



Wider Opportunities for Women

ECONOMIC SECURITY DEFINITIONS FOR DISCUSSION

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2008

UN Human Rights Declaration

Article 25.(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

World Bank

It is the vision of the World Bank Group to contribute to an inclusive and sustainable globalization - to overcome poverty, enhance growth with care for the environment, and create individual opportunity and hope.

- World Bank President, Robert B. Zoellick

Beijing Conference on Women

Article 15. Equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women, and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their well-being and that of their families as well as to the consolidation of democracy;

Article 16. Eradication of poverty based on sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice requires the involvement of women in economic and social development, equal opportunities and the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centered sustainable development.

Britain Minimum Income Standard

A minimum standard of living in Britain today includes, but is more than just, food, clothes and shelter. It is about having what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society.

The standard specifies an income sufficient to reach a minimum acceptable standard of living – a standard that social policy should aspire for everyone to meet. The standard is rooted in social consensus about the goods and services that everyone in modern Britain should be able to afford, while at the same time drawing on expert knowledge about basic living requirements and actual expenditure patterns.

Wider Opportunities for Women

Economic security cannot be achieved in a single step; it requires strategies that create ladders out of poverty that provide assistance, guidance and time families need to accomplish their financial goals. WOW's geographically-based measures of income adequacy promote a measure of income that respects the autonomy goals of individuals and families, rather than a measure of what we all struggle to avoid – abject poverty. WOW's tools assist individuals, community-based organizations, and policymakers at all levels of government help low-income working families achieve long-term economic security in work years and into retirement.

Mobility Agenda

We want to live in a place where all have the opportunity and resources necessary to contribute and participate fully in our economy and democracy. We all fare better when no one falls too far behind and the economy works for everyone.

<http://www.mobilityagenda.org/reframingthepovertydebate>

Children's Defense Fund

Increased investments in education, including job training, and accelerated job creation promise to help families find employment and move out of poverty. We must make work pay by guaranteeing families a livable minimum wage, regularly adjusted for inflation, and offering them, as needed, affordable housing, food stamps, and the child care and leave policies that will enable them to work.

NYC Center for Economic Opportunity

The threshold is set to equal roughly 80% of median family expenditures on this “market basket” of necessities, plus a little bit more for other necessary purchases and is adjusted to reflect geographic differences in the cost of shelter. The threshold is adjusted annually by the items in this “market basket” of necessities. This ensures that the poverty threshold reflects changes in the nation's standard of living.

- The resource measure includes tax liabilities and credits along with the cash value of in-kind benefits such as Food Stamps and housing subsidies.
- Resources are also adjusted to reflect necessary expenditures related to work, such as transportation costs and child care. Medical out-of-pocket expenses are subtracted from income, since what families must spend to maintain their health is not available for purchasing other necessities.

National Academy of Sciences: Although the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report recommends measuring poverty using income, not everyone agrees that this is the appropriate resource measure to use.

Many researchers argue that it is preferable, for a combination of theoretical and empirical reasons, to look at what families actually consume or spend rather than at their income in order to determine their poverty status. A basic premise of this view is that families and individuals derive material well-being from the actual consumption of goods and services rather than from the receipt of income *per se*; hence, it is appropriate to estimate their consumption directly.