

Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2008-2009



Nova Scotia Advisory Council
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, 2009 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 2008-2009. 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Denise Peterson-Rafuse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Denise" being the most prominent.

Honourable Denise Peterson-Rafuse
Minister

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jean M. d'Entremont". The signature is cursive and elegant.

Jean d'Entremont
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 the decisions that affect their lives, families and communities.

I am the elected representative responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. I depend on the Council to deliver advice, feedback and concerns about issues facing women and their families.

This year, Council members increased their outreach in their communities. One way they did that was through the Women in the Lead: Four Films project, developed by agency staff. One of the films focused on the early sexualization of girls, and the parents and young people who saw it welcomed the discussion.

Staff held roundtables on women's economic security, women with disabilities, respite and caregiving challenges and options, assessing sexual assault services for victims, and with equity groups in order to develop a strategy on preventing domestic violence. Feedback from these sessions is sometimes the only way that government hears the voices of vulnerable citizens, and I value Council's continuing conversations with women from diverse communities.

Council, staff and community partners work daily to improve the status of women in Nova Scotia. Here's a summary of work during 2008-2009.



Honourable Denise Peterson-Rafuse
Minister

Message from the Chair

Council members, dedicated staff and knowledgeable partners from across the province continue to help identify the gaps in the equality, fairness and dignity in the lives of Nova Scotia women and are working together on responses and strategies to address those gaps.

For instance, the Women in the Lead theme during Women's History Month in October helped increase public understanding of the value and contribution of women community and political leaders – through projects such as the film package Women in the Lead: Four Films and the Nova Scotia Campaign School for Women.

Council increased work under the program Personal Safety and Freedom From Violence this year. We updated sexual assault statistics and advised on the community report *Suffering in Silence*, an assessment of sexual assault services across the province. Council staff organized inclusion groups for the Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy. We worked with our partners at the Transition House Association of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission on the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women at Province House on December 5. We participated in initiatives to address family violence in communities, including work with Aboriginal women. We produced an updated version of *Making Changes, A Book for Women in Abusive Relationships*.

We increased understanding about the state of women's paid and unpaid work through a new statistical profile and increased the capacity of women securing higher-paying jobs through the Bread and Roses Bursary. We recognized the contribution of immigrant women through an event called Celebrating Immigrant Women on International Women's Day on March 8.

To improve women's health and well-being, Council staff held talks across the province on the challenges and priorities of caregivers -- results from the Healthy Balance Research Program. Staff also co-chaired the Nova Scotia Respite Partnership on Family Health and Wellness. The partnership held workshops across the province to help families and caregivers taking care of children with high needs, to connect with resources and other caregivers and learn to find respite solutions.

The most exciting part of our work is collaborating with dedicated, innovative women's groups and community organizations. You'll see in this report the results of those partnerships during 2008-2009.

Jean d'Entremont
Chair

Introduction

The content of this accountability report is based on the goals, programs, priorities and outcomes described in the Council's business plan for 2008-2009. The purpose of this report is to update the public, members of the legislative assembly and our community partners on Council's activities and accomplishments.

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 Council seeks to represent and include all women in Nova Scotia in decisions that affect their lives and families.

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 develops responsive strategies and options. 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 shares information on women's issues to the Minister, Council, staff, and citizens, including media and the general public. Through a comprehensive communications strategy, Council informs key stakeholders about issues and concerns affecting women's, and Council and government priorities, activities and accomplishments, and about opportunities for improvement in addressing the challenges facing women and their families.

Community Liaison and Outreach

Through Council members and staff, the agency 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 2008-2009

Women and Leadership Program

Goal: 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

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

- Participated on the Public Service Commission's Diversity Roundtable.
- As part of the action plan from Roundtables for Women with Disabilities, held roundtable with women from the African Nova Scotian community. The sessions identified issues and barriers for presentation to various groups within government, including the Department of Community Services.
- Provided advice to the Long-term Planning Council on women and diversity and women's economic security.
- Presentation to a conference held by the Institute of Public Administration of Canada on the importance of women and diversity for the future of Nova Scotia.
- 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. Four campaigns schools were held in communities across the province in April and May 2008, in preparation for October 2008 elections.
- Held the fourth Nova Scotia Campaign School for Women in October 2008 at Mount Saint Vincent University. Twenty-five women interested in running for office or in running a campaign prepared at this free, non-partisan school. The weekend included sessions with politicians and party officials, communication trainers and pundits. For the first time, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians from across Canada were experts and critics to participants. Democracy 250 provided \$10,000 in funding.
- Hosted CWP Outreach tours across the province, to women's groups and universities and schools.
- Women in the Lead: One of the Solutions -- Executive Director Brigitte Neumann delivered the keynote address at the Canadian Federation of University Women annual conference at Acadia University.

- Printed a revised version of *Votes for Women, A Political Guidebook* and *Des votes pour les femmes, un guide politique*.
- Encouraged women to get involved in provincial agencies, boards and commissions through publications such as *Newsbytes*.
- Printed and distributed French version of *Guide for Girls -- Guide-ressources pour filles*, with input from partners inside and outside government.
- Partnered with Equal Voice Nova Scotia, on media messages regarding the fall elections and on development of a "Government is Us" presentation. This national organization aims to increase the number of women involved in politics.
- Our website and *NewsBytes*, a bi-weekly electronic bulletin, deliver Council news, partner and community information, and are an important link to opportunities for increasing the number of women in decision-making roles and at awareness raising events.

Priority: Recognize the contribution of women leaders in advancing fairness, dignity and equality of women.

- Partnered with Oxfam on the 100th birthday celebration for Muriel Duckworth in November 2008, to recognize her lifelong advocacy for fair political representation, civil rights, and a just and equitable society.
- *Women in the Lead: Four Films* -- Women directors focus the lens on pioneers of social justice and peace movements, on everyday heroines among historically excluded peoples, on grinding inequality and early sexualization of girls. This package sent to libraries and women centres included an outreach guide and the four films: *The Little Black School House*; *The Spirit of Annie Mae*; *Muriel Duckworth Practising Peace*; and *Sexy Inc. Our Children Under Influence*.
- Hosted *Celebrating Immigrant Women* on International Women's Day on March 8, with speeches, poetry readings and dancing at a lunch at the Holiday Inn, Halifax.
- The December 6 Ceremony at Province House recognized and featured local and international women, working to raise awareness about and address violence against women in our homes and communities.
- *NewsBytes* featured short profiles and links to stories about women leaders.

Priority: Exercise leadership at the international level, by sharing expertise and experience with international women's organizations.

- Hosted the second delegation from the All-China Women's Federation in June 2008, to share Canadian policies, practices, and experiences in women's education and training. The Canadian International Development Agency funded the project. In Nova Scotia, the delegation heard from Council, the Department of Education, the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, Read to Me Family Literacy, Women's Committee of the Canadian Labour Congress, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), Women Unlimited, Second Story Women's Centre. In Vancouver, the delegation learned about the Minerva Foundation.

Women's Work and Economic Security

Goal: To promote women's economic equality

Priority: Expose girls and women to occupations where they remain under-represented, particularly in science, trades and technology.

- Launched the Bread and Roses Bursary and Campaign, to recognize International Women's Day and women's contributions to paid and unpaid work -- but mostly to increase women's capacities for securing high-paying jobs. The Nova Scotia Community College Foundation is managing the \$20,000-fund, to benefit women studying sciences, trades, or technology, with particular consideration for women from diverse communities.
- 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 NSCC, Women in Trades and Technology, and the Apprenticeship Training Division of the NS Department of Education, in partnership with more than 20 sponsors. Council provided financial support for the program launch and two bursaries for Techsploration alumnae.
- Council provides ongoing advice, direction and implementation support to programs that increase women's numbers in trades and technology, such as the Women Unlimited Career-Decision-Making Program.
- *Guide for Girls* and *Guide-ressources pour filles* feature information about careers in trades, technology and sciences.

Priority: Inform the development and implementation of the Province's economic and social policy initiatives through relevant research and policy recommendations.

- Monitored and published statistical information on women's role in Nova Scotia's paid and unpaid work force and on their incomes -- much of which demonstrates the gendered risks of poverty.
- Submitted recommendations on the minimum wage.
- Consulted with the Poverty Reduction Working Group on the process and concerns for women and families regarding the Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- Provided input on the intergovernmental response to the Senate Standing Committee on Aging.
- Chair the Roundtable on Women's Economic Security, consisting of federal and provincial public servants 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).
- Participated on the Community Development Advisory Group and Nova Scotia Rural Team, involving all levels of government.
- Participated in Federal/Provincial/Territorial initiatives related to the modernization of maternity and parental benefits.
- Provided comments to the Department of Labour and Workforce Development on its new strategic plan.
- Recommended measures to assist economic integration of women with disabilities.
- Made comments to the Public Service Commission's diversity roundtable on a consultation guide developed by Treasury and Policy Board.

Priority: Highlight importance of women's paid and unpaid work

- Bread and Roses Bursary and Campaign launch recognized International Women's Day and women' contributions to paid and unpaid work.
- Held IWD brunch Celebrating Immigrant Women -- a networking opportunity.

Personal Safety and Freedom from Violence

Goal: To reduce violence against women and girls in communities, workplaces and families

Priority: *Contribute to the Province's Crime Prevention Strategy by formulating policy and program recommendations to address violence against women, with particular attention to family law applied in domestic violence situations.*

- Participated on Crime Prevention Strategy Policy working group.
- Participated on the Domestic Violence Prevention Committee and chaired and supported the Inclusion Working Group. The group has held key informant meetings with representatives from these communities: Acadian Women; African Nova Scotian Women; Women who have experienced the criminal justice system; immigrant and new Canadian women; rural women and their service providers; and women with disabilities.
- Developed information materials and raised awareness about new resources to address family law issues that affect women leaving abusive relationships. For instance, we published a revised design and updated *Making Changes: A Handbook for Women in Abusive Relationships*.
- Council also supported the launch in December of the book *Safely on Your Way*, a partnership project led by the Family Law Information Project for Abused Women. The goal is to increase safety and stability among abused women and their children during the post-separation period by increasing awareness of family court proceedings. Participated in a problem-solving think tank in March.
- Participated on inter-agencies on family violence issues across the province.

Priority: *Make evidence-based recommendations to government and policy-makers for a comprehensive, provincial program for victims of sexual violence.*

- Provided support and advice on the community-based report *Suffering In Silence*, which was presented to the Minister and Deputy Minister early in 2009. It includes many recommendations for making improvements to current services and for addressing gaps in services across the province.

Priority: Work with First Nation communities, governments, and the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum to develop culturally appropriate models of prevention and intervention to assist women, families and communities in 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. One initiative is Aboriginal Domestic Violence research led by Dr. Jane MacMillan at St. Francis Xavier University.
- Attended workshops held by the Sisters in Spirit Campaign.

Priority: Mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against on December 6.

- 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 5, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Participants included the Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, the Girl Guides of Canada, and representatives from the Domestic Violence Prevention Committee and Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights.
 - Delivered resolutions and statements in the Legislature, and to PSC staff.
 - Produced statistical fact sheets on spousal, intimate partner and sexual violence against women.
 - Assisted and educated media.
- Helped support our partners in their activities, such as THANS, Adsum House, Silent Witness, Avalon Centre, and many other groups in raising awareness about intimate partner violence, and all violence against women.
- Council members participated in events in their communities and our website Events Page promoted an extensive list of happenings across the province.

Women's Health and Well-Being

Goal: To improve the health and well-being of women and their families

Priority: *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, made 20 presentations to stakeholders and to public meetings on the challenges and needs of caregivers.
- Co-chaired the NS Partnership on Respite, Family Health and Well-being, with the Disable Persons Commission. The partnership raises awareness about issues for families caring for children/youth and/or adult children with disabilities, and informs, advocates, and makes recommendations to policy audiences about respite. The partnership held Creating Respite Solutions workshops across the province during 2008-2009 with more planned for 2009-2010. Based on findings from workshops already held, informational resources for parents/caregivers have been developed and are regularly being delivered to caregivers.
- Due to high community demand, reprinted thousands of copies of the Caregiver's Handbook and Manuel du soignant, 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.

Priority: *Through academic, community, and government partnerships, build knowledge and skills in the promotion of women's health among students, researchers and community members, and to communicate the result of that work to relevant target audiences.*

- Partnered with Antigonish Women's Resource Centre on a conference on the hyper sexualization of children in March 2008.
- Participated in the development of Women and Mood Disorders: Stories of Recovery with the Department of Health, Mental Health Branch, for Mental Health Awareness Week.
- Collaborated with academic partners to develop meaningful knowledge transfer/exchange opportunities for students examining women's health issues.

- Partnered with Juniper House Outreach to research, plan and deliver 14 workshops from September 2008 to April 2009 on dating violence and healthy relationships. Also created accompanying sessions for parents.
- In partnership with the Womens Place Resource Centre, created workshops on gender stereotyping, cyberbullying and pension planning.
- Participated in a workshop at the Family Resource Centre in Bridgetown on gender and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Helped develop a two-day Girls Retreat held in October 2008.
- Provided input on the *Personal Information Act*.
- Made recommendations to the Catastrophic Drug Coverage Consultation.

Financial Results

Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women				
	2007-2008 Estimate	2007-2008 Forecast	2008-2009 Estimate	2008-2009 Actual
Program & Service Area	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
Total Program Expenses				
Administration	\$756	\$831	\$835	\$854
Field Work Program	\$160	\$128	\$168	\$110
Total Program Expenses	\$916	\$959	\$1003	\$964
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	8.0	7.5	8.0	7.2

Performance Measures 2008-2009
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 first strategic goal of increasing the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities, a desirable outcome is ensuring that the work of the Advisory Council addresses diversity and social inclusion.

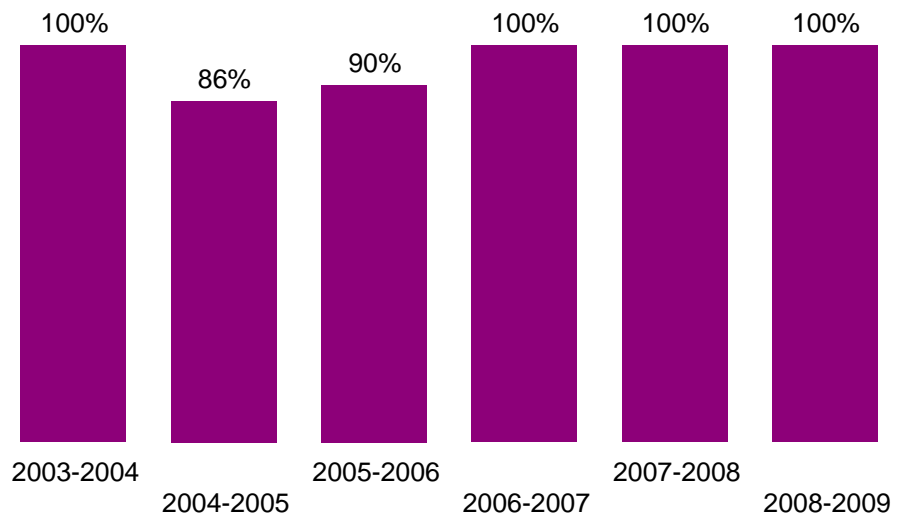
What does the measure tell us?

This measure is a straight-forward calculation of the proportion of all Advisory Council publications, including briefs, statistical reports, informational reports and fact sheets that address diversity and social inclusion. Given the Advisory Council's inclusion goal, ensuring that all Council publications are inclusive of diverse groups is an essential step towards reaching this goal.

Proportion of Advisory Council Publications that Address Diversity and Social Inclusion 2003-2004 to 2008-2009

Where are we now?

Our current target for this measure is 100 per cent. In four of the past six years analyzed, and in the three past years, our target of 100 per cent was met in that 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 our target in the 2008-2009 fiscal year. It is expected that we will continue to meet our target of 100 per cent for the coming fiscal years.

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

Under the Advisory Council's first strategic goal of increasing the participation of women in all their diversity in decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities, 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 three-day Campaign School was designed to give women the practical knowledge and skills necessary for them to begin participating in the political life of the province as elected representatives. 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 actively in politics.

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. Three more Campaign Schools for Women have been held since that time.

Year	Number of Graduates
2004-2005	30
2005-2006	28
2007-2008	29
2008-2009	25
Total	112

In the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the Advisory Council once again offered its Campaign School for women in partnership with Mount Saint Vincent University. Each time the Campaign School for Women is held, it generates a substantial amount of interest at both the provincial and national level.

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. The next Campaign School will be held October 16 to 18, 2009 and will, as it did last year, include participation from current and previous women politicians. Each Campaign School graduates between 25 and 30 women from diverse backgrounds.

Number of Girls and Women Exposed to Non-Traditional Occupations for Women

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of promoting women's economic equality, another desirable outcome is to increase women's and girls' exposure to occupations where they remain under-represented; ie., science, trade, and technology occupations.

The Advisory Council collaborates with partners from government, community, business, colleges, and universities in developing and offering programs that provide women and girls exposure and active participation in science, trade, and technology occupations.

What does the measure tell us?

The Advisory Council has played an important role in the development of two programs that aim to provide women and girls with exposure to and experience with science, trade, and technology occupations, Techsploration and Women Unlimited.

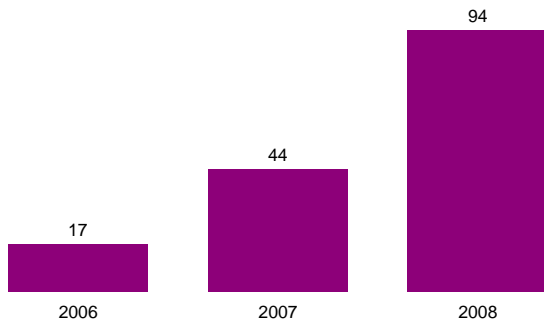
Techsploration provides young women from grades nine to twelve with opportunities to explore science, trades, and technology occupations, while creating awareness about the critical role of work in their lives and by assisting young women from diverse backgrounds to explore a wide range of careers in these fields. Starting out in one school board as a pilot project in 1998 it now enjoys representation from every school board in the province with 28 schools participating in 2008.

Women Unlimited is a pilot program is co-sponsored by Women for Economic Equality Society (WEE) and the Hypatia Association that works with a variety of government, community, academic and business partners to introduce and assist diverse and unemployed women to obtain employment in skilled trades and technology occupations. The Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is the site of three pilots - one in Lunenburg County and the others in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

The measure is an annual count of the number of girls and women participating in each of these two programs.

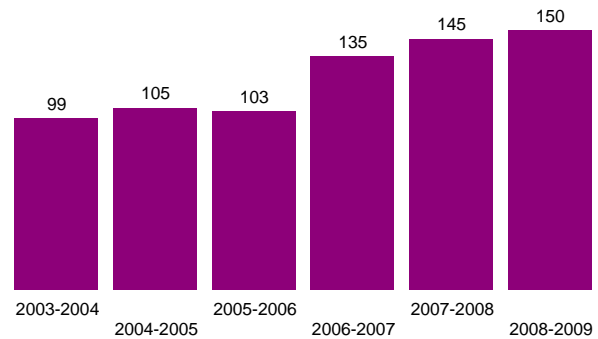
Where are we now?

Women Unlimited
2006-2008



Source: Women Unlimited Program Coordinator

Techsploration
2003-2004 to 2008-2009



Source: Techsploration Program Coordinator

As can be seen in the graphs above, 94 women participated in programs now offered at three sites by the Women Unlimited program in 2008 and 150 girls participated in the Techsploration program in 2008-2009. The 150 girls make up 24 school teams around the province, including three First Nation Community Schools and one Acadian School. Approximately 40 schools are currently involved with Techsploration, with 2500 students (including some young men) who participate in some Techsploration Goes to School Events. Additionally, 350 role models, teachers and volunteers participated in 51 Techsploration program events.

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

The Advisory Council will continue to participate in and support these two important programs. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting targets in the coming years.

Level of Utilization and Public Support for Advisory Council Publications

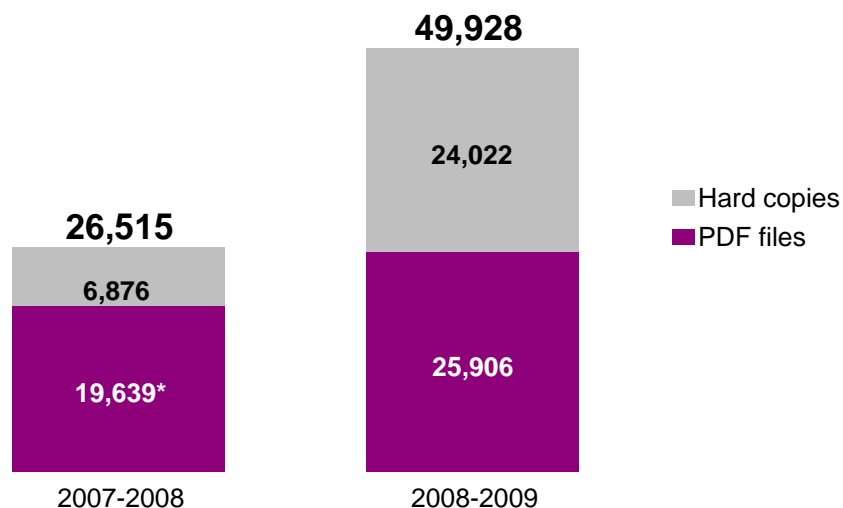
Under all of the Advisory Council's strategic goals, a desirable outcome is that government and community gain a fuller understanding of the issues affecting women in Nova Scotia, eg., women's economic equality; violence against women; women's health and well-being; women and leadership, etc. One measure of this outcome is to track the number of Council publications disseminated, overall, as well as by program area, eg., women's economic equality/security. The figure on page 24 below, provides data for two performance measures described on pages 16 and 19 of our 2008-2009 business plan.

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?

All Advisory Council Publications Downloaded/Distributed 2007-2008 and 2008-2009

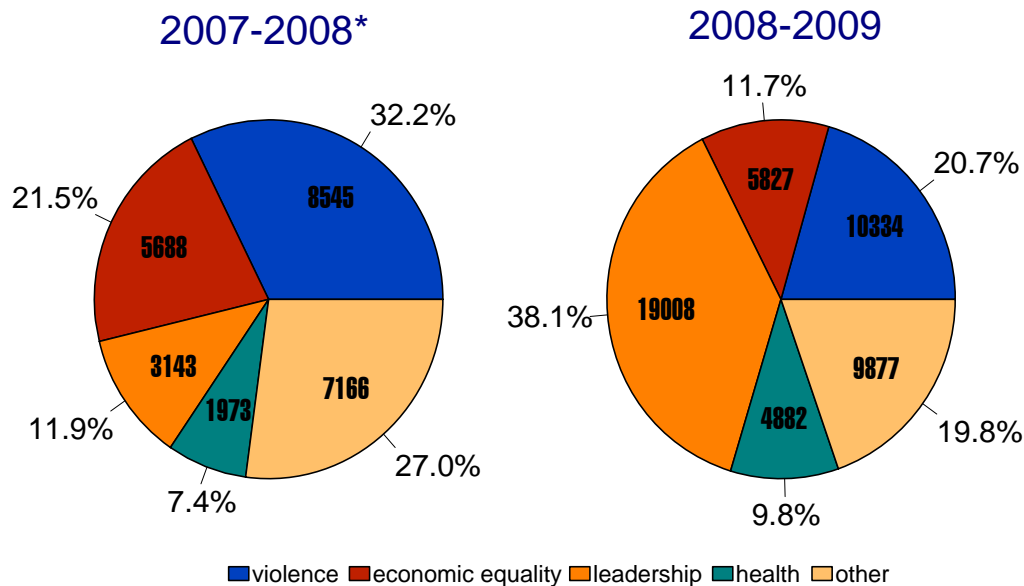


* 10 months of data only

Source: [Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women](#)

As can be seen in the graph above, the number of PDF files downloaded from the Advisory Council's website showed a slight increase (+ 10 per cent)...from 19,639 downloads in 2007-2008 (10 months of data only....see technical note below) to 25,906 downloads in 2008-2009. The number of hard copies of publications distributed went from 6,876 copies in 2007-2008 to 24,022 copies in 2008-2009, an increase of close to 250 per cent.

Advisory Council Publications (PDF and hard copy) Downloaded/Distributed by Program Area



* PDF data is for 10 months only

Source: [Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women](#)

When looking at publications downloaded/distributed by program area, we see substantial increases in all program areas except for women's economic equality. Delays in releasing certain publications in the 2008-2009 fiscal year were a likely cause of the lack of increase in this program area. Because of technical reasons (see note below) our revised targets for 2008-2009 for both women's economic equality and violence against women is 10,000. Although this target was met for publications related to violence against women, it was not for publications related to women's economic equality.

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

With the release of several new publications in 2009-2010, it is expected that the number of PDF downloads will increase in the coming year and we do not anticipate having difficulty reaching our target.

Technical Note: The government server software which previously enabled us to track our website usage and downloads (LiveStats) ceased operation in March/07. In February/09, it was replaced by a different software (WebTrends). WebTrends allowed us to go back to June/07 for the purposes of calculating website statistics. Hence we have no web-site data available for April and May of 2007. The new software, WebTrends, makes use of more stringent “bot” filters than the previous software, resulting in significantly reduced numbers of downloads than was tracked by the previous software. As a result, we have adjusted our 2008/2009 targets and ultimate targets to more realistically reflect the statistical results generated by the new website software. We have not presented data for years where LiveStats was in use as these are not comparable to the data collected by WebTrends (ie., since June of 2007).

Numbers of NewsBytes Subscribers*

Under all of the Advisory Council's strategic goals, a desirable outcome is that government and community gain a fuller understanding of the issues affecting women in Nova Scotia, eg., women's economic equality; violence against women; women's health and well-being; women and leadership, etc. Another measure of this outcome is to track the number of subscribers to the Advisory Council's bi-weekly electronic news bulletin, "NewsBytes".

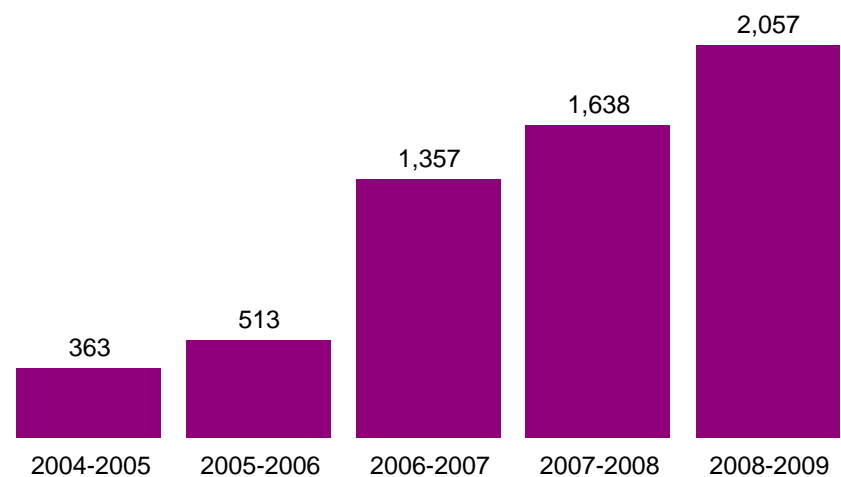
What does the measure tell us?

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 2008-2009

At the end of the 2008-2009 fiscal year, there were a total of 2,057 Newsbytes subscribers. The number of subscribers increased by 25.6 percent over the previous year and now surpasses our revised target of 2,000 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.

* N.B. This is an additional measure with a revised target, not included in our 2008-2009 Business Plan.

Presentations to Government and Other Audiences

Under all of the Advisory Council's strategic goals, a desirable outcome is that government and community gain a fuller understanding of the issues affecting women in Nova Scotia, eg., women's economic equality, including the paid and unpaid work they do; violence against women; women and leadership, women's health and well-being, among others. Another measure of this outcome is to track the overall number of presentations the Council makes to government and other (eg., community and academic) audiences as well as by program area, eg., women's economic equality/security. The table below provides data for two performance measures described on pages 16 and 21 of our 2008-2009 business plan.

What does the 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 Council-related issues as well as ensuring that a province-wide awareness of women's issues is achieved.

This measure was introduced in the 2005-2006 fiscal year but was used to track the total number of presentations only (ie., across all goals). 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 (# of participants/attendees)						
	Total	Women's Economic Equality	Violence Against Women	Women and Leadership	Health		Other
					Care- giving	Other	
2005-2006	16 (496)	1 (30)	2 (45)		2 (130)	3 (103)	8 (188)
2006-2007	22 (771)	7 (325)	2 (55)	3 (135)	1 (30)	1 (20)	8 (206)
2007-2008	15 (398)	1 (50)			10 (220)	3 (102)	1 (26)
2008-2009	29 (1,139)	4 (90)	1 (--)	6 (312)	11 (163)	3 (415)	4 (159)

In 2008-2009, there were a total of 29 speaking engagements requested of the Advisory Council, higher than in any year tracked thus far. Of these, fourteen related to women's health (11 of which related to caregiving), six to women and leadership, four to women's economic equality, one to violence against women, and four to "other" topics. Presentations were made on a wide variety of topics to diverse audiences across the province. Audience size for the presentations ranged from 2 to 300 with a total of more than 1,100 persons attending overall in 2008-2009.

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

The targets for this measure for 2008-2009 were three presentations relating to women's economic equality, three presentations relating to women's health issues and ten presentations relating to women's unpaid work and care-giving issues (with an average of 20 participants at each).

We have met all our 2008-2009 targets for numbers of presentations though fell slightly short of our target for numbers of participants attending presentations on care-giving. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting our targets in the coming years.

Media Coverage of Council's Work

Under all of the Advisory Council's strategic goals, a desirable outcome is that government and community gain a fuller understanding of the issues affecting women in Nova Scotia, eg., women's economic equality, including the paid and unpaid work they do; violence against women; women and leadership, among others. Another measure of this outcome is to track the total number of print media stories that were published that related to Advisory Council events, initiatives and work in general, as well as by program area, eg., women's economic equality/security.

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 and awareness of the Council's work and initiatives.

Where are we now?

Year	Number of Print Media Articles					
	Total	Women's Economic Equality	Violence Against Women	Women and Leadership	Health	Other/ General
2004-2005	56	13	11	15	3	14
2005-2006	86	23	8	30	2	23
2006-2007	73	21	11	12	7	22
2007-2008	56	10	8	18	5	15
2008-2009	24	0	2	12	9	1

The number of print media articles has decreased over the years. Contributing to the decline are shrinking newsrooms: the wind-down and eventual shut down of the *Daily News* and the reduction in staff at the *Chronicle Herald* during 2008-2009 had a significant effect on our print coverage. Our placements were largely due to submitted editorials and public service announcements, or media releases about coming and annual events.

Moreover, CBC reduced its newsrooms in the Maritimes in 2008-2009. However, staff did do several interviews with local television, which are not reflected in the print numbers.

The continuing challenge for small agencies is to use and target new modes of media, as readers and viewers of traditional news formats drop off.

Another factor is the fine line we walk in our work – to stay in touch with women in Nova Scotia and advise the government about issues affecting women and their families. In recent times, the agency has moved away from advocating through the media.

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

While we did not meet our target of 5 articles relating to women’s economic equality in 2008-2009, with the release of several new publications in 2009-2010, it is anticipated that we will meet our target for the coming fiscal year.

Gender-Sensitive Recommendations

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of reducing violence against women and girls in communities, workplaces, and families, a desirable outcome is that provincial strategies such as Nova Scotia's Crime Prevention Strategy continue to address violence against women by having recommendations that are gender-sensitive.

This is a new measure for 2008-2009.

What does the measure tell us?

By examining the extent to which provincial strategies and other related resources take gender and gender-based violence into account, we can ascertain whether violence against women is being taken seriously and addressed by our government.

Where are we now?

Nova Scotia's Crime Prevention Strategy, *Time to Fight Crime... Together*, released in 2007, makes five specific references to addressing violence against women and two other mentions of gender. The on-line companion program for *Time to Fight Crime... Together*, includes a "How to Protect Yourself" section for women as well as sections on intimate partner violence and criminal harassment. All of these are positive steps towards reducing violence against women.

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

In 2008-2009, the Advisory Council began participating in the province's Domestic Violence Prevention Committee which is developing recommendations for a provincial domestic violence prevention strategy. As part of this initiative, the Advisory Council has chaired and led the work of the Inclusion Working Group which has brought forward the concerns and recommendations of key informant groups, including Aboriginal women, African Nova Scotian women, Immigrant women, women with disabilities and criminalized women. The final report from this committee is expected June 30, 2009 and we anticipate that it will include recommendations brought forward by these diverse groups of Nova Scotian women.

The Advisory Council will continue to make recommendations and to publish statistical and other informational resources with the goal of reducing violence against women in the coming years.

Respite Workshops for Caregivers

Under the Advisory Council's strategic goal of improving the health and well-being of women and their families, one desired outcome is that caregivers, the majority of whom are women, are better supported in their care-giving role.

Care-giving is a significant part of life in Nova Scotia, with about 36 per cent of us providing care to another person. Women are disproportionately affected, as they do more care-giving overall and the kind of care-giving they do is time-consuming, intensive and demanding, such as personal care. Mothers who care for children with disabilities are among care-givers with the most urgent needs, particularly for regular respite.

In its role as Co-Chair of the Nova Scotia Partnership on Respite, Family Health and Well-being, the Advisory Council has been collaborating with numerous government, community, health and academic partners to develop and offer solution-focused workshops for parents/caregivers in Nova Scotia. The workshops aim to ensure that caregivers acquire the information, skills, and tools necessary to enable/enhance their own respite outcomes.

What does the measure tell us?

Three measures will be used in relation to this outcome. 1) The number of workshops offered to parents/caregivers, 2) The number of parents/caregivers who attend the workshops, and 3) the workshop evaluation ratings of participants. The number of workshops and participants serve as measures of the extent to which we have been able to reach parents/caregivers in Nova Scotia and of the level of interest in and need for this kind of workshop. The evaluation ratings of participants indicates whether the participants found the workshop and its components to be helpful.

Where are we now?

In May of 2008-2009, we held our first respite workshop for parents/caregivers in HRM. Because of the high level of interest in the workshop on the part of families who are caring for children/adult children with disabilities as well as community, health, and government partners, we sought and were successful in acquiring funding to conduct five more respite workshops across the province. Three of these regional respite workshops were conducted in 2008-2009 for a total of four workshops.

Respite Workshops for Caregivers, 2008-2009

Workshop location	Number of Participants
Halifax	125
Yarmouth	31
Wolfville	46
New Glasgow	42

Source: Nova Scotia Advisory council on the Status of Women

Participants' evaluations of the respite workshop and its components have been overwhelmingly positive. Of the four workshops conducted in 2008-2009, 99 per cent of participants gave overall ratings of excellent (54%) or very good (45%); ie., either a 4 or a 5 on a five-point Likert scale. All workshop components were rated by participants for their helpfulness. At least 70 per cent of all participants rated each of the workshop component's helpfulness as either a 4 or 5 on a five-point Likert scale. Participants also made many positive comments on their evaluation sheets.

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

We will conduct the other two regional workshops for which we have received funding in the 2009-2010 fiscal year as well as disseminate the findings of the workshops to relevant audiences. We do not anticipate having any difficulty meeting our targets for this measure.

Publications and Submissions

Brief to the Mental Health Commission of Canada on lack of information on how mental illness and addiction affect women.

Caregiver's Handbook: A Helping Hand for Families and Friends Giving Care in Nova Scotia -- reprinted in 2008

Changer pour le mieux : un livre pour les femmes victimes de violence (Quatrième Edition) -- 2008

Des votes pour les femmes : un guide politique (Troisième édition) June 2008

Fact Sheet on Sexual Assault -- November 2008

Fact Sheet on Intimate Partner Homicide -- November 2008

Fact Sheet on Violence Against Women – November 2008

Fact Sheet on the Road to Representation -- July 2008

Guide for Girls (Second Edition) -- March 2008

Guide-ressources pour filles (First Edition) -- reprinted in 2008

Making Changes: A Book for Women in Abusive Relationships (Sixth Edition)
– March 2009

Submission to HRM by Design.

Votes for Women: A Political Guidebook (Third Edition) April 2008

Women in the Lead: Four Films, Film Guide and Outreach Guide -- November 2008

Council Members

Liz Chisholm, Chair (April 2007 to April 2009) – Highland 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

Jennie Orlando -- Central Region

Doreen Paris – Highland Region

Sonja Power – Fundy Region

Rita Warner – Cape Breton Region