

FACTS & INSIGHTS

THE IMPACT ON WOMEN

■ The job creation programs in the Harper government's stimulus package are aimed at physical infrastructure and construction programs which are male dominated industries. These are critical investments but it is equally important to invest stimulus dollars in our social infrastructure (like health care, early childhood education and community-based social services) which are female dominated services.

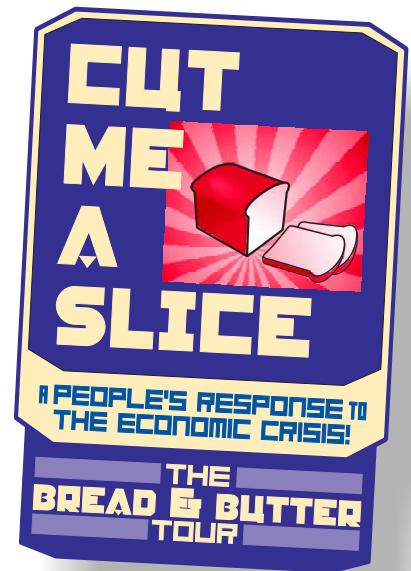
■ Only 32% of unemployed women qualify for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. Essentially two in every three working women who pay into EI don't receive a single penny in benefits if they lose their jobs. The key reason is that the program doesn't recognize that women have different patterns of paid work than men — because of their family responsibilities.

■ Women are at a significant disadvantage when it comes to retirement security. They are a lot less likely to have a workplace pension plan or private savings to rely on. For most retired women, OAS and GIS benefits are their sole

source of income but the rates just are not high enough to maintain a decent standard of living.

■ Women are more vulnerable to the effects of an economic downturn. The majority of working women are in the unpaid informal economy and insecure forms of employment with lower earnings. That's why in times of economic upheaval women often experience the negative consequences more rapidly and are slower to enjoy the benefits of recovery.

■ Women's equality was a low priority for the Harper government long before the current economic crisis hit. Harper implemented tax cuts that had very little benefit for most women; cancelled major investments in early childhood education; did nothing to make employment insurance accessible to more women; failed to address the gender wage gap; and revoked pay equity rights for women.



OBVIOUS SOLUTIONS

- The federal and provincial governments must:
 - ◆ Invest more stimulus dollars in female dominated social infrastructure programs;
 - ◆ Immediately increase GIS benefits;
 - ◆ Improve access to EI for women;
 - ◆ Implement full pay equity rights;
 - ◆ Create a national early childhood education program;
 - ◆ Create a national elder care program.

TAKE ACTION

- Visit www.peoplesresponse.ca so you can:
 - ◆ Find out about town hall meetings in your community;
 - ◆ Connect with like-minded people and get involved with a virtual campaign;
 - ◆ Make your voice heard by sending an email to your Member of Parliament, completing a short survey, and posting your own note or video;
 - ◆ Download information and other resources such as fact sheets, videos and podcasts.
- Invite your friends, family and colleagues to get involved and speak out.