

PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON THE STATUS OF
WOMEN
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR



Annual Report
2012-2013



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May 29, 2013

Honourable Charlene Johnson
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Johnson:

On behalf of the members of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, it is my pleasure to submit our 2012-2013 Annual Report in accordance with the guidelines for Annual Performance Reports for Category 2 Government Entities.

This report was prepared under my direction. My signature reflects Council members' accountability for the results contained in this report.

Sincerely,

Linda Ross
President/CEO

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1.0 Organizational Overview

The Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women (PACSW) is an arms-length, external agency which reports to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women. It was established by the Provincial Government in 1980 and received legislative standing with the introduction of the *Status of Women Advisory Council Act*.

The Advisory Council consists of 11 members, including a President/CEO and a Vice-President. It was created to advise the Provincial Government on issues affecting the status of women and to raise awareness of women's issues within the general public.

The President/CEO is a full-time salaried staff position filled through a public service competition. The successful candidate is appointed to a three-year term by the Lieutenant-Governor.

Members of the Advisory Council are selected following a nomination call by the Women's Policy Office. They are appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor for three-year terms of office and are eligible for reappointment.

1.1 Advisory Council Members

Advisory Council members bring diverse experiences and feminist analysis to the work of the Advisory Council. Their demonstrated leadership and commitment to advancing the status of all women in Newfoundland and Labrador is vital to the work on women's equality issues from a community, regional and provincial perspective. Council members bring experiences of rural and urban women, multicultural and Aboriginal women, women with disabilities, and women with experience in social, economic and political sectors.

'The Advisory Council plays an integral role in our government's efforts to advance the status of women by bringing forth the concerns and issues of diverse groups of women in Newfoundland and Labrador.'

Honourable Charlene Johnson, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

In April 2012, the current Council was established with three new Council members appointed, two members reappointed for a second term and five members reappointed for a third term.

2012-2013 Council Members:

- Linda Ross, President/CEO - St. John's
- Carolyn Lavers, Vice-President - Port au Choix
- Mary Pia Benuen - Sheshatshiu

- Stephanie Flowers - Happy Valley-Goose Bay
- Yamuna Kutty - St. John's
- Hilda Whelan - Whitbourne
- Michelle Murdoch - St. John's
- Kelly Power - Paradise
- Melita Collier - St. Alban's
- Lorraine Hearn - Grand Falls-Windsor
- Cynthia Benoit - Conne River

1.2 Staff

The Advisory Council operates with a complement of four full-time staff, including the President/CEO. The four full-time staff are:

- Gillian Spurrell, Executive Administrator
- Jessica Gallant, Research and Policy Analyst*
- Sarah Flynn, Communications and Outreach Director
- Linda Ross, President/CEO

*Jessica Gallant commenced maternity leave in September 2012 and is being temporarily replaced with Erin Drover

See **Appendix A** for Advisory Council member biographies.

1.3 Mandate

The mandate of the Advisory Council is derived from Section 3 of the *Status of Women Advisory Council Act*. It reads as follows:

3. *The advisory council shall*

- Advise the minister on those matters relating to the status of women that the minister refers to the advisory council for consideration;*
- Advise the minister on those matters relating to the status of women that the advisory council feels appropriate;*
- Bring before the government and the public matters of interest and concern to women; and*
- Establish the general policies that will govern the organization, administration and operation of the advisory council.*

Vision:

Equality, equity and inclusion for women in Newfoundland and Labrador.

1.4 Values

Advisory Council members and staff work from a feminist perspective to advance the status of women in Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2011, the Advisory Council developed its set of values: commitment, dynamic, inclusiveness, evolving, respectful, celebration, collaborative.

See **Appendix B** for a description of these values.

1.5 Location

The leased, accessible office space is located at 15 Hallett Crescent, Suite 103, St. John's, NL.

Working for social, cultural,
economic, legal and political
equality for women of
Newfoundland and Labrador.



1.6 Budget

In April 2012, the Advisory Council was allocated \$462,700.

1.7 Lines of Business

Lines of business are defined as those discrete and coherent sets of programs, services and/or products that represent what the Advisory Council provides to its external clients.

In keeping with the Advisory Council's legislated mandate, the following lines of business have been identified:

(1) Advising Government on Issues Affecting the Status of Women

The Advisory Council provides advice as requested by the Minister and other Government of Newfoundland and Labrador departments and agencies. On an ongoing basis, the Advisory Council is asked for recommendations on changes to, or the creation of; legislation, policies and practices affecting the status of women in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The work of the Advisory Council is centred on improving Government of Newfoundland and Labrador policies, programs, practices, services, legislation and budget allocations as a means to advance the equality of women in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Advisory Council also brings emerging issues and concerns to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. It works with individual women, women's groups, and the Women's Policy Office to identify the issues and develop an analysis of problems and solutions.

While the Advisory Council is not the direct agent of change, Advisory Council members provide advice and direction to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and advocate for systemic changes. Advice is generally provided through position papers, briefs, written recommendations and in the course of face to face meetings. The Advisory Council identifies processes to move existing policy forward or to deal with gaps. It also engages in issue analysis, research and consultation. In addition, the Advisory Council participates in a variety of committees and working groups, which provide information and recommendations related to advancing the status of women.

(2) Outreach and Consultation

The Advisory Council conducts outreach to equality-seeking and community based organizations and to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

by responding to requests for workshops, presentations and speeches on gender specific issues, women's experiences, feminist analysis and gender inclusive analysis. In addition, the Advisory Council engages in provincial outreach by travelling and meeting with groups of women in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to discuss issues related to the status of women.

When working on specific issues, the Advisory Council reaches out to stakeholders, clients and others for information and collaboration. It engages in networking and consultation with women's groups throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, as resources allow and as indicated by the strategic priorities.



The Advisory Council's outreach work is done using communication tools such as email, phone and conference calls. The Advisory Council is engaged in outreach through travel and face- to- face meetings with women in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Advisory Council hosts and participates in roundtable meetings; brings groups together to facilitate information exchanges; and participates in local, regional and national meetings and conferences. The Advisory Council also engages in outreach with women's equality-seeking groups through participation on outside boards and advisory committees.

(3) Public Education and Awareness

The Advisory Council's third line of business is focused on providing public education and awareness on issues related to women's social, legal, economic, political and cultural equality.

The Advisory Council uses the media, both print and electronic, to provide information on the status of women, proactively and reactively. This enables the Advisory Council to provide public feminist reaction and analysis on issues that negatively and positively affecting women's equality and inclusion.

The Advisory Council creates and/or circulates information, briefs, reports and other documents related to the status of women. The Advisory Council also publishes articles in magazines, periodicals and the print media. Additional public education and awareness initiatives include the hosting and co-hosting of educational roundtables and workshops.

2.0 Shared Commitments

It is the mandate of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women to 'bring before the Government and the public, matters of interest and concern to women'. This work is achieved through partnerships and collaborative work with various government departments and agencies. Staff at the Council also works closely with community groups, sitting on committees and boards. Through this work the Advisory Council gains an in depth understanding of issues related to the status of women which is critical to the Advisory Council's provision of advice on policy development.

During 2012-2013, the supportive and collaborative working relationship with the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and the Women's Policy Office was key to the Advisory Council fulfilling its mandate and reaching its goals. Throughout this period, the Advisory Council shared information, analysis and strategies to advance a variety of women's equality issues.

The Advisory Council also established and maintained positive working relationships with the following Departments and their respective Ministers and/or senior staff:

- Child, Youth and Family Services
- Advanced Education and Skills
- Finance
- Justice
- Health and Community Services
- Education
- Natural Resources
- Transportation and Works
- Innovation, Business and Rural Development
- Office of Public Engagement

The Advisory Council worked with many feminist groups and other community organizations including:

Provincial

- Status of Women Councils
- Multicultural Women's Organization of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre
- Regional Coalitions against Violence
- Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Students

- Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs
- THRIVE-Community Youth Network
- Stella Burry Community Services
- Planned Parenthood-NL Sexual Health Centre
- Office to Advance Women Apprentices

National

- Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women

Representation on external committees or the board of directors

- Women Interested in Successful Employment
- Women in Resource Development Corporation
- Newfoundland and Labrador Coalition Against Human Trafficking
- Coalition against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth
- Women and Sport Committee
- YWCA Renewal Team

Collaborations

- Violence Prevention Initiative
- Justice Minister's Committee on Violence against Women
- Royal Newfoundland Constabulary on important issues related to violence against women
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police on issues related to violence against women

These feminist groups and community organizations were important partners in advancing the work of the Advisory Council. Through collaboration with the Status of Women Councils, the Advisory Council was able to contribute to increased awareness of the role of the Advisory Council as well as expand our knowledge of gender issues in regions across the Province. The Advisory Council facilitated and hosted meetings and events that included a reception for Tracy Hardy, Assistant Commissioner, RCMP to meet community organizations who are doing work for women's equality; meetings on gender and justice and a cross-sectoral discussion on women and minimum wage. Partnerships with the Violence Prevention Initiative, the St. John's Status of Women Council, the Eastern Region Committee against Violence and the Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre have contributed to the Advisory Council being able to increase public awareness of violence against women, through public and media presentations. Work with Women in Resource Development Corporation, Women Interested in Successful Employment, the

Office to Advance Women Apprentices and the Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs has centred on women's earned income and employment, women owned businesses as part of the supply chain and women in the skilled trades. Together with these groups the Advisory Council was able to raise awareness and provide input to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador regarding barriers to women in the skilled trades and supports for women owned businesses to benefit from natural resource development. Throughout the report there is further elaboration on the work with various partners.

Collaboration with the Women's Policy Office crosses all work of the Advisory Council given the shared commitments to advancing the strategic priorities of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

3.0 Internal Governance

3.1 Meetings and Committees

The Advisory Council held four, two-day in-person meetings during the year:

- June 11-12, 2012
- September 20-21, 2012
- November 26-27, 2012
- March 11-12, 2013

Three of these meetings took place at the Advisory Council office in St. John's and the September 2012 meeting took place in Grand Falls-Windsor to coincide with the Take Back the Night March in that community.

3.2 Business Planning

The Advisory Council, having completed the second year of the 2011-2014 Business Plan, is now in the third year of the plan. The 2011-2014 Business Plan was in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Transparency and Accountability Act for category 2 entities.

The 2011-2014 Business Plan encapsulates the Advisory Council's work on a number of issues that align with the Provincial Government Strategic Directions, in addition to issues addressed by the Advisory Council during the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

4.0 Governance Issues

In consideration of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's strategic directions, and the mandate of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the following priority areas were identified by the Council members.

Issue 1: Improving Justice Services for women

Women's equality, be it legal, economic or social, is profoundly affected by the design and delivery of justice services for women. Issues of domestic violence, mental health and addictions, family law, correctional services and the court system all impact the social and economic well being of women. In keeping with its mandate to advise the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the public, during the 2011-2014 period, the Advisory Council identified key justice issues related to advancing the status of women.



Key documents such as "Out of the Darkness—Moving towards the Light", a review of the prison system in Newfoundland and Labrador and "Alone Among the Few", a report on facilities and supports for female offenders from Labrador, identified varied and complex needs of female inmates such as mental health and addiction issues, cultural differences and access to programs and supports. Justice services impact women's lives, not only as offenders but as victims of violence as well as individuals working in correctional services. Initiatives such as the Family Violence Intervention Court and the Violence Prevention Initiative highlight the importance of policies, programs and supports for women as victims as well as offenders. Policies that accommodate and support women working in correctional services are core to advancing women's ability to work in traditionally male dominated fields within corrections.

The Advisory Council maintains its membership on the Justice Minister's Committee on Violence against Women and over the past year provided advice and recommendations to the Minister of Justice on a number of initiatives. The spectrum of justice issues the Advisory Council addressed included: the Family Justice Services and Emergency Protection Orders; programs and supports for women with complex needs; sentencing for sexual assaults; leadership roles for women working in correctional facilities, domestic violence issues and gender based analysis training for those working in legal services.

Through the above mentioned work, the Advisory Council has been able to contribute to the advancement of the Provincial Government's Strategic Directions related to violence prevention and women's economic and social

equality as stipulated in Appendix A of the Business Plan 2011-2014 of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Goal 1: By March 31, 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have gathered information and provided advice and/or recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, so as to better inform policy-makers, to further women's equality within key areas of the justice system.

Measure: Provision of advice and recommendations in key areas

Indicators: Advice and recommendations pertaining to:

- Justice services for women with complex needs
- Justice services for Aboriginal women
- Justice services with respect to sexual and domestic violence
- Mitigation of negative social impacts of economic advancement

Objective 2: By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have gathered information and developed advice and/or recommendations in key areas related to justice services for women, including but not limited to, sexual assault courts, sex trade and human trafficking and correctional services.

Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and recommendations submitted to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador pertaining to:

- Justice services for women
- Sexual assault courts and alternative interventions
- Sex trade and human trafficking
- Correctional services for women

Progress Report: Improving Justice Services for Women

By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women achieved the indicator of providing advice and recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador pertaining to justice services for women, sexual assault courts and alternative interventions, the sex trade and human trafficking and correctional services for women.

Over the past year, the Advisory Council has been engaged on the issue of improving justice services for women. The Advisory Council continued to participate in coalitions and working groups of organizations providing programs and services to female offenders, many of whom have complex needs related to

histories of domestic violence, sexual assault, substance abuse and mental health issues. The Advisory Council undertook substantive research on the issue of women with complex needs and models of best practice being used in other countries to meet the needs of this particular population of women. Women with complex needs in particular face difficulties navigating various systems and services available to them. In both an oral presentation and written document to the Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women, Provincial Deputy Ministers and senior government officials, the Advisory Council discussed the issue and provided advice and recommendations on the challenges faced by women with complex needs and international best practice models to address them. The Advisory Council has also met with Navnet, a pilot project designed to provide a 'wrap-around' service for those individuals with the highest level of need. In addition, the Advisory Council collaborated with Family Justice Services and the St. John's Women's Centre to raise awareness about some of the programs currently available.

Specialized courts and court proceedings are one way to improve justice services and prevent future criminal activity in areas such as sexual violence and domestic violence. The Advisory Council has been exploring ways specialized courts and proceedings can be used to improve the justice system . Through meetings with the National Judicial Institute and the Coalition of Status of Women Councils, the Advisory Council has increased its understanding of the issue and its capacity to provide useful advice in the future.

There is increasing concern regarding the growth in the sex trade/human trafficking and organized crime in the Province. The Advisory Council currently sits on both the Newfoundland and Labrador Committee against Human Trafficking and the Coalition against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth. Working with these groups has allowed the Advisory Council to connect with frontline services providers and increase our understanding of the challenges they are dealing with, changes that are needed as well as raising awareness of the issues within the general public. In meetings with the Women's Policy Office, the Advisory Council has provided advice on how to address these issues and support vulnerable women.

The Advisory Council also continues to work on improving the services available to female offenders. Many of the women who are currently incarcerated have complex needs and face unique challenges. The Advisory Council has continued its work from last year on this important issue through its involvement with the Gender and Justice Committee. This committee has identified the particular needs of female inmates and has provided recommendations and advice about how to best meet those needs. Over the course of the past year, the Advisory Council has done follow-up with the Women's Policy Office on next steps.

Emergency Protection Orders (EPOs) are a valuable tool in supporting women experiencing domestic violence; however, it is critical that all parties clearly understand the application of such orders and the extent of what they cover. The Advisory Council provided input to the RCMP and Department of Justice officials in this regard.

The Advisory Council provided advice and recommendations on the need for increased training and public awareness of EPOs as well as the need for clarification regarding the supports provided to EPO applicants. Supportive justice services for women who have experienced sexual assault are vital, especially through the court process. The Advisory Council provided advice and recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on alternative interventions and specialized courts to deal with sexual assault cases.

Substance abuse, sex trade activities and other forms of crime pose significant challenges to advancing women's social and economic equality during a time of economic prosperity in the Province. Over the past year, the Advisory Council continued to raise awareness of the need for programs to offset these growing challenges. In meetings with the Women's Policy Office and officials from the Department of Justice, the Advisory Council has discussed concerns regarding these impacts on women. As mentioned above, the Advisory Council has provided advice and recommendations related to female offenders with complex needs, many whose personal situations have been exacerbated by the impacts of changing economic realities in the Province.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided further advice and/or recommendations for emergent issues related to justice services for women.

Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and recommendations submitted to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador pertaining to:

- The sex trade and human trafficking
- Supports for women with complex needs
- Justice services for Aboriginal women
- Supports for women experiencing sexual and domestic violence

Issue 2: Capacity Building for Historically Under-represented Groups of Women

During 2011-2014 in accordance with the mandate to advise the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on issues affecting the status of women, Council members have identified, as a priority, the contributions to ongoing strategic priorities, in particular

those involved in enhancing the capacity of historically under-represented groups of women.

Social and economic inequality, though experienced by women throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, is most prevalent amongst particular populations of women -- Aboriginal women, multicultural women, women with disabilities and women in rural and isolated areas. In line with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's continuing commitments to poverty reduction, through the Poverty Reduction Strategy, economic advancement through diversity plans and women's employment plans, reducing violence through dedicated initiatives, support to advancing women in leadership and the inclusion of persons with disabilities, the Advisory Council will continue to contribute to the shaping of public policy in order to advance women's equality.

Aboriginal women, women with disabilities and other women from historically under-represented groups experience greater poverty and more violence than other women in society. They hold fewer leadership positions and are seriously under-represented in elected office at all levels of government and at decision making tables. Support for capacity building initiatives is critical to advancing social and economic equality for these groups of women.

The Advisory Council continues to be a strong supporter of the need for inclusion in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Social and economic equality for many women in the disability community seems beyond reach. The Advisory Council continues to discuss the barriers women with disabilities face in accessing employment in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Over the past year, the Advisory Council continued to identify the need for policies and programmes which support women with complex needs.

The Advisory Council maintains very good relations with Aboriginal women's groups in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and over the past year, has met with Inuit women in Nain as well as members of the Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network to discuss issues of concern.

Meeting with women throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is a priority for the Advisory Council. Women's experience of social and economic equality differs greatly and is often dependent on where they live. Through provincial outreach initiatives over the past year, the Advisory Council met with women in smaller communities endeavouring to deepen the Advisory Council's understanding and gather information related to challenges and opportunities those women face and how best to address their needs.

Multicultural representation on the Advisory Council as well as collaboration with multicultural women on community initiatives has afforded the Advisory Council the opportunity of learning more about the barriers faced by multicultural women in

the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the social and economic challenges they face.

Through the above-mentioned work, the Advisory Council has been able to contribute to the advancement of the Provincial Government Strategic Directions related to violence prevention and women's economic and social equality as stipulated in Appendix A of the Business Plan 2011-2014 of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Goal 2: By March 31, 2014, so as to better inform policy-makers, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided advice and/or recommendations related to advancing the social and economic equality of historically under-represented groups of women.

Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador pertaining to:

- Poverty reduction
- Prevention of violence
- Leadership
- Inclusion
- Amongst historically under-represented groups of women

Objective 2: By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have gathered additional information and conducted analysis to further its advice and/or recommendations related to advancing social and economic equality for women in historically under-represented groups.

Measure: Provision of further advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations provided to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador pertaining to:

- Violence prevention initiatives
- Poverty reduction initiatives
- Training and supports to advance leadership amongst historically under-represented groups of women

Progress Report: Capacity Building for Historically Under-represented Groups of Women

By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women achieved the indicator of providing advice and recommendations related to the violence prevention initiatives, poverty reduction initiatives and training and supports to advance leadership amongst historically under-represented groups of women.

During 2012-2013, the Advisory Council continued to strengthen relationships with the above mentioned groups of women, deepening the Advisory Council's understanding of the particular challenges they face. It is through this work that the Advisory Council has been able to provide advice and recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland of Labrador.

Violence against women is a major concern for the Advisory Council. However, violence experienced by Aboriginal women, particularly Innu women, continues to be an issue discussed by Council. As such, the Council continued to affirm its support for the women's gatherings in Labrador that are part of their healing journey. Substance abuse, both alcohol and drugs have been identified as significant contributing factors in violence against women. In meeting with the Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network, issues of violence and substance abuse, particularly amongst young women were identified as emergent issues. The Advisory Council invited representatives of the RCMP and the RNC to join in a quarterly meeting in Grand Falls-Windsor to discuss issues related to violence against women and emergent trends in smaller and more rural communities. Similarly, the growing presence of drugs was identified as contributing to an increase in violence. Although the Province is fortunate in having twelve shelters for women, in some more rural regions, the issue of a safe house for a woman experiencing violence continues to pose a challenge. During 2012-2013, the Advisory Council provided advice and recommendations related to supports for Aboriginal women's organizations, emergency protection orders in smaller communities and safety planning in rural areas.

In 2012-2013, the Advisory Council continued to be actively engaged in the Women's Economic Roundtable convened by the Women's Policy Office, an important venue for discussion of policies and programmes related to advancing women's economic status through working in the skilled trades or as women owned businesses. Strategies to ensure women in historically under-represented groups continued to be an area of focus in discussions and recommendations. While in Nain, Labrador, Inuit women identified the challenges of being aware of and able to avail of opportunities in these areas.

Women's leadership constituted a significant focus for the Advisory Council in 2012-2013, with the President chairing the organizing committee for *Ovations*. The first of its kind for the Province, the *Ovations* Leadership Forum was intended to bring together a diversity of women from across the Province to focus on women's leadership at all levels of society, from community and volunteer organizations through elected positions on boards and all levels of politics. It was a priority that the forum brought together women from the disability community, multicultural community, Aboriginal women and women from rural Newfoundland and Labrador together with other women from diverse backgrounds throughout the Province. Through the experiences of seven panelists from a variety of leadership backgrounds women were afforded the opportunity of hearing about 'leading from where you are'. An important component of the Forum was the ability to garner feedback from those in attendance. Through electronic polling, questionnaires and follow-up and feedback cards, the committee was able to ascertain the areas of interest and specific needs with respect to leadership training that women from various parts of the Province were looking for. Sharing this information with the Women's Policy Office will assist in the development of follow up initiatives on women in leadership, including that of historically under-represented groups of women.

Over the past year, the Advisory Council continued to recommend support, through the 2013-2014 pre-budget submission, for the Multicultural Women's Organization and the Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network in the work they are doing to address violence, economic advancement and reduction of barriers.

Through the above mentioned work, the Advisory Council has been able to contribute to the advancement of the Provincial Government's Strategic Directions related to Violence Prevention, Women in Leadership and Decision Making and Women's Earned Income and Employment through the provision advice and recommendations with respect to women from historically under-represented groups.

Objective 3: By March 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have furthered its advice and/or recommendations related to advancing social and economic equality for women in historically under-represented groups.

Measure: Provision of further advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations provided to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador pertaining to:

- Supports to increase understanding of justice issues
- Strategies to engage historically under-represented groups of women in non-traditional occupations and businesses

- Supports and training to advance historically under-represented groups of women in leadership
- Violence prevention initiatives

Issue 3: Advancing Women's Equality in Priority Areas

In keeping with its mandate to bring before the Government and the public issues affecting the status of women, the Advisory Council has identified barriers to advancing women's economic and social equality as a strategic issue.

Through the Government support and collaboration with industry, we are seeing an increasing number of employment opportunities for women in the skilled trades and technology. While more women are entering the skilled trades and other traditionally male dominated fields, women continue to have difficulty taking advantage of these higher paying employment opportunities due to challenges associated with lack of supports, such as adequate child care. Over the past year, the Advisory Council has done significant work with the Government and community partners to encourage and support women to enter the skilled trades and technologies, while at the same time exploring options for increasing childcare spaces and facilities.

In addition to supporting women who directly work in the natural resources sector, it is important to recognize the opportunities in the Province for the business community. Traditionally, many women owned businesses have been in the retail sector which does not benefit directly from the success of the natural resources sector. The Advisory Council has together with the Government and community partners, such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs (NLOWE), been exploring business access strategies which will ensure women owned businesses will avail of the opportunities in the natural resource sector.

While many people in the Province are seeing the benefits of economic prosperity, poverty continues to be a significant issue for women and families throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Through outreach, engagement with community partners and from the women themselves, we have heard about women struggling with issues of poverty, and in particular the inability to secure, safe, affordable and accessible housing. These issues of poverty are of particular concern for women who are otherwise marginalized, for example senior women who are often living on limited and fixed incomes and women with disabilities. The Advisory Council recognizes the importance of investments in key strategies such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Provincial Social Housing Plan and the child care strategy as being critical to addressing poverty issues more broadly. Over the 2012-2013 period, the Advisory Council promoted these initiatives through outreach and provided advice and recommendations to the Government with respect to them.

Through the above mentioned work, the Advisory Council has been able to contribute to the advancement of the Provincial Government Strategic Directions related to women's earned income and employment and women's social and

economic equality as stipulated in Appendix A of the Business Plan 2011-2014 of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Goal 3: By March 31, 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided advice and/or recommendations to better inform policy-makers on the issues related to advancing women's equality, including but not limited to supports for women entering and working in traditionally male dominated fields, supports for women owned non-traditional business and supports for populations of marginalized women.

Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations provided to Government related to:

- Women in traditionally male dominated occupations and businesses
- Horizontal strategies such as poverty reduction strategies, housing strategy, equal pay and child care

Objective 2: By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided advice and/or recommendations to women in the skilled trades, non-traditional businesses and emerging priority issues as identified by the Council.

Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations provided to Government pertaining to:

- Supports for women entering and working the skilled trades
- Strategies to support the development of women owned non-traditional businesses
- Emerging priority issues as identified by the Council

Progress Report: Advancing Women's Equality in Priority Areas

By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women achieved the indicator of providing advice and recommendations pertaining to supports for women entering and working in the skilled trades, strategies to support the development of women owned non-traditional businesses, and other emerging priority issues.

The Advisory Council has continued to participate in the Women's Economic Advancement Roundtable, a multi-sectoral working group focused on women's

economic development. The Roundtable includes government representatives and community partners, and has worked to develop strategies to increase women's participation in non-traditional settings, such as the skilled trades and technologies, as well as strategies to support the development of women owned businesses.

The Advisory Council continues to work closely with the Women in Resource Development Corporation (WRDC), an organization whose mission is "to advance economic equality of women in Newfoundland and Labrador by promoting equitable participation of women in the natural resources sector". Over the past year, the Advisory Council supported the organization in its work with women entering the skilled trades and other non-traditional occupations. Through this work, the Advisory Council has had opportunities to meet with women who are working in or interested in working in the skilled trades, technology and engineering, thereby increasing the understanding of opportunities and challenges in this area. This involvement has also increased the capacity for the Advisory Council to provide advice and recommendations to government representatives, including the Deputy Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

The Advisory Council also works closely with the Office to Advance Women Apprentices. Support for female apprentices is a critical link in ensuring women's participation in the skilled trades. The Advisory Council's work with the Office has allowed discussions with women apprentices and an increased understanding of the challenges they face. These discussions included concerns about safety issues and bullying in the workplace, which assisted the Advisory Council when preparing for their participation in the Workplace Health Safety and Compensation Commission's statutory review consultation.

The Advisory Council has been involved in supporting women in the mining industry. In order to better understand the issues and circumstances of women in the mining industry, the Advisory Council participated in the Women in Mining Forum, which was held in conjunction with Newfoundland and Labrador Mining week. The forum included a lineup of women from the industry and encouraged participants to share their stories, insights and experiences. This event provided an important opportunity to broaden the Advisory Council's understanding of the issues and furthered the ability to provide advice and recommendations related to women in mining.

While much of the work is focused on supporting women in the growing natural resources sector, the Advisory Council has been involved in other non-traditional areas as well. While attending the International Association of Police Women's conference held in St. John's in 2012 and the Advisory Council was able to learn about the unique experiences of women in this area.

Over the past year, the Advisory Council has continued to work closely with the Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs (NLOWE). Through this work, the Advisory Council continues to increase its understanding of the circumstances and challenges facing women business owners. Through participating in a number of events and discussions with individual business owners, the Advisory Council has increased its capacity to advise government. One of the most important issues of discussion has been the need for business access strategies which will allow women entrepreneurs to benefit from the prosperity of the oil and gas sector. Through these discussions, the Advisory Council has increased its capacity to give advice and recommendations on these important issues. In addition to working with NLOWE, the Advisory Council has provided advice to a number of industry leaders on supporting women-owned businesses.

As discussed elsewhere in this report, one of the Advisory Council's major pieces of work this year was Ovations, an event celebrating women in Newfoundland and Labrador. This event provided an opportunity to connect with women from across the Province who work in many different areas, including natural resources, business, the military and other non-traditional areas. It also gave the Advisory Council the opportunity to connect with industry leaders on the important area of women's equality. This event provided an excellent opportunity to increase the capacity to comment on issues of relevance by meeting women from across many sectors and, and was also an opportunity to educate industry leaders.

While the above mentioned recommendations and measures are best categorized as employment-based means of advancing women's equality in non-traditional settings, strategies to address poverty more generally are also critical to advancing women's equality. These strategies are particularly important for women who may be otherwise marginalized, such as senior women, aboriginal women, multi-cultural women and women with disabilities. Although the following points outline the Advisory Council's work around strategies to address poverty amongst marginalized women in particular, it is noteworthy that when making recommendations with respect to support for women in the non-traditional settings and strategies to support the development of women owned business, the Advisory Council always endeavours, where appropriate, to highlight the circumstances and needs of specific groups of women.

The Advisory Council continued to support and work with Women Interested in Successful Employment (WISE), an organization which provides support to women in gaining the basic skills and training they need to find employment and thereby increase their social and economic status. Our work with WISE further informed our understanding of the needs of women seeking employment in all sectors.

Safe, affordable, and accessible child care is a significant issue for women throughout the Province. This is particularly significant for single income families who say that finding child care is challenging. It is also notably an issue for women working in non-traditional settings, who are often required to train and work away from their communities, outside the typical 9-5, Monday-Friday schedule. This year, the Advisory Council met with a government official to discuss the 10 Year Child Care Strategy, thereby increasing the understanding of issues and the plan for the years ahead.

The Advisory Council continued to hear women's concerns about meeting their basic needs, especially for those women from single-income and low-income families. As the Province grows more prosperous, the cost of meeting basic needs has increased. The Advisory Council has provided advice and recommendations related to poverty. The Advisory Council has participated in and provided advice on issues related to housing and homelessness through participation in the Housing and Homelessness Network and by participating in a consultation on Social Housing. Furthermore, the Advisory Council has provided advice and recommendations to the Government regarding legislation around rental increases in the Residential Tenancies Act. Finally, the Advisory Council has provided advice and recommendations on an appropriate minimum wage, given the increase in costs throughout the Province.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have further made recommendations related to women in the skilled trades, non-traditional businesses and emerging priority issues as identified by the Council.

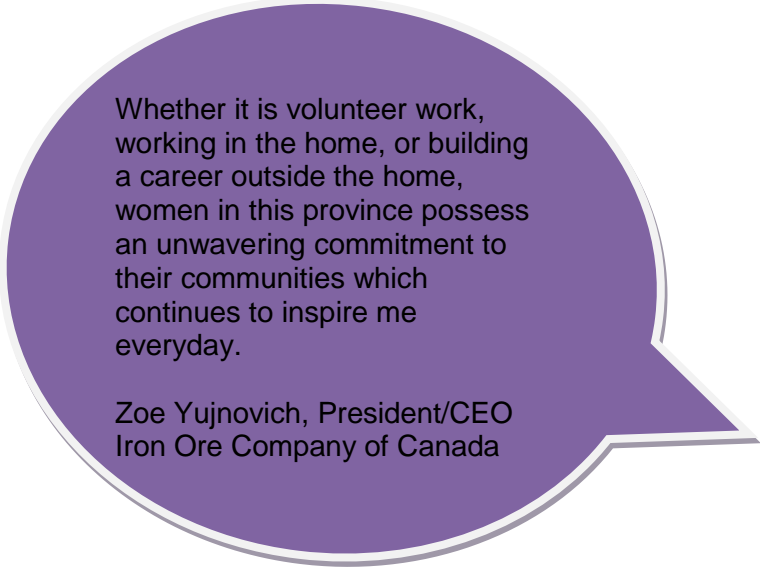
Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations provided to the Government pertaining to:

- Supports for women entering and working the skilled trades
- Support for women entrepreneurs
- Access to quality, affordable childcare
- Emerging priority issues as identified by the Council

Issue 4: Advancing Women in Leadership

Women continue to be under-represented in elected office at all levels of government. Further to this, women are under-represented in senior leadership and decision making positions within corporations, government at all levels and on agencies, boards and commissions. According to the Conference Board of Canada, at the present rate of change in Canada, it will take 151 years for women to achieve parity on Boards.



Whether it is volunteer work, working in the home, or building a career outside the home, women in this province possess an unwavering commitment to their communities which continues to inspire me everyday.

Zoe Yujnovich, President/CEO
Iron Ore Company of Canada

The focus on women in leadership continues to be a priority for the Advisory Council. While the Advisory Council has seen changes with more women in municipal councils and increasing numbers of women appointed Deputy Ministers in the Province, women continue to be under-represented in leadership positions in general.

Over the past year, the Advisory Council worked to raise awareness of the need for more women in leadership and decision-making positions by speaking about the issue in outreach sessions and public engagements. The Advisory Council met with young women in Stephenville to discuss leadership training in their community.

Most significantly, during 2012-2013 the Advisory Council played the lead role in organizing *Ovations: Applauding Accomplishments of Women in Our Communities* in St. John's. *Ovations* was an event created to celebrate women in Newfoundland and Labrador, recognizing their contributions and leadership throughout history. The President of the Advisory Council chaired the organizing committee of women from business, community, industry and government.

Through media interviews, the Advisory Council further elaborated on the need for more women in leadership, across elected political positions as well as on boards, agencies and commissions where the representation of women remains very low.

Through the above mentioned work, the Advisory Council has been able to contribute to the advancement of the Provincial Government's Strategic Directions related to women in leadership and decision making as stipulated in Appendix A of the Business Plan 2011-2014 of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Goal 4: By March 31, 2014, so as to better inform policy-makers, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided advice and/or recommendations related to advancing women's equality through addressing barriers to women's representation in leadership and decision making positions.

Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations provided to the Provincial Government related to:

- Women in leadership and decision making positions

Objective 2: By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided advice and/or recommendations related to key areas of support for increasing women's representation in leadership and decision making positions.

Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations pertaining to:

- Training and supports for women running for elected office
- Training and supports for women on boards, agencies and commission
- Increasing women in leadership and decision making positions

Progress Report: Advancing Women in Leadership

By March 31, 2013 the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women achieved the indicator of providing advice and/or recommendations pertaining to training and supports for women to get involved in leadership roles.

The intent of *Ovations* was to celebrate the leadership and accomplishments of women in the Province. The event addressed many of the Advisory Council's Governance Issues for 2012-2013 including women in leadership. *Ovations* was comprised of an afternoon Leadership Forum held at the Delta ballroom and an evening celebration at the Convention Centre. The Forum featured seven women leaders from community and business who spoke about their challenges and successes. The Forum provided an opportunity for delegates hear from the speakers and engage in an interactive and answer session through electronic polling. The polling was achieved through collaboration with the Office of Public Engagement and the questions asked to attendees covered leadership topics including types of leadership roles and necessary supports for women to become

involved in leadership roles. The Forum provided opportunity for follow-up through evaluation and further information and contact cards submitted by attendees.

The evening celebration featured a speech by the Honourable Kathy Dunderdale, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador and a showcase of women's accomplishments in the Province throughout history to present day, through diverse mediums and artistic performances. The evening closed with the presentation of the Premier's inaugural Ovarions Award for outstanding contribution of a woman to Hilda Whelan from Whitbourne.

Ovarions created an opportunity for the subsidized participation of a diversity of women across sectors and from all regions of the Province. The Leadership Forum was attended by over 700 women and the evening celebration by over 800 people. Completely financed through corporate and business donations, *Ovarions* was the first event of its kind recognizing the contributions of women in Newfoundland and Labrador. With the focus of *Ovarions* being the celebration of women's leadership and accomplishments, work pre and post the event addressed many of the Advisory Council's Governance Issues for 2012-2013 including women in leadership, young women, and historically under-represented groups of women. The Advisory Council was also part of a panel with Dr. Kara Arnold, Associate Dean, MUN Faculty of Business Administration on CBC Radio Noon Crosstalk discussing the role of women in leadership.

Working with the Women's Policy Office, the Advisory Council provided advice regarding strategies and supports to increase the number of women in leadership and decision making positions and the necessary supports.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided further advice and/or recommendations related to key areas of support for increasing women's representation in leadership and decision making positions.

Measure: Provision of further advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Further advice and/or recommendations pertaining to:

- Training and supports for women running for elected office
- Training and supports for women on boards, agencies and commission
- Increasing women in leadership and decision making positions

Issue 5: Reducing Barriers for Young Women

In keeping with its mandate to bring issues affecting the status of women to the Provincial Government and the public, the Advisory Council has identified the strategic issue of reducing barriers for young women as a priority.

Significant investments have been made by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and industry to encourage young women to reach their greatest potential, through education and entering traditionally male dominated fields in trades, technology, science and engineering. There are opportunities for young women and girls to attend camps and programs that introduce them to a variety of career options in Newfoundland and Labrador's growing natural resource sector. However, the impact of social and popular media, the hyper-sexualization of young women and girls and the social impacts of our new economic reality are providing a growing challenge for young women in reaching their potential.

Over the past year, the Advisory Council has continued to further understand the barriers facing young women in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador today. The Advisory Council has followed media reports, undertaken research and collaborated with community partners and the Provincial Government on examining ways of addressing the many challenges facing young women. Council members continued to raise concerns about the pressures they see young women experiencing in their own communities across the Province.

Issues related to the status of young women and girls, particularly those associated with bullying and cyber bullying, continued to capture media attention at both a national and international level over the past year. The Advisory Council, in partnering with community and front line service providers, is gaining further insight into the numerous challenges faced by young women at an increasingly earlier age—challenges such as drugs, bullying, low self esteem, mental health issues, pressure to engage in risky behaviours and the virtual world.

The Advisory Council's priority issue of reducing barriers for young women is in keeping with the strategic directions set forth by the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women. The advice and/or recommendations developed by the Advisory Council will contribute to reducing barriers for young women.

Through the above mentioned work, the Advisory Council has been able to contribute to the advancement of the Provincial Government's Strategic Directions related to violence prevention and women's earned income and employment as stipulated in Appendix A of the Business Plan 2011-2014 of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Goal 5: By March 31, 2014, so as to better inform policy-makers, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided advice and/or recommendations related to reducing barriers for young women.

Measure: Provision of advice and/or recommendations

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations provided to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador related to:

- Reducing barriers for young women

Objective 2: By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided advice and/or recommendations related to reducing barriers and providing supports for young women.

Measure: Advice and/or recommendations provided to the Provincial Government related to:

- Initiatives to reduce barriers for young women
- Supports for young women

Indicators: Further information on:

- Options for reducing barriers and providing supports for young women
- Indicators associated with Objective 2 were accidentally omitted in the 2011-12 annual report and they are presented here accordingly.

Progress Report: Reducing Barriers for Young Women

By March 31, 2013 the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women achieved the indicator of gathering further information on the options for reducing barriers and providing supports for young women. Whereas in the previous year, the Advisory Council was collecting information to identify key themes related to barriers for young women in the province, as it continues to do, this year some of these issues began to be addressed. Over the past year, the Advisory Council worked with various groups and organizations to tackle ways of effectively communicating with young women in the Province. Modeling our Manitoba counterparts, the Advisory Council created a 'Loves Me...Loves Me Not' bookmark. This bookmark lists healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviour. These bookmarks are not gender or relationship specific which makes them appropriate for a wide audience. To date, the Advisory Council has distributed over 20,000 bookmarks to community organizations throughout the Province. Working with community groups has not only allowed the materials to be

distributed but has also expanded outreach networks throughout the Province for future opportunities.



In 2012-2013, the Advisory Council provided input and promotional support to the creation of 'Cybersafe Girls'. This project was a collaboration of the Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women and

launched in Fall 2012. It is a website created to help young women learn how to safely navigate the internet.

In 2012-2013, the Advisory Council met with young women in Stephenville and discussed several key themes related to barriers for young women in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. They include body image and self esteem, mental health and addictions, peer pressure and bullying, sex, sexual harassment and hyper-sexualization, relationships, media, and leadership and gender equality.

As in previous years, the Advisory Council continued to sit on committees to examine and promote non-traditional careers for young women such as the skilled trades and the marine sector. The Advisory Council sits on the board of Women in Resource Development Corporation (WRDC) and Council of Marine Professionals Association (COMPASS).

In addition, the Advisory Council is a member of the Coalition against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth (CASEY) and its sub-committee on education and outreach, which focuses specifically on initiatives to reduce barriers for youth.

The information gathered over the past year has guided the discussions the Advisory Council has had with the Deputy Minister of the Women's Policy Office and has helped shape the advice and recommendations with regards to options for reducing barriers for young women in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have provided further advice and/or recommendations related to reducing barriers and providing supports for young women.

Measure: Further advice and/or recommendations provided

Indicators: Advice and/or recommendations provided to Government related to:

- Supports aimed at building young women's self esteem
- Supports to reduce bullying amongst youth

- Expanding young women's options for entering non-traditional occupations

Issue 6: Public Awareness and Outreach

Public awareness and outreach is an effective way of communicating with women throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, increasing awareness of women's social and economic inequality and the role of the Advisory Council in providing advice and recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on advancing the status of women. In keeping with its mandate to bring issues affecting the status of women to the Provincial Government and the public, the Advisory Council has identified the strategic issue of public awareness and outreach as a priority.

By implementing a strategic approach to its public awareness and outreach activities, the Advisory Council has effectively contributed to the strategic directions of the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women by bringing attention to the roots of women's inequality and the importance of effective public policies and programs which advance the status of women.

Outreach and public awareness has taken many forms, not only planned initiatives but those in response to requests. The Advisory Council is fortunate to have strong working relationships with many women's groups and organizations throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador which have afforded the opportunity to meet with diverse groups of women over the past year. Events the Advisory Council attended as guests or delegates provided opportunities to increase public awareness of the role of the Advisory Council and its mandate in advancing women's equality.

Goal 6: By March 31, 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have undertaken province-wide public awareness and outreach initiatives to improve access to information and resources.

Measure: Initiatives are undertaken to improve access

Indicators:

- Province-wide outreach is conducted

- Improved promotion of the role and services of the Advisory Council
- Education and outreach tools are expanded and/or improved

Objective 2: By March 31, 2013, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have further implemented strategic outreach initiatives.

Measure: Outreach initiatives have expanded and communication tools are enhanced

Indicators:

- New website launched
- Strategic Outreach Plan updated
- Outreach activities conducted in three regions of the Province
- Media plan developed

Progress Report: Outreach Initiatives

The Advisory Council, by March 31, 2013, expanded outreach initiatives and enhanced its communications tools to better engage with women throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Advisory Council achieved its indicator of creating a new website which was launched in September 2012. This new site is more engaging and allows most of the maintenance and development to be done in-house.

Reaching out to engage with women across the Province is essential if the Advisory Council is to represent the concerns of all women in Newfoundland and Labrador. Outreach with women throughout the Province is a critical way of not only creating public awareness of the role of the Advisory Council but of discussing issues, concerns and successes with women. Through this outreach, the Advisory Council has enhanced its understanding of women's equality issues in the Province which has been key to the Advisory Council's provision of advice and recommendations to the Provincial Government. As identified in our Business Plan, by March 31, 2013 the Advisory Council conducted outreach activities in three of the nine regions of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Over the past year the Advisory Council met with women in the following communities:

- Port aux Basques
- Stephenville
- St. John's
- Nain
- Grand-Falls-Windsor

During the course of Advisory Council outreach events, issues and concerns discussed included: the impacts of economic development; challenges felt by women in rural communities; barriers for young women; challenges and opportunities for Aboriginal women.

Not only did the Advisory Council travel throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador but hosted outreach events in St. John's. In the 2012-2013 fiscal year the Advisory Council hosted a meeting with women in the skilled trades to discuss successes and challenges for women. The Advisory Council held a 'meet and greet' as an opportunity for community groups to connect with the new and first female, Assistant Commissioner of the RCMP in Newfoundland and Labrador, Tracy Hardy.

In addition to hosting outreach events, the Advisory Council is often asked to speak with groups about issues related to the status of women. In 2012-2013, the Advisory Council gave a presentation to the Atlantic Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women and then to a group of deputy ministers and senior staff on women with complex needs. In addition, the President of the Advisory Council spoke at the Inuit Women's Conference in Nain and to the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary about the status of women in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As described throughout the Annual Report, the Advisory Council chaired the *Ovations* committee. This event brought together women from all over the Province to celebrate the accomplishments and leadership of women in diverse groups.

The Advisory Council recognizes the necessity of effective methods of communicating with women in Newfoundland and Labrador as a way of receiving and disseminating information. In updating the existing Strategic Outreach Plan, the Advisory Council has been looking at new ways to effectively engage with women in Newfoundland and Labrador. For some time Council has expressed a desire to use new communications tools and more popular methods of communication as opposed to the listserv. The Advisory Council decided to no longer use the listserv but move to set up a Twitter account (Spring/ Summer 2013) and better utilize the current website. The Advisory Council determined that although some forms of social media present potential risk for both the Advisory Council and users and therefore are not useful or appropriate for the

Advisory Council at this time, Twitter would be a useful way of engaging with a dynamic group of women and disseminating information. The Advisory Council Twitter account will be launched in spring/summer 2013.

In order to increase awareness of and maintain a strong voice for women's equality issues in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Advisory Council often appears in the media. The Advisory Council has a strong working relationship with media and the President is frequently contacted to respond to issues and news items related to the status of women. As an element of implementing a media plan, the Advisory Council has also been directing media to other groups and agencies engaged in front line work related to the issues being covered in the story. Another effective element of the media plan for the Advisory Council over the past year was in writing op-ed pieces as a form of directly commenting on issues and concerns. In 2012-2013, the Advisory Council addressed the media covering such topics as domestic violence, sexual assault, abortion, feminism as well as other issues related to the status of women.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2014, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have continued the implementation of strategic outreach initiatives.

Measure: Outreach initiatives have been implemented

Indicators:

- Province-wide outreach conducted in three regions of the Province
- Virtual communications tools continue to be implemented and monitored
- Continued engagement with media

5.0 Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

The Advisory Council, having completed two years of the 2011-2014 Business Plan has provided advice and recommendations to Government on a range of issues contributing to women's social and economic equality in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. There have been many positive changes including a dramatic increase in the number of women entering and apprenticing in the skilled trades and marine transportation sector; an increased focus and work by community partners and Government on addressing issues of bullying, social media risks and other barriers faced by young women and increased support for work on child exploitation, illegal drugs and organized crime. Collaboration amongst community partners, business and industry, the Advisory Council and Government remains key to continuing to make positive change in the Province.

In spite of the many positive changes, there are still significant challenges to be overcome and the Advisory Council remains concerned about the inequality that exists and the barriers facing many groups of women. Violence against women continues to be a major concern, particularly amongst Aboriginal women, women with disabilities and multicultural women. Access to economic opportunities afforded by the growing natural resource sector poses a significant challenge for these same groups. Work needs to continue on increasing their capacity and addressing issues of violence. Work also needs to continue to break down the barriers that prevent them from gaining employment in science, engineering, trades and technology.

With the development and expansion of projects in the oil, gas, mining and power generation sectors, communities across the Province are experiencing growth and increased wealth. While this brings great opportunity, the challenges associated with development cannot be minimized. There is a need to work together to address negative impacts such as illegal drugs, violence and criminal activity. These activities impact everyone, but women and girls are increasingly vulnerable to the exploitation associated with these activities. Many women are benefitting from the economic growth in Newfoundland and Labrador through opportunities in the natural resource sector, however continued work and support are necessary to ensure other women do not get left behind or become victims of the downside of economic development.

The Advisory Council is committed to continuing to work with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and community partners to ensure all women benefit from resource development in the Province and the negative impacts are mitigated.

Child and family care commitments, accessible, affordable and safe housing, initiatives to address exploitation and criminal activity are ongoing challenges to advancing women's equality, and are issues around which the Advisory Council is seeing positive changes and ones which the Advisory Council is dedicated to continue working on with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and community stakeholders.

Justice services for women remains a priority focus for the Advisory Council, particularly those for women with complex needs and women dealing with family law and child custody issues. The Advisory Council is committed to continuing to collaborate with community partners and the Government in an endeavour to address these concerns.

Fundamental to advancing women's equality is the reduction of barriers they face, not only as adults but as young women. The Advisory Council is committed to continuing to collaborate with community partners and the Government in

addressing such issues as the negative impact of popular media, the hyper-sexualization of young women and girls and the growing challenges they face.

The success of “*Ovations: Applauding the Accomplishments of Women in Our Communities*” and the feedback from participants clearly identified an appetite for understanding and recognizing the roles women have played as leaders throughout the history of the Province. It further pointed to the desire of women to learn more and access training around leadership at all levels of society. This is critical, as we know that women are far from where they should be in leadership and decision making positions. At all levels of government, on agencies, boards and commissions and in senior leadership positions, women remain seriously under-represented. Working with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and community partners to advance women in leadership will remain a priority for the Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council’s ability to provide advice and recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as defined by its mandate is critical to supporting policies and programs to advance women’s equality. An essential element of this work involves raising public awareness of women’s inequality and deepening the understanding of the social and economic realities of women in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Public awareness and outreach continue to be core to the work of the Advisory Council and remain a priority throughout the coming years.

Over the next planning cycle, the Advisory Council will continue to collaborate with community partners and diverse stakeholders to analyze issues, provide advice and/or recommendations and advocate for policies and programs to advance women’s equality. The Advisory Council will continue to build and strengthen effective working relationships with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and bring key issues and feminist perspectives to the attention of the general public.

6.0 Audited Financial Statements

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Biographical Information

Council members 2012-2015:

- Linda Ross, President/CEO – St. John's
- Carolyn Lavers, Vice-President – Port aux Choix
- Cynthia Benoit – Conne River
- Hilda Whelan – Whitbourne
- Kelly Power – Paradise
- Lorraine Hearn – Grand Falls-Windsor
- Mary Pia Benuen – Sheshatshiu
- Melita Collier – St. Alban's
- Michelle Murdoch – St. John's
- Stephanie Flowers – Happy Valley-Goose Bay
- Yamuna Kutty – St. John's



Linda Ross joined the Advisory Council as President in 2009. She holds an Honours BSc in Biology from the University of Waterloo. She has held the position of President/CEO of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Newfoundland and Labrador since May 2009. Previous to this, Linda spent 24 years working in the field of international development with Oxfam Canada focusing on the area of gender and development with particular emphasis on the social and economic exclusion of women. Her work has involved travel in Central and South America, Africa and Asia. As a member of Oxfam Canada's - Gender Working Group, she was involved in the development of their first gender action plan related to internal and external operations. Linda has a history of leadership and experience in dealing with issues that affect women on a local and global scale. Linda has and continues to be actively engaged on the Boards of Directors of numerous community based organizations. Ms. Ross resides with her family in St. John's.

Mary Pia Benuen was born and raised in Sheshatshiu, Labrador. Through hard work and many sacrifices, Mary Pia was the first Innu woman to become a nurse. Since 2010 she has been the Director for Primary Health services for Sheshatshiu. She is a true community leader, involved in health promotion, facilitating workshops, and community research. She sits on a number of community advisory groups. Mary Pia volunteers with the Family Resource Centre and is always willing to go that "extra mile" with families who are experiencing hardships, including providing emotional support when suicide or death occur. Mary Pia and her beautiful daughter live in Sheshatshiu. Mary Pia has been a member of the Advisory Council since 2006.

Yamuna Kutty is the President of the Multicultural Women's Organization of Newfoundland and Labrador. She has also served on the St. John's Status of Women Council, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada. Yamuna is involved with numerous projects and initiatives. She brings critical perspectives about lives of immigrant and refugee women to our work, along with a warm and caring heart. She has an extremely busy volunteer schedule. Yamuna lives in St. John's. Yamuna has been a member of the Advisory Council since 2006.

Carolyn Lavers is an Economic Development Officer with the provincial Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development in Port au Choix where she resides. She is a small business entrepreneur and worked with the former Women's Enterprise Bureau. Carolyn has served on the boards of several local business development boards and other community agencies. She is also deeply concerned about issues related to violence, rural child care solutions, women's employment and women in leadership. She brings great dedication and insight to our work. Carolyn has been a member of the Advisory Council since 2006.

Michelle Murdoch is a determined feminist with a disability. She is a president/chairperson of the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities-NL, a cross-disability education and awareness organization, advocating for the full inclusion of all persons in every aspect of society throughout the province. Michelle earned her Master's in Women's Studies from Memorial University. As part of her program, she completed a participatory action research project about women with disabilities and employment. Her interests extend across a broad range of social justice issues but her major stress relief comes from rug hooking! She is keenly analytical and always ready to ask the important questions. Michelle and her family live in St. John's. Michelle has been a member of the Advisory Council since 2006.

Stephanie Flowers is an Aboriginal woman originally from the community of Rigolet, on the north coast of Labrador. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Psychology from Saint Mary's University in 2005 and has been active in her community working with women, as well as volunteering with local organizations. She is deeply passionate about learning about women's health and nutrition, and would like to expand her education and advocacy. She currently resides with her family in Happy Valley. Stephanie has been a member of the Advisory Council since 2009.

Kelly Power is currently the director of the Carpenter Millwrights' College in Paradise. She has actively promoted skilled trades to women and encouraged partnerships with organizations to attract women to the construction industry. Kelly is very passionate about ensuring the success of female apprentices and works closely with them to help mediate barriers in training and employment. Kelly has been involved with the Federation of Labour, Education Committee and with the Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development, Strategic Partnership Innovation Committee. Kelly is originally from Hermitage and currently lives with her family in Paradise. Kelly joined the Advisory Council as a member in 2009.

Hilda Whelan was recently involved in fighting for women's rights in a case involving surviving spouses and the Workplace Health, Safety & Compensation Commission. Hilda solely represented and fought for all widows involved in the case for fifteen years, winning an important victory for women's equality. She is a strong advocate, concerned about a wide variety of issues affecting women, including violence and access to child care. Hilda brings the realities of rural women to the work of the Advisory Council. She is determined to continue to make a difference. Hilda and her family live in Whitbourne. Hilda has been a member of the Advisory Council since 2006.

Melita Collier is a Career Development Specialist with Department of Advanced Education and Skills. She has been committed to women's issues and

advancements for many years and in numerous ways. Her involvement in the Coast of Bays International Women's Day Committee is one of the ways she expresses her passion for ensuring healthy, safe and supportive workplace practices for which diversity and inclusiveness is valued. Melita works with marginalized and under-represented groups, bringing awareness and education to women's social, economic and political challenges, and she is a Silent Witness Advocate. She obtained a Bachelor of Administrative Studies in 1997 from York University in Toronto and returned to Newfoundland in 2003. She visits Toronto, where her daughter lives, regularly. Melita currently resides in St. Alban's. Melita joined the Advisory Council in 2011.

Cynthia Benoit was born and raised in St. Alban's Newfoundland. After high school Cynthia went on and graduated from St. Thomas University in New Brunswick with a Bachelor of Arts and Human Services Counselling Diploma. Over the course of Cynthia's career she has worked and volunteered in the social services sector. Through Cynthia's work and volunteer activities she has had the opportunity to work with youth directly dealing with social policies and issues. It is through these experiences that Cynthia has developed compassion and empathy specifically for children and youth. Cynthia is currently working with Miawpukek First Nation Self Government Initiative as a Communication Manager where she facilitates a school program relating to Self Government. Cynthia is also currently enrolled part time in the Distance Bachelor of Social Work program at the University of Manitoba where is she near completion of this degree. Cynthia hopes to continue to work in the Coast of Bays region with the goal of continuing to be a strong advocate of our children and youth. Cynthia lives in the community of Conne River with her husband and two children Will and Kailee. Cynthia joined the Advisory Council in 2011.

Lorraine Hearn's professional background is in the fields of Nursing and Addiction Studies and Intervention. In 1998, she graduated from McMaster University in Ontario with two Diplomas-one in Addictions Studies and the other in Addictions Care Worker. In 1998-1999, she earned, Associate Counselor Status in Addictions through the Canadian Certification Board for Alcohol and Drug Counselors'. She began volunteering with the Committee Against Violence in 1992 and over the years, held various executive positions. Lorraine presently holds the position of Executive Director with the Central West Committee Against Violence Inc. working under the Violence Prevention Initiative. She is responsible for the central west region of the province. This committee is one of ten working throughout the province under the Government's Violence Prevention Initiative. Lorraine's role is to provide leadership in violence prevention initiatives as well as provide education, awareness and training on violence issues. She has extensive background in delivering community presentations, workshops and training in all areas of violence as well as advocating for women and victims of violence. Lorraine joined the Advisory Council in 2011.

APPENDIX B: Values

The values expressed in this plan reflect the governing values for the operation of the Advisory Council and the conduct of its staff and council members.

As an equality-seeking organization, the Advisory Council works from a feminist perspective to advocate for women's full and equal participation in all aspects of society. As the Advisory Council responds to the equality concerns of women in Newfoundland and Labrador, it works to include feminist values in all its processes, activities and initiatives.

Commitment Each individual applies feminist principles when asserting equality and challenging inequality, thereby affecting social and economic change.

Dynamic Each individual contributes to meeting the needs of the diverse women's community in response to the changing social and economic climate.

Inclusiveness Each individual works to ensure that all opinions and knowledge are considered so that the strength that exists in the collective voice of women is sustained and enriched by the diversity of women's perspectives.

Evolving Each individual continues to educate herself about women's inequality as a means of fulfilling her responsibility as a feminist leader in an ever changing environment.

Respectful Each individual contributes to the creation of a respectful environment that ensures women have a safe place to speak openly about inequities.

Celebration Each individual acknowledges both the challenges and the joys of working with and for women and celebrates our collective achievements.

Collaborative Each individual acknowledges the value of working with other individuals and groups to forward a shared agenda of advancing women's equality.