

Women and Poverty

Women traditionally have higher poverty rates than men, and the differences often arise from the disadvantages women face in the paid labour force and the disproportionately large responsibilities they have for the care of their children.

Higher poverty rates

The poverty rate for women in 2003 was 17.1 percent, higher than the rate of 14.7 percent for men. This was mainly driven by the higher poverty rates for unattached women and single-parent mothers.

Unattached women had a poverty rate of 42.1 percent in 2003, eight percentage points higher than the rate for unattached men.

The poverty rate for single-parent mothers was 48.9 percent in 2003, the highest rate for any family type.

Education helps ...

but women still face hurdles.

Women with higher levels of education have lower rates of poverty.

Families that rely on women as their major income earner are more likely to be living in poverty. This applies even when women have the same level of education as men who are major income earners. The only exception is for single, working-age women with a BA.

