

Wedge Provisioning Research Project Abstract
December 2005

Wedge was chosen as the project's name to suggest its focus on women and communities 'on the edge' of the global economy working together 'on the edge' of new ideas and strategies for surviving with dignity. We are looking in a new way at the work which women do as women's work can't be neatly divided into categories of paid and unpaid work. They work in the arenas of family, employment and the community in complex and overlapping ways. We are trying out the concept of provisioning to describe the work that women do. By provisioning we mean all the activities that women do to provide the necessities of life for all those they are responsible for inside and outside the home. This research project examines the actual patterns of work that women do in their households, communities and jobs. A particular interest of the project is the provisioning work that women do in the community. We know less about this area of women's work than we do about their work in the family and paid employment. The project objectives are: (1) To find new ways to understand the endless amount of work that women do to maintain the lives of those they feel responsible for, especially the work they do in the community. (2) To develop better social practices, programs and policies that make it easier for women to provide for others without sacrificing their own well-being. We are conducting interviews, focus groups, field visits, and policy analysis in six different community sites in two provinces, including a food cooperative, a community resource centre, an older women's network, and young immigrant women's training program, a tenant housing group in a public housing, and an employment program for women leaving abusive relationships.

["Provisioning: Thinking about all of women's work"](#) by S. Neysmith, M. Reitsma-Street, S. Baker Collins & E. Porter. *Canadian Woman Studies* 2004 Vol 23(3/4): 192-198.

["Provisioning": Conceptualizing the work of women for 21st century social policy](#) by S. Neysmith & M. Reitsma-Street. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 2005, Vol 28(5): 381-391.

