



NEW MEXICO **WOMEN**.ORG

Advancing Opportunities for Women and Girls.





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NewMexicoWomen.Org Works to Advance Opportunities For Women And Girls Statewide So That They Can Lead Self-Sufficient, Healthy And Empowered Lives

EDUCATE: Through research, communications, and trainings, NMW.O brings public attention to the issues affecting women and girls with an eye toward influencing philanthropy and policy.

LEAD: NMW.O Listens to community and facilitates alliances among non-profits, funders and other sectors in order to concentrate resources and foster collaboration.

INVEST: NMW.O leverages philanthropic investments in programs serving women and girls statewide through our donor education and strategic grant making efforts.

2017 RESEARCH REPORT:

The Heart of Gender Justice in New Mexico: *Intersectionality, Economic Security, and Health Equity*

A joint research project of NewMexicoWomen.Org and a multi-disciplinary research team of social policy scholars of color from University of New Mexico College of Population Health and RWJF Center for Health Policy.

Focusing on women in New Mexico, this report includes qualitative findings from statewide community dialogues around gender, health, and economic equity, as well as quantitative findings from an analysis on the link between economic security and women's health status by race and ethnicity.



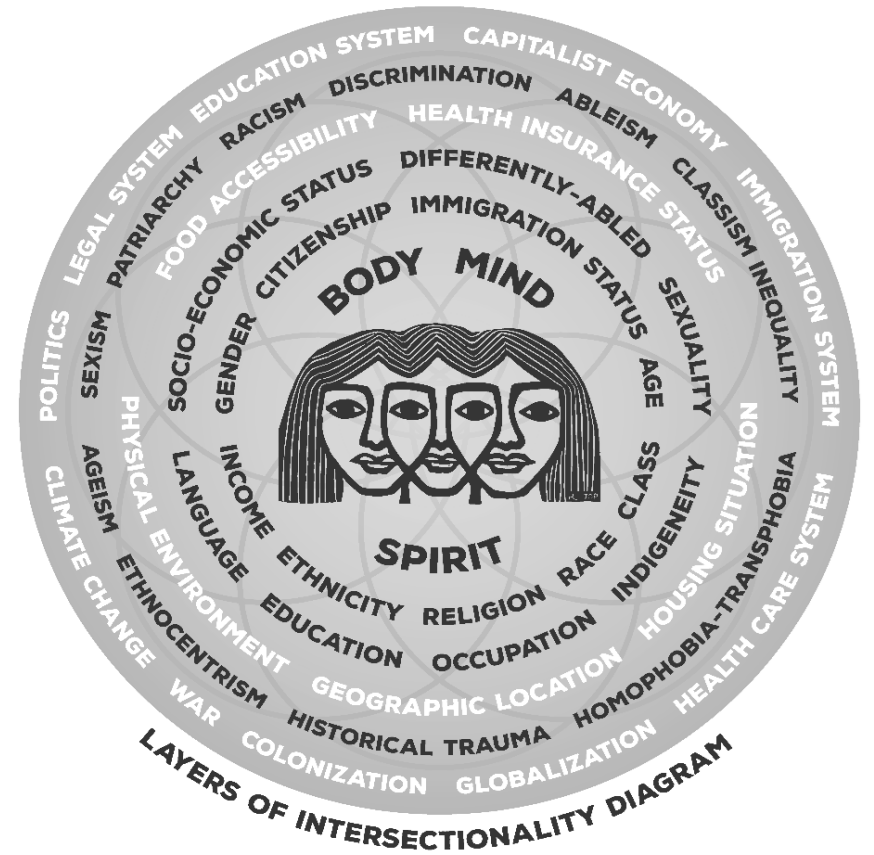
Purpose and Aims of Community Engagement and Research

1. Identify the catalytic intersections between health equity and economic security in New Mexico;
2. Learn about the lived experiences of communities in relation to this intersection and recognize community members as experts;
3. Clarify and prioritize the particular needs of communities in this field; and
4. Determine what role NMW.O will play in addressing those needs and supporting the work of communities.



Approach - Intersectionality

- Analytic tool, Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1989
- Understanding how systems of oppression intersect
- Articulating multiple aspects of identity and experience that enrich health, economic opportunities, and lives, as well as challenge, and complicate them.
- Acknowledging how gender intersects with other social factors such as race, class, ability, sexuality, religion, age, and environment to impact one's lived experiences.



GENDER EQUITY

"I feel unsafe a lot, being a woman and being gay. Being out with my family and my daughter and what people say, or how they relate to me and my wife."

—Santa Fe participant

"I work on a farm and supervise two males slightly younger than me, and it's interesting that the assumption whenever anyone gets to the field—is that one of the men would be in charge."

—Las Cruces participant

SOCIO ECONOMIC EQUITY

Economic insecurity is most prevalent among Native American, Hispanic, and foreign-born women in New Mexico. Native American women are more than twice as likely to be poor than White women in New Mexico.

Participants described how challenging it is for communities that have experienced traumas and borne the brunt of ongoing structural inequalities to achieve economic security.

HEALTH EQUITY

Regarding access to health care, Native American and Hispanic women face the greatest challenges in New Mexico. Hispanic women are over 25% less likely than White women to be insured.

While exercise and diet are critically linked to one's health, communities described physical well-being and healthy bodies as an issue of justice and not simply personal choice.

"All my life I was always on the heavy side. Now when I really reflect back...I realize when I was little, I was an emotional eater...historical trauma was one of the things that caused that."

—Gallup participant

RACIAL EQUITY

Social determinants have a disproportionate impact on the health, economic opportunities, and well-being of women and girls of color.

"As a White man, I benefit economically from racism...Some of my ancestors were given land, Native people's land, for free, and we were given access to credit. We were able to accrue wealth, whereas people of color were not."

—Albuquerque participant



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IMMIGRATION STATUS

Foreign-born women are nearly twice as likely to be poor than US-born women in New Mexico.

A woman's immigration status as documented or undocumented is inextricably linked to her health and economic opportunities.

"The border is with you wherever you are."

—Las Cruces participant

HEALING HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Participants stated that poor health, gender-based violence, mental health issues, and breakdown in family systems are caused in part by historical and intergenerational trauma.

"Nobody ever talks about the historical trauma that has occurred in these communities with colonialism...There's a lot of pain."

—Española participant

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Participants expressed how low-income communities and communities of color experience the detrimental effects of environmental contamination in a disproportionate way—for example, by losing access to safe and clean outdoor spaces.

"Everybody on the reservation was thinking, 'Oh, we don't live by a uranium mine, so we're okay.' What they're not realizing is those uranium mines were never cleaned up. It's still seeping into our groundwater."

—Gallup participant

EQUITY FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural communities across the state described a context of government underinvestment in services and safety nets, resulting in negative health outcomes for women.

In New Mexico, women living at or near a metropolitan area were 20% less likely to be obese, 21% more likely to have a mammogram, and 24% more likely to get a checkup within a two-year period than women living in a rural area.



How does our work relate to CCJ Interim Committee?

Recent data and news articles:

“...data shows the population of women in prison in the state had increased by 47 percent since the start of 2001” –The SF New Mexican

“40 percent of female inmates in New Mexico are incarcerated for drug offenses” –The SF New Mexican

“We have spent the last three or four years scratching our heads trying to figure out what is going on with the female population.” –New Mexico Sentencing Commission

“Fifty percent of the occupancy at our jail right now, at the Doña Ana County Detention Center, are people that are waiting for mental health pretrial competency—mental health support and assessments. Women typically have a 30 percent higher rate of being jailed with mental health conditions than male counterparts. We need to figure out a way to provide mental health services asap.”

-Las Cruces research participant



How does our work relate to CCJ Interim Committee?

“Participants across the state described a context of structural underinvestment (and in some cases divestment) in mental health and substance abuse recovery services, with decreasing resources available, especially in rural communities.”

“Rural communities described a lack of consistent services and safety nets. The result is very little trust in services, as one day they are open and available, and the next they are defunded and closed.”



Systems Approach to Policymaking

- Consider the conditions (including the health system) in which people are born, live, work, play, pray, and age, also known as the **social determinants of health**.
- Understand how health conditions are shaped by **social structures which impact distributions of power** and drive **allocations of resources**.
- Focus on **root causes** to poverty, violence, and incarceration.
- Multi-sector approaches to systems change and resource allocations.

Recommendations for Policymakers and Public Sector

- **Identify communities most impacted:** Low-income and rural communities of color tend to be impacted the most.
- **Acknowledge the effects of historic trauma and support healing efforts:** Communities want longer-term, culturally rooted healing as a critical need to tackle root causes to the issues we face in our state.
- **Apply a social justice lens to funding and policymaking:** Communities described the need to educate funders and policymakers.
- **Utilize and partner with the nonprofit and philanthropic sector:** This sector fills the gaps where the public sector cannot.



Thank you! Questions?

