

**Don't run out of money before you run out of life, says Sylvia Walker,  
Market Development Manager, Old Mutual**

Women should start taking responsibility for their own retirement planning and stop relying on their partners.

With the reality of divorce, retrenchment and severe illness, relying on one's partner can have disastrous consequences. Women that rely solely on their partner's plans for retirement could find themselves in trouble, especially if their marital status changes suddenly.

One only has to consider the high divorce rate to see that many women's lives do not have the fairy tale endings they'd planned. Coupled with the growing incidence of severe illness like breast cancer, the odds of a comfortable, debt-free retirement are often stacked against them.

Coupled to this is the fact that most women outlive men by 5 years on average, leaving women alone in their golden years.

If you think you are safe because you are covered by your company pension fund, think again! Your employer suddenly has no further need for your service. What now? You belong to a pension fund, but you are now compelled to dip into these funds earlier than intended. Before long, you will run out of money.

Another common scenario is during your working career you've changed jobs often and cashed in rather than preserved your pension fund. As a result your present pension fund may not be adequate to sustain you for the next twenty to thirty years after retirement.

With around one-third of retirement annuities owned by women, it is clear that they do not take their retirement as seriously as their male counterparts. And, more often than not they find themselves solely responsible for their family's financial future due to circumstances beyond their control.

So how much money does one need to retire comfortably every month? How can you fill the income gap that will occur at retirement to be able to enjoy the lifestyle you've been used to? What provision has your partner made for your retirement, and what will happen if you outlive your partner? How will your retirement income be affected by inflation? These are some of the important issues that you need to consider and discuss with your financial adviser.

Married, or single, these are issues that should not be neglected if you want to put your feet up and enjoy your golden years.

Speak to your Old Mutual broker or adviser today to get financial peace-of-mind.