etc.

*Women live these situations, because of socio-economic inequity*

● Socio-economic inequity has a direct impact on **education, health, violence against women** and **poverty**.

## Equal pay and equivalent work >>

In Atlantic Canada, women earn less than men. In New Brunswick, the difference in salaries is equal to one month without pay.

## Violence against women >>

In 2002, eight out of ten victims in cases reported to the Canadian police were women. 62% of women murdered were victims of family violence. Eighty to 90% of children are aware of family violence at home, whether they are older children or babies who do not talk yet.

## Daycare >>

In the Atlantic Provinces, many women with young children work, but accredited daycares can only accept a certain number of children under the age of 12 (13% in NB; 7% in NL; 19% in PEI and 10% in NS).

## Early childhood >>

Each dollar that the government invests in early childhood could save \$7 in services for helping children who may need help later on in life.

## Single mothers (with children under 18) >>

In Canada, in 2001, 42.4% of single mothers lived in poverty versus 19.3% of single fathers.

## Women's health >>

The poorest people (women) are more likely to suffer from heart problems. A study showed that poverty is linked to 6,366 cases of people dying of heart disease in Canada each year.

## In conclusion >>

- Women are not poor because they want to be;
- Women do not experience abuse because they want to;
- Women are not in worse health, because they want it that way;

**Women live these situations, because of socio-economic inequity. We have to count on everyone—men and women—to change and improve the situation that is affecting our grandmothers, mothers, sisters, daughters, the entire family and our community.**

# Organization Members

*Femmes Équité Atlantique* is made up of women from the four Atlantic provinces, representing organizations dealing with women's issues, including:

- Association acadienne et francophone des aînées et aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick
- Association des femmes acadiennes et francophones de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard
- Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research
- New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity
- New Brunswick Women's Collective
- New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- Fédération des acadiennes et francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick
- Fédération des femmes acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse
- Femmes Action; Nouvelle-Écosse
- Femmes de Terre-Neuve
- Femmes francophones de l'ouest du Labrador
- Women's Studies Program at the University of New Brunswick
- Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Île-du-Prince-Édouard et Nouveau-Brunswick



## FEMMES ÉQUITÉ ATLANTIQUE

### Femmes Équité Atlantique

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## BACKGROUND

Socio-economic equity among Acadian and Francophone women living in minority situations in the Atlantic Provinces is an initiative undertaken in January 2004, by the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research. The goal of this initiative is to try to answer the following questions:

***What are the repercussions of socio-economic inequity on poverty, education, violence and health?***

***Why does this inequity exist?***

***What can we do as a community?***

The *Groupe Femmes Équité Atlantique (FÉA)* is made up of organizations that deal with women's issues in the four Atlantic Provinces, and was created in fall 2004.

***What is meant by inequity?***

Any public policy developed without analyzing the social and economic impacts on women, men, children, seniors, people with special needs and families may result in inequity. Inequity is the result of an unfair situation.

## MANDATE

FÉA's mandate is to improve the socio-economic situation of Acadian and French women in the Atlantic provinces.

## OBJECTIVES

FÉA intends to continue its mandate by adopting the following objectives:

- to offer Acadian and French women in the Atlantic provinces opportunities to become informed, question themselves and come together to work on issues related to socio-economic inequity
- to offer the work tools to help them share the information received in their communities
- to offer support services for women who want to share information on socio-economic inequity with groups or people from similar backgrounds
- to join with other groups working to improve the welfare of the population.

## ACTIVITIES

FÉA carries out activities that involve sharing information with a large number of women about socio-economic inequity by:

- offering workshops on socio-economic inequity
- offering training on the gender-based analysis tool and other tools that can help influence public policy
- workshops on pay equity - equal pay for equivalent work

*s'informer, se questionner et se regrouper pour résoudre les problèmes*