# Investing in women & communities through non-custodial measures

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PROMOTING ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT FOR WOMEN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

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# Making the case: The investment model & non-custodial measures

The **investment model**:

Funding policies and practices that improve outcomes by investing in all forms of capital

Two key points:

The **rationale** for non-custodial measures

Non-custodial measures in **policy and practices**

# The rationale for non-custodial measures

**Acknowledging the gendered harm** and **unnecessary suffering** for women in prison

**Recognizing the ability** of justice systems to make **rapid change** in the face of the pandemic

**Grounding in** the realities and profiles of women as **low risk**

These policy actions **open the door** to a **larger discussion** of how women can be **more safely and more productively supervised within their own communities** through non-custodial alternatives to imprisonment.

# The rationale for non-custodial measures

Non-custodial measures **avoid the problems created by unnecessary and punitive imprisonment**, through **funding and implementing community policies** that include:

- ◦ programs and services **that target pathways** factors that **improve outcomes for women** in real-world settings
- ◦ meeting **fundamental needs** such as housing, employment as well as treatment
- ◦ practices that emphasize **relationships** with family and children (IPV must be considered)
- ◦ opportunities to both **develop and maintain community ties**
- ◦ **local investment to strengthen community** rather than spending on often far-removed prisons

# Empirical evidence for non-custodial measures

A **review** of evidenced-based practice and corresponding evaluation studies demonstrates both **the utility and the efficiency of community-based sanctions.**

A review of these findings show clearly that:

**external services** such as education and training, housing supports, childcare and other resources that target pathway factors

when combined with therapies and treatment opportunities that **support internal change** through treatment, therapy and other healing services

**produce the strongest positive outcome** in terms of pro-social behavior, decreased problematic behaviors and overall success on supervision.

# NCMs are community-based solutions

To **improve outcomes** for women, their children and the community, successful NCMs share these steps:

**Engage individuals** as full partners in developing treatment plans

Develop a **system of comprehensive and holistic services** with **case-management**

Address **key pathway needs through external services** that support **internal change** through treatment and external resources **to promote self-sufficiency**

Directly address **intimate partner violence (IPV) and trauma**

Provide **staff training and administrative support**

Community **collaboration**

Incorporate **safety and dignity at every stage** of involvement in CJ system

# More evidence

Convincingly, this research shows that **investing in women-centered practices amplifies t**his effect.

Gender-informed and evidenced-based practice then is **more effective** in meeting the goals of the justice system **than punitive sanctions.**

# The time is now to reduce over-reliance on prison and its counterproductive outcomes

We have **invested in the failure** of the prison

Charge now is to **invest in future success of gender-responsive NCM**

**NCM with gender-appropriate** services has been shown repeatedly to produce **much better outcomes than prison sentences of any kind**

We have **an opportunity** to change the **way we spend criminal justice and public safety money**

# A puzzle, not a mystery

Implementing human rights reforms through NCM is not a **mystery**. It is a **puzzle.** These pieces are supplied in the **NCM Toolkit**, as well as in the **Bangkok Rules and supporting human rights instruments**

We have the **pieces**; now we need to find the **will**

**Thank you** for listening to me.