

# **Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2007-2008**



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on the Status of Women  
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## Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the year ended March 31, 2008 is prepared pursuant to the *Provincial Financial Act*, the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, 1977, c. 3, s. 6(1) and government policy and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's business plan information for the fiscal year 2007-2008. The reporting of the Advisory Council's outcomes includes estimates, judgments and opinions by the agency's management.

This accountability report is the responsibility of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women's management and is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Council's business plan.



Carolyn Bolivar-Getson  
Minister



Liz Chisholm  
Chair

## Message from the Minister

An equal voice in society, fair pay and pensions, freedom from violence, and good health and well-being ... How can Nova Scotia create this future for women and their families? The answer is involving more women in public policy and leadership roles.

Since the Council's inception in 1977, it has encouraged women to take on decision-making roles, to run in elections, join agencies, boards and commissions, to vote and contribute to public consultations, to work as public employees or for political parties.

Throughout the years, the Council has partnered with local, provincial and national organizations to increase women's political involvement through workshops and campaign schools – including a successful session in May 2007.

As the elected representative responsible for the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, I depend on the Council to deliver advice, feedback and concerns about issues facing women and their families. This year, the Council held roundtables on economic security, women with disabilities, respite and caregiving, and challenges for Aboriginal women.

Education and awareness campaigns focused on violence against women and family caregivers, and included events, presentations, and information publications.

In June 2007, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs and the Council hosted the first Nova Scotia Summit for Aboriginal Women in Millbrook, to identify issues for the National Aboriginal Women's Summit in July - such as violence against women, empowering women in leadership roles, education, training, and strengthening culture and language.

To recognize and celebrate women leaders and to look to the future, Council held the October 2007 Women's History Month lecture "Women, Technology and the Future of Work". On International Women's Day on March 8 "Opening Doors" featured discussions on how to increase the number of women in community and public activities, and the importance of government and community partnership.

Nova Scotia women have made great gains in 30 years, contributing to our province's prosperity and all aspects of our lives. Council's anniversary calendar *30 Voices/30 voix* features quotations from notable women, representing thousands of women who champion equality, fairness and dignity for people everywhere, every day.

The women on the Advisory Council, staff and community partners work daily to improve the status of women in Nova Scotia. Here they recount their progress, achievements and services during 2007-2008.

Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson  
Minister

## Message from the Chair

On October 12, 2007, the Council turned 30. Since 1977, our successes have been, and always will be, based on partnerships with organizations, such as women's centres and transition houses, the Women's Economic Equality Society, Zonta Clubs, University Women's Clubs, YWCA and YMCA programs, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, among others.

These partnerships with women's groups, federal and municipal governments, community and business organizations and universities expand our abilities to work on initiatives that improve the status of women.

Today, most students in universities are women, they receive most of the degrees, diplomas and certificates, and they make up nearly half of Nova Scotia workers. More women are becoming judges, doctors and lawyers, are involved in policy, law, public service, and public life – and they represent our diversity and experience.

Other wins are not just for women, to name a few: maternity and parental benefits; family illness leaves; pro-arrest, pro-prosecution policies on woman abuse; the protection of confidential files of sexual assault survivors; and policies encouraging respectful and healthy workplaces.

Our continuing relevance is in identifying and addressing gaps in the equality, fairness and dignity of Nova Scotia women:

- Gaps in women's participation in public leadership
- Gaps concerning women's income levels due to low-paying jobs and not enough education for well-paying work
- Gaps in our safety and freedom from violence
- Gaps in our health and well-being

Our 10 council members, dedicated staff and knowledgeable partners from across the province continue to help identify the gaps and build bridges to a better life for women and their families. This report outlines our work during 2007-2008.

Liz Chisholm, Chair

## Introduction

The content of this accountability report is based on the goals, priorities and outcomes described in the Advisory Council's business plan for 2007-2008. The report describes the accomplishments and progress that the Advisory Council has made in meeting those goals and priorities.

The purpose of this report is to update the public, members of the legislative assembly and the Advisory Council's stakeholders, including women's equality-seeking groups and all women in the province, on Council's activities and accomplishments.

The report is structured around the agency's goals and priorities.

## Background

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women advises the provincial government on issues of interest and concern to women, and brings those issues forward. The mandate and powers of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women are set out in Section 4 of the *Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act*, which was passed in 1977. The mandate is:

- to advise the Minister upon such matters relating to the status of women as are referred to the Council for consideration by the Minister;
- to bring to the attention of the Minister matters of interest and concern to women.

The Council's powers are:

- to receive and hear petitions and suggestions concerning the status of women;
- to undertake and recommend research on matters relevant to the status of women;
- to recommend and participate in programs concerning the status of women;
- to propose legislation, policies and practices to promote equality of opportunity and status;
- to publish reports, studies and recommendations.

Council keeps women's issues on the agenda of governments. The Minister responsible for the Status of Women appoints women from all regions of the province. Members stay in touch with women in their communities and identify opportunities and needs for government action. Diversity is a hallmark of membership and action, as the Council seeks to be inclusive of all women in Nova Scotia. Staff work on policy research, public education, and community liaison and outreach.

## **Mission, Goals and Core Functions**

### **Mission**

To advance equality, fairness and dignity for all women in Nova Scotia

### **Goals**

- To increase the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities, with particular emphasis on those who face discrimination because of race, age, language, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or various forms of family status.
- To promote women's economic equality.
- To reduce violence against women in communities, workplaces and families.
- To improve the health and well-being of women and their families.

### **Core Functions**

#### ***Policy and Research***

Council advises the Minister responsible for the Status of Women on the concerns and priorities of women, and formulates strategies and options to address these. Council conducts quantitative and qualitative research in consultation with community groups, academic researchers, and government departments to ensure advice is a feasible, relevant, timely and accurate guide to government action.

#### ***Information and Education***

Council collects and disseminates information on women's issues to the Minister, Council, staff, and other key stakeholders, including media and the general public. Through a comprehensive communications strategy, Council informs and influences key stakeholders about issues and concerns affecting women, Council, and government priorities, activities and accomplishments, as well as about opportunities for improvement in addressing women's issues.

#### ***Community Liaison and Outreach***

Through Council members and fieldwork staff, Council brings forward concerns of women from across Nova Scotia, with particular attention to historically disadvantaged groups. Council also partners with communities, organizations, and agencies to advance equality for women in programs and services.

## Progress and Accomplishments 2007-2008

### Inclusion and Participation

#### ***To advise government and other stakeholders on best practices, policies and strategies for the inclusion of women in all their diversity in the development of legislation, policy and programs***

- Submitted recommendations to the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Department of Environment and about regarding workplace violence.
- Submitted recommendations to the director of Labour Standards, Department of Environment and Labour, regarding the extension of eligible family members for purposes of compassionate care leave in the Labour Standards Code.
- Participated on the Public Service Commission's Diversity Roundtable.
- Conducted a workshop on Gender, Inclusion and HIV/AIDS, in partnership with the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health and the provincial Advisory Commission on AIDS.
- Hosted the first Nova Scotia Summit for Aboriginal Women in Millbrook, in June 2007, with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs. The aim was to identify issues for the National Aboriginal Women's Summit later in the month under the themes violence against women, empowering women in leadership roles, education, training, and strengthening culture and language.
- Presented on Gender and Gender Roles at the session "What's Gender Got to Do With It? Health Research Policy and Practice in Nova Scotia", held by the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation in November 2007.
- Took part in the Nova Scotia Community-Based Transportation Association Workshop.
- Printed and distributed French version of *Guide for Girls -- Guide-ressources pour filles*, with input from partners inside and outside government.
- Participated in the Youth Sexual Health Strategy consultation through the Department of Health.

### ***To increase the numbers and diversity of women in public and political life***

- Worked with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, YWCA and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on the Women in Local Government Project (WILG), to encourage more women to participate as municipal leaders. Planning began for four campaigns schools for April and May 2008, in preparation for October 2008 elections. Council provided communication support and advice on the campaign schools and funding for a new WILG website.
- Held the third Campaign School for Women in May 2007, in partnership with Mount Saint Vincent University. Journalists, campaign planners, politicians and pundits helped participants through media relations training and campaign strategy. Our evaluations reveal that participants especially valued training in door-to-door campaigning, public speaking and media relations, the nuts and bolts of campaign organization, and feedback from politicians.
- Encouraged women to get involved in provincial agencies, boards and commissions through publications. Holly Meuse, council member for the Valley Region and a member of Bear River First Nation, was featured in government's awareness campaign.
- Provided advice and support to women forming Equal Voice Nova Scotia, founded in December 2007. This national organization with local chapters aims to increase the number of women involved in federal politics.
- Hosted "Opening Doors" on International Women's Day on March 8, with discussions on how to increase the number of women in community and public activities, and the importance of government and community partnership. The event, which included a quilt and jewelry show, took place at the YWCA's new location on Barrington Street in Halifax. Representatives from the Council, the YW, Women in Local Government Project, Equal Voice, and Women's Work Project participated.
- Provide ongoing advice to the Long-term Planning Council with a particular focus on the interaction of women and diversity.

### ***To increase the visibility and enhance the economic and social well-being of women with disabilities in Nova Scotia by educating government, policy makers and the public about their issues***

- Completed Roundtables for Women with Disabilities, to identify issues and barriers, and presented the findings to various groups within government, including the Department of Community Services. Drafted an action plan, which includes holding further sessions with women from diverse groups, such as those from African Nova Scotian and Aboriginal communities.

- Partnering in the development of an accessible medical examination table, in partnership with the Canadian Paraplegic Association, the Department of Economic Development and the Seniors' Secretariat.
- Created summary of data on prevalence, type and severity of disability by sex in Nova Scotia based on PALS 2006 release.
- Participated in the development of *Women and Mood Disorders: Stories of Recovery* with the Department of Health, Mental Health Branch.

***To maintain the effectiveness of the Advisory Council by increasing the visibility of Council and its members***

- Launched the new website in June 2007, with a more welcoming interface, easier navigation, and better access to publications. Users can now browse library content, request publications and ask the librarian questions online.
- Produced a desktop calendar "30 Voices"/"30 voix", celebrating Council's "30 years strong" from 1977 to 2007. It featured quotations from 30 notable women -- raising awareness about their leadership roles in advancing equality, fairness and dignity for Nova Scotia women and improving the status of women.
- Held a Women's History Month/Agnes Dennis Lecture called "Women, Technology, and the Future of Work" at the Saint Mary's University Sobey Building marking our 30th anniversary on October 11, 2007. Jennifer Corriero, an international leader in youth and technology, was the keynote. Dr. John Hamm, co-chair of Democracy 250, spoke about encouraging youth to vote. Liz Chisholm, our chair, spoke about the Council's work and goals and told the audience of supporters, "You have our gratitude and appreciation for standing with us throughout the years, helping us advance, equality, fairness and dignity for women here and everywhere."
- Women's Place Resource Centre in Bridgetown and the Council held a Luncheon featuring Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, the Honourable Mayann E. Francis on March 18, to celebrate International Women's Day.
- *NewsBytes*, a bi-weekly electronic bulletin, delivers Council news, partner and community information -- including opportunities for participation in decision-making and at community events. There are now more than 1,600 subscribers, up from 1,300 in 2006-2007.
- Hosted a delegation from the All-China Women's Federation from October 14 to 17, 2007, the first of two study tours to help the organization learn about Canadian policies, practices, and experiences in women's education and training. The

Canadian International Development Agency is funding the project. Delegates met members of the Council and staff, representatives from the Nova Scotia Department of Education, the Nova Scotia Community College in Halifax and Bridgewater, Pictou County Women's Centre, the Coastal Communities Network, Women Unlimited, and the Second Story Women's Centre. Mount Saint Vincent University hosted a half-day session for the Chinese delegation with women leaders in education, business, medicine, law, and government. Her Honour Mayann E. Francis, the Lieutenant Governor, held a reception at Province House, where the Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, addressed the delegation.

- Hosted a meeting with visitors from Malawi and Chile. The former were interested in learning about models for bettering the situation of women in agriculture. The latter were interested in how Nova Scotia achieves equity in civil service employment.
- Advised/educated media about challenges in caregiving and work-life balance and the release of the *Caregiver's Handbook/Manuel de soignant*. Media requested views and information about topics such as the early sexualization of girls, body image, objectifying women in the workplace, the slow pace of a sexual harassment investigation at Digby RCMP, the need for political campaign schools, maintenance enforcement, and other factors affecting economic equality and security for women. Proactive media focused on launching new and new editions of publications, violence against women, our 30th anniversary, our Women's History Month lecture on women, technology and the future of work, and progress on the status of women from 1908 to 2008 to mark International Women's Day in March 2008.

## **Economic Equality**

***To develop an evidence-base for policy recommendations related to dependent care, precarious employment and early childhood learning and care, with the goal of enhancing women's ability to support themselves and their families***

- Chair the Roundtable on Women's Economic Security, consisting of federal and provincial public servants from throughout government and representatives from organizations, such as the Women's Economic Equality Society, Women's Centres Connect!, Women's Employment Outreach and FemJEPP (Feminists for Just and Equitable Public Policy). The roundtable is a forum for sharing knowledge and understanding about changing social and economic circumstances and how they affect women's independence and security.
- Provided input regarding matrimonial real property for aboriginal communities, through a provincial working group. The lack of legislation on matrimonial real

property on reserves is a human rights concern and creates hardship for First Nations people -- especially women. Nova Scotia is committed to working with the federal government and the Aboriginal population to find effective, fair and appropriate solutions.

- Participated in discussions at Intergovernmental Affairs concerning gender implications of the Canada Social Transfer, fiscal imbalance, and equalization.
- Presented to Expert Panel on Older Workers, giving them a gender and diversity perspective on the issues.
- Prepared a response to the Minimum Wage Review Committee Report.
- Provided feedback on the process and concerns for women and families regarding the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Hosted meetings between Council members and the developers of the strategy.

***To increase women's exposure to and participation in occupations where they remain under-represented, particularly in science, trades and technology***

- Partner with government and community organizations to expand opportunities for women's economic well-being. For instance, brokered more than \$100,000 of funding for Women Unlimited programs, enlisting the Office of Economic Development.
- Participated on the Community Development Advisory Group and Nova Scotia Rural Team, involving all levels of government.
- Work with industry and labour and women's organizations to increase recruitment and retention of women in trades and technology occupations. Council is a program sponsor and a member of the Program Advisory and Program Expansion Committees for Techsploration -- designed to introduce Grade 9 girls to career opportunities in science, trades and technology-related occupations. It is a joint initiative of the NS Community College, WITT NS (Women in Trades and Technology), and the Apprenticeship Training Division (NS Department of Education) in partnership with more than 20 sponsors.
- Council provides ongoing advice, direction and implementation support to programs that increase women's numbers in trades and technology. Women Unlimited launched the Career-Decision-Making Program at the NSCC Lunenburg Campus in 2006. Nineteen women explored careers in science, trades and technology, through hands-on workshops, field trips, industry-based activities, work/life balance sessions and job shadowing with 33 local employers.
- Partnered in Ebbing The Flow: Young Women's Expo in Lawrencetown at the Centre of Geographic Sciences, Nova Scotia Community College in November

2007. The expo aimed to introduce young women to the opportunities in science and technology -- to pursue a career and life in Nova Scotia.

## **Personal Safety and Freedom from Violence**

### ***To promote the need for a comprehensive strategy to deal with violence against women that takes into account the particular needs of diverse women***

- Participate on three inter-agencies against family violence across the province.
- Participate on Crime Prevention Strategy Policy working group.
- Participate in prevention and service development activities related to domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Published and publicized a new edition of *Making Changes: A Handbook for Women in Abusive Relationships* and *Changer pour le mieux : un livre pour les femmes victimes de violence*, with a new chapter that guides family and friends through helping victims and disclosing abuse.
- Launched awareness campaign during the 16 Days of Activism to Eliminate Violence Against Women, from November 25 to December 10, including these activities:
  - ▶ Hosted Province House ceremony on December 6, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The Transition House Association of Nova Scotia and the Girl Guides of Canada participated. The event featured the Clothesline Project, with dozens of purple scarves decorated by women who have survived violence.
  - ▶ Created a video message from the Minister for the government website and to circulate to provincial universities and colleges.
  - ▶ Delivered resolutions and statement in the Legislature.
  - ▶ Produced statistical reports on spousal, intimate partner and sexual violence against women.
  - ▶ Assisted and educated media.
- Conducted monthly workshops on dating violence, self-esteem and communication at Digby Regional High School to girls in Grades 7 to 9. Staff partnered with the high school and Juniper Transition House's Outreach Service. Staff also held a two-day girls' retreat, expanding on school workshops.
- Worked with the Family Law Information Project for Abused Women (FLIPAW), to increase safety and stability among abused women and their children during the post-separation period by increasing awareness of family court proceedings in abuse cases. FLIPAW will produce a family law resource in print, on line and in

French and English. The group has also formed Justice and Equity Subcommittees to ensure that diversity issues are integrated into the work.

- Participated and supported Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, Silent Witness Program, and other groups in raising awareness about intimate partner violence, and all violence against women.
- Have built a section on violence in the Council library through new acquisitions

***To make evidence-based recommendations to government and policy-makers about the need for development and expansion of province-wide sexual assault programs and services***

- Assessing where and how services are being delivered for sexual assault survivors in Nova Scotia, in partnership with the Sexual Assault Services Planning Group, with the aim of extending services. Research continued during 2007-2008.

***To work with First Nation communities, governments, and the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum to identify program and service gaps and to research culturally appropriate models of prevention and intervention to assist women, families and communities in dealing with and responding to family violence***

- Participated on the Nova Scotia Working Group to address issues related to family violence in aboriginal communities, now subcommittee of the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum Justice Committee.
- Worked with Mi'kmaq organizations and government departments to research family violence in Mi'kmaq communities, and to identify culturally appropriate ways of addressing the issues.
- Partnered with colleagues through government to audit what the province is doing to address violence against aboriginal women -- part of preparation for the second National Aboriginal Women's Summit.

## **Health and Well-Being**

***To make evidence-based recommendations to provincial and federal governments, and to professional and community audiences about the support needs of women in caregiving and care-receiving roles***

- Brigitte Neumann, executive director of the Council and a co-director of the Healthy Balance Research Program (HBRP) began stakeholder presentations and public meetings to report back on research on the challenges and needs of caregivers in Nova Scotia. The first presentation was to the Working Group on Caregiving, Department of Health, on policy implications from the report *Priorities for Caregivers*.
- Launched the *Caregiver's Handbook* and *Manuel du soignant* in September 2007, a resource guide to help the 36 per cent of Nova Scotians who care for family, friends, neighbours and other people in their communities. HBRP partners developed the guide -- the Council, the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health and the Institute for Population Health at the University of Ottawa -- with provincial support and expertise from the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, the Department of Acadian Affairs and the Seniors' Secretariat. Federal funding came from Human Resources and Social Development Canada. By the end of the fiscal year, 10,000 copies of this resource had been requested by caregivers and the organizations who support them.
- Co-chaired a respite committee, with Disabled Persons Commission, comprising government and community partners. The focus is respite for parents caring for children with disabilities.
- Conducted a train-the-trainer session in partnership with the Canadian Association for Community Living in October 2007. The free three-hour workshop aimed to help people with children with a disability learn how to help other families in similar situations. The session provided the skills and tools to help family caregivers get flexible, useful supports to take time off from care-giving.
- Held a Well Women's Clinic in Bridgetown in June 2007, in a collaborative effort involving the Council, Public Health, and local organizations such as the Women's Place in Bridgetown and local hospitals such as Soldiers Memorial Hospital in Middleton. The clinics increase the availability of PAP tests and breast examinations, and provide information about nutrition.
- Partnered with Juniper House Outreach, Islands Health, Emergency Health Services and the Womens Place on a Health Fair held in Freeport on Long Island.
- Partnered on a Body Image Workshop in Annapolis Royal Middle School for Grade 7 girls with the school and the Womens Place.

**Financial Results**  
**2007-2008**

	<b>2007-2008 Estimate (\$000's)</b>	<b>2007-2008 Actuals (\$000's)</b>
Gross Expenses	926	975
Net Expenses	916	897
Salaries and Employee Benefits	579	574
Funded Staff (FTEs)	8.0	7.5

The variance in estimates and actuals of gross expenses was brought about by recoveries for the Council's project with the All China Women's Federation.

**Performance Measures 2007-2008**  
**Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women**

## Proportion of Advisory Council Publications that Address Diversity and Social Inclusion

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, one desirable outcome is ensuring that the work of the Advisory Council addresses diversity and social inclusion.

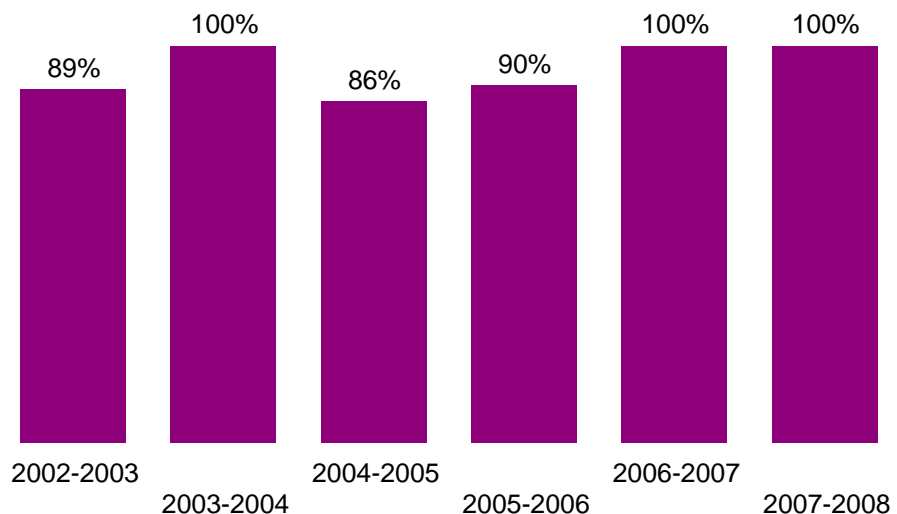
### What does the measure tell us?

This measure is a straight-forward calculation of the proportion of all Advisory Council publications, including briefs, statistical reports, and informational reports that address diversity and social inclusion. As one of the Advisory Council's goals is to increase the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities, with particular emphasis on those who face discrimination because of race, age, language, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or various forms of family status, it behooves us to ensure that all Council publications reflect this goal.

### Proportion of Advisory Council Publications that Address Diversity and Social Inclusion 2002-2003 to 2007-2008

#### Where are we now?

Our current target for this measure is 90 percent. In four of the past six years analyzed, and in the three past years, our target of 90 percent was met or exceeded. In three of these six years, all publications released by the Advisory Council addressed diversity and social inclusion.



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

## **Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

The proportion of all Advisory Council publications that address diversity and social inclusion met or surpassed our target in the 2007-2008 fiscal year. It is expected that we will continue to meet or exceed our target of 90 percent for the coming fiscal years.

## Council Website Visits

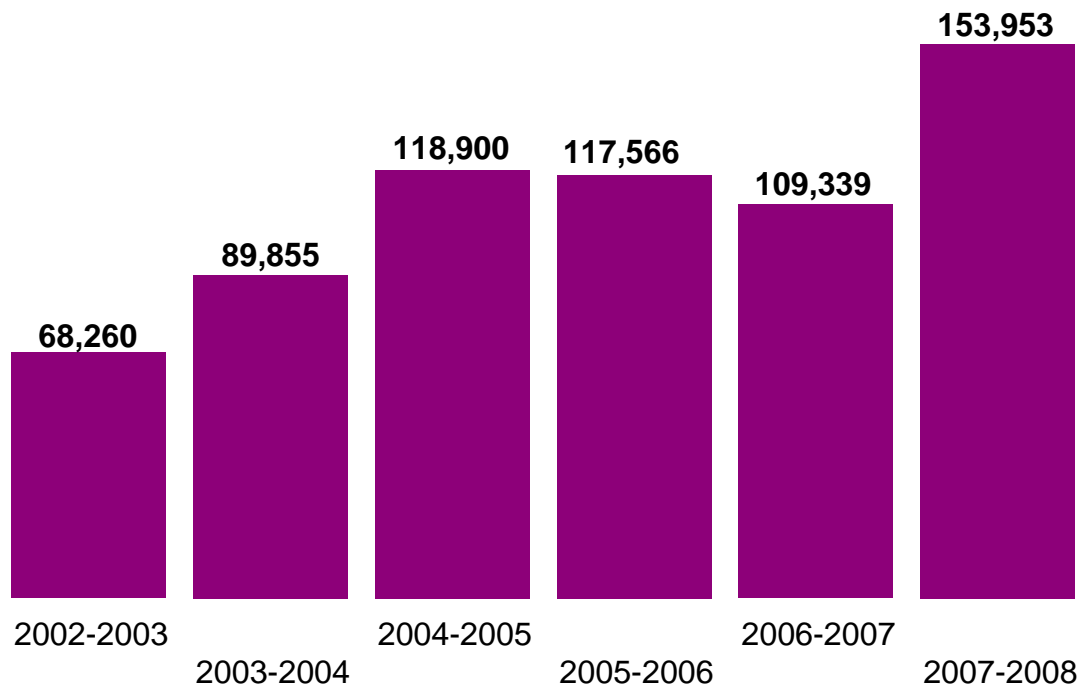
Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is an increased public awareness of Council initiatives. One measure of this outcome is tracking the public's usage of the Advisory Council's web-site.

### What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the Council's website utilization gives us an idea of the popularity of the Council's work, including its briefs, statistical publications and other informational documents, which the Council is increasingly making available to the public in electronic format. Consistently high Council website usage indicates a consistently strong public interest in and demand for the Council's work.

### Where are we now?

**Advisory Council Web-Site Usage (pageviews)  
2002-2003 to 2007-2008**



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

In 2007-2008, the Advisory Council's website had 153,953 visits. This figure shows an increase of 40.8 percent over the previous year. Substantial redesign of the Advisory Council's web-site in the first quarter of the 2007-2008 fiscal year is likely one of the main contributing factors to this increase.

**Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

We have surpassed our target of 100,000 web-site visits for the past four fiscal years. In 2007-2008, we actually surpassed our ultimate target of 125,000 web-site visits. In light of our plan to continue upgrading our website, it is our hope that the use of the Advisory Council's website will continue to meet its target in future years.

## **Advisory Council Speaking Engagements and Public Presentations**

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is an increased public awareness of Council initiatives. Another measure of this outcome is tracking the number of speaking engagements and public presentations that are requested of the Advisory Council.

### **What does this measure tell us?**

Tracking the number of speaking engagements and public presentations that members of the public, community organizations, and other government departments and agencies request of the Advisory Council is a good way of ascertaining their awareness of the Council and ensuring that a province-wide awareness is achieved.

This measure was introduced in the 2005-2006 fiscal year. A speaking engagement tracking form was developed which allows us to record the location and topic of the presentation, the type of organization making the request, the audience size and tone, as well as a 5-point rating of how well the presentation went (1=poorly, 5=excellent).

### **Where are we now?**

Year	Number of Speaking Engagements
2005-2006	16
2006-2007	22
2007-2008	16

In 2007-2008, there were a total of 16 speaking engagements requested of the Advisory Council. Presentations were made on a wide variety of topics to diverse audiences across the province.

### **Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

The target for this measure was originally set at 10 presentations/speaking engagements per year and then raised to 20 presentations/speaking engagements for the 2006-07 fiscal year. This target was met in 2006-2007, but fell slightly short in 2007-2008. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting this target in the coming years.

## Media Coverage of Council's Work

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is an increased public awareness of Council initiatives. Another measure of this outcome is the print media's coverage of Council initiatives, events, and work in general.

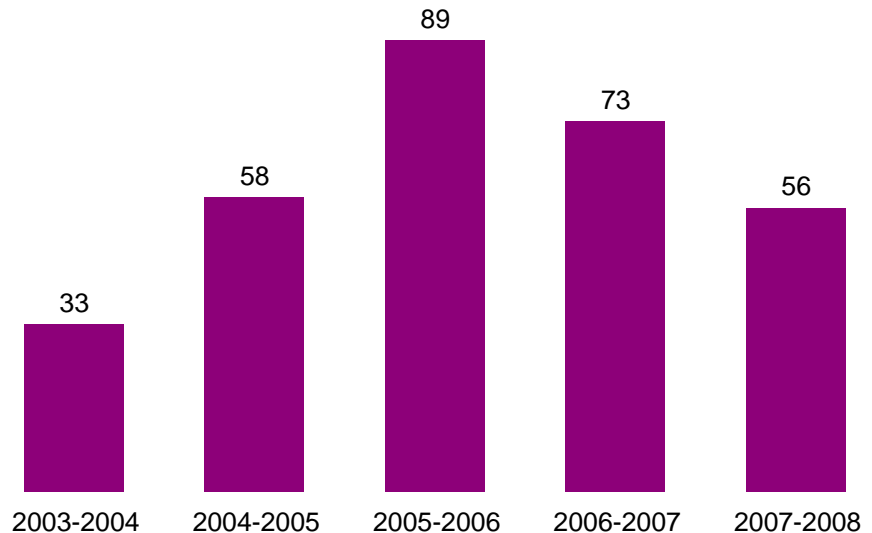
### What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the print media's coverage of the Council's work provides us with a sense of the Council's public image. A consistently strong interest in the Council's work on the part of the media is consistent with a stronger public image and increased public recognition of the Council's work and initiatives.

### Where are we now?

#### Print Media Coverage of Council's Work 2003-2004 to 2007-2008

In 2007-2008 there were a total of 56 print media stories published that related to the work of the Advisory Council. This total meets our revised target of 50 print media stories per year.



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

### Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Our revised target for this measure for 2008-2009 is 50 print media stories. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting this target.

## Increased Numbers of NewsBytes Subscribers

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is to increase the number of subscribers to the Advisory Council's bi-weekly electronic news bulletin, "NewsBytes".

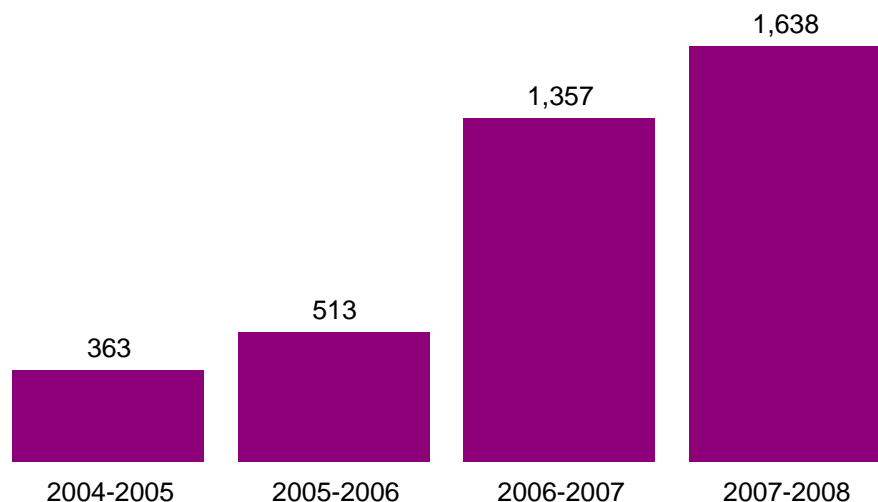
### What does the measure tell us?

NewsBytes is the Advisory Council's bi-weekly electronic news bulletin which has been in existence since April of 2002. Newsbytes replaced the Council's hard-copy newsletter and aims to inform subscribers of Council news, updates, and short features on women's issues. The number of NewsBytes subscribers gives a good indication as to the public's level of interest in women's issues and is an efficient and cost-effective way of providing information to those interested in women's issues.

### Where are we now?

#### NewsBytes Subscribers 2004-2005 to 2007-2008

At the end of the 2007-2008 fiscal year, there were a total of 1,638 Newsbytes subscribers. The number of subscribers increased by 20.7 percent over the previous year and substantially surpasses out revised target of 1,200 subscribers.



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

### Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Through continued web-site upgrading and consistent marketing, the Advisory Council plans to keep increasing its numbers of NewsBytes subscribers in the coming years.

## Council Members' Self-Rating of Participation in Community

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is the sustained effectiveness of the Advisory Council which can be achieved by supporting members' active engagement in their communities to enable them to bring forward the concerns of women to relevant policy audiences.

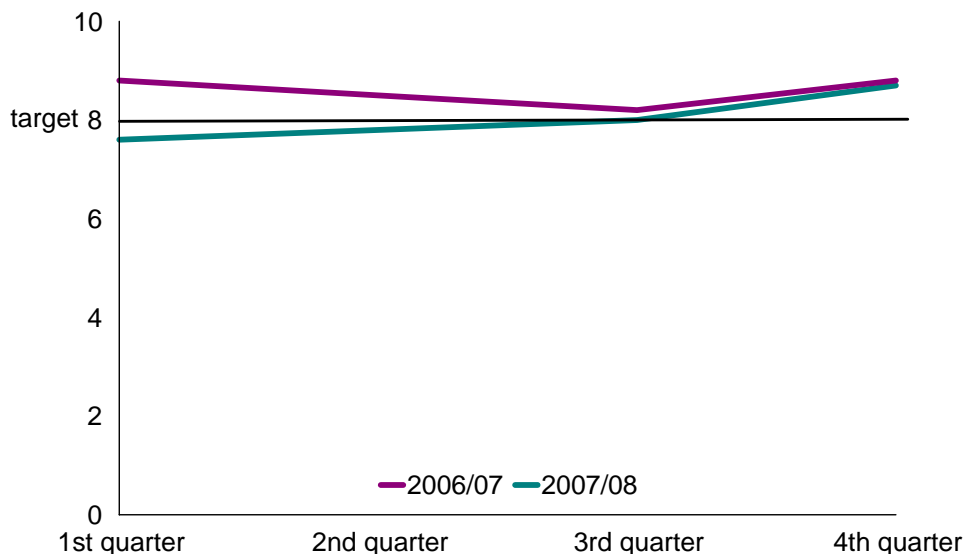
### What does the measure tell us?

The Council members' self-rating of participation in the community is a quarterly administered self-rating which ranges from 1 (was not able to do any Council-related work) to 10 (did Council-related work at least once a week). Scores are averaged across all Council members for each quarter of the fiscal year. Higher scores are indicative of a more active, vibrant Council with members who are dedicating a significant amount of personal time to the concerns of women in the province and who know the needs of the women they are serving.

### Where are we now?

#### Average Advisory Council Member Self-Ratings 2006-2007 and 2007-2008

Average council member self-ratings in 2007-2008 exceeded our target rating of 8.0 in two out of the four quarters. The overall average rating for the year was 8.025.



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

### Where do we want to go/be in the future?

Average Council member self-ratings surpassed our target in two of the four quarters of the 2007-2008 fiscal year. It is expected that we will continue to meet or exceed our target of 8 out of 10 for the coming fiscal years.

## **Number of Women's Campaign School Graduates and Political Workshop Participants**

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of *Social Inclusion and Participation of Women in Decision-Making*, another desirable outcome is to increase the numbers of Nova Scotian women who obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in public and political life. This can be achieved by offering the Nova Scotia Campaign School for Women, publicizing it widely to women across the province and ensuring that diverse groups of women have information about and access to the school as well as by developing and offering educational workshops for women so that they can further develop particular political skills.

### **What does this measure tell us?**

In November of 2004, the Advisory Council developed and coordinated the first-ever non-partisan, Nova Scotia Campaign School for Women. The School, comprised of several modules, was designed to give women the practical knowledge and skills necessary for them to begin participating in the political life of the province. Modules included:

- Making the decision to run
- Securing the nomination
- Campaign ethics
- Putting together a winning team - the campaign plan
- Media Relations
- Communications Training, including one-on-one television interviews, on-the-spot interviews and three-minute prepared speech
- Campaign fund-raising and budgeting

Each time the Campaign School and related political workshops are offered, the number of graduates/participants serves as an indication that an increasing number of women in this province have the necessary skills to participate in political life.

### **Where are we now?**

The first campaign school, held in Halifax in November of 2004, had a total of 30 graduates (25 from Nova Scotia and 5 from out-of-province) who gained invaluable knowledge and skills required to participate actively in public and political life. The second Campaign School was held in December of 2005 and graduated 28 more women.

In the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the Advisory council once again offered its Campaign School for women in partnership with Mount Saint Vincent University. As was the case in previous years, the school generated a lot of interest and many more women applied than the school was able to admit. Twenty-nine more women graduated in the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

Each time the Campaign School for Women is held, it generates an increasing amount of interest at both the provincial and national level. The Commonwealth Secretariat has also expressed recent interest in sending observers to the school to determine its possible applicability and use in the Commonwealth.

### **Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

The Advisory Council will continue to refine, coordinate, and offer its Campaign School for Women. In the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the Advisory Council partnered with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities to offer four municipal campaign schools for women interested in entering municipal politics in preparation for October 18, 2008 municipal elections. The Advisory Council will also offer its Campaign School for Women from October 24 to 26, 2008, which will include participation from the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians. Each Campaign School graduates between 25 and 30 women from diverse backgrounds.

## **Satisfaction with Advisory Council's Recommendations, Advice and Input**

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goals of promoting women's economic equality; reducing violence against women in communities, workplaces, and families; and improving the health and well-being of women and their families, a desirable outcome is that the advice, recommendations, and input that the Advisory Council makes in relation to gender, inclusion, and diversity are valued and well-utilized, by government and community partners.

### **What does this measure tell us?**

Assessing the extent to which our government and community partners' value and utilize the advice, recommendations, and input the Advisory Council makes in relation to gender, inclusion, and diversity is a good indicator of whether the work we do, so much of which is horizontal and collaborative in nature, enhances the social policy efforts of this province.

This measure was first introduced in the 2005-2006 fiscal year. A 5-point Likert scale rating form (1=poor, 5=excellent) was developed to assess the value and level of utilization of Advisory Council advice, recommendations, and input. Government and community partners who had requested the input of the Advisory Council in social and health policy, research, and community initiatives were asked to provide a rating.

### **Where are we now?**

For the 2007-2008 fiscal year, ratings received included those for the following projects:

- Women Unlimited
- WEE Society Projects
- Techsploration (Expansion Committee and Program Advisory Committee)
- Aboriginal Women and Family Violence/Domestic Violence in First Nations
- Nova Scotia Partnership on Respite

All ratings received thus far were 5 on a 5-point scale. Overall, the average rating received was 5.0 which surpasses our target of 3.5 out of 5.

### **Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

It is anticipated that we will continue to meet or surpass our target of 3.5 in coming fiscal years.

## Level of Utilization and Public Support for Advisory Council Publications

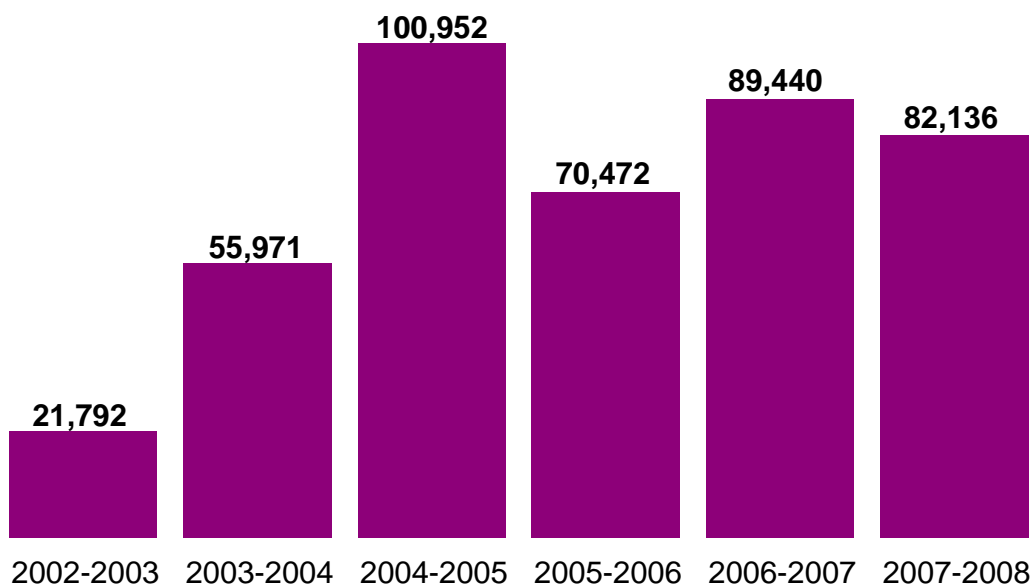
Under the Advisory Council's strategic goals of promoting women's economic equality; reducing violence against women in communities, workplaces, and families; and improving the health and well-being of women and their families, a desirable outcome is the strong utilization of policy-based research and informational resources developed and disseminated by the Advisory Council.

### What does the measure tell us?

Tracking the public's use of Council publications, both printed copy and electronic format, gives us an idea of the popularity of the Council's published work, including its briefs, statistical publications and other informational documents. Consistently high demand for Council publications indicates the public's interest in and satisfaction with the published work of the Council, analogous to the media's use of circulation figures. Tracking the distribution by publication allows us to know how popular particular publications are.

### Where are we now?

**Advisory Council Publications (PDF files)  
Downloaded from Web-Site, 2002-2003 to 2007-2008**



Source: Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

As can be seen in the figure immediately above, the overall number of publications downloaded from the Advisory Council's website increased by 27 percent from 2005-2006 to 2006-2007 and then showed a slight decline (8 percent) from 2006-2007 to 2007-2008. In total, 82,136 publications (PDF files) were downloaded from the Council's website in 2007-2008 with an additional 6,876 hard copies of publications distributed to meet the requests of the public.

### **Where do we want to go/be in the future?**

The importance of the Council's website in improving the public's access to council information can hardly be over-stated. The number of policy/research as well as informational/educational publications downloaded, for instance, far exceeds the number the Council could typically afford to make available in hard copy. Thus our information and outreach capacity is enhanced in a highly cost-effective manner.

Unfortunately, the statistical program that allows government departments and agencies to track the usage of particular publications was not functioning in the 2007-2008 fiscal year. We are therefore not able to report on the usage of any individual publications at this time.

With a revised and expanded edition of *Making Changes and Changer pour le mieux* released in November 2007, an updated electronic version of *Votes for Women and Des votes pour les femmes*, as well as *Guide for Girls* and *Guide ressources pour filles* in March 2008, the launch of the new *Caregiver's Handbook* and *Manuel du soignant* in September 2007 along with the release of several new publications and a substantial re-design of our website, it is expected that the number of PDF downloads will continue to increase in the coming year.

## Council Publications

30 Voices/30 voix 30th anniversary calendar

*Caregiver's Handbook: A Helping Hand for Families and Friends Giving Care in Nova Scotia* -- September 2007

*Changer pour le mieux : un livre pour les femmes victimes de violence*  
(Quatrième Edition) -- November 2007

*Des votes pour les femmes : un guide politique* (Third Edition, electronic) March 2008

Fact Sheet on Aboriginal Women – May 2006

Fact Sheet on Sexual Assault -- March 2008

Fact Sheet on Intimate Partner Homicide -- November 2007

Fact Sheet on Violence Against Women – November 2007

*Guide for Girls* (Second Edition) March 2008

*Guide-ressources pour filles* (First Edition) May 2007

*Making Changes: A Book for Women in Abusive Relationships* (Fifth Edition) – November 2007

*Manuel du soignant : Une main tendue aux familles et aux amis qui fournissent des soins en Nouvelle-Écosse* -- November 2007

*Votes for Women: A Political Guidebook* (Third Edition, electronic) March 2008

## **Council Members**

**Liz Chisholm, Chair (April 2007)– Highland Region**

**Linda Carvery – Central Region**

**Jean d’Entrement – South Shore Region**

**Shelley Goodwin – South Shore Region**

**Anne Kelly – Central Region**

**Patricia LeBlanc – Cape Breton Region**

**Holly Meuse – Valley Region**

**Doreen Paris – Highland Region**

**Sonja Power, Chair (to April 2007) – Fundy Region**

**Rita Warner – Cape Breton Region**