
WOMEN'S CENTRES CONNECT!

PLANNING REPORT

TO

**THE NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
SERVICES**

MAY 2003

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INTRODUCTION

Women's Centres in Nova Scotia remain strong and have continued to grow throughout twenty-five years of development. Eight Women's Centres serve many communities from locations in Yarmouth, Bridgewater, Lawrencetown, Truro, New Glasgow, Sheet Harbour, Antigonish and Sydney (see Appendix 1). As a result, thousands of women annually come to Women's Centres for information, support and programs.

Women and adolescent girls come to Women's Centres during periods of crisis and transition in their lives. Their issues are multi-faceted and require holistic, practical and sustained problem-solving support and services delivered by knowledgeable, skilled, competent staff. Women's Centre services and programs enable women successfully to identify and address the complexity of issues and barriers they experience, and to go forward in their lives.

Women's Centres service and program framework has three key components: Intervention, Prevention and Community Development. These three components are interdependent and contingent on a set of Core Services that focus on strengthening capacities at multiple levels: at the individual level, organizational level and broader community level. For example:

Women's Centres services and programs assist *individual women* in establishing economic independence, in entering or returning to the workforce, in upgrading skills and education, and in maintaining healthy lives, families and parenting practices.

At the *organizational level*, services and programs facilitate increased awareness among other agencies of issues facing women and adolescent girls and improved policies and procedures to improve responses to women.

At the *community level*, services and programs support leadership development, new or strengthened community programs and services, positive community partnerships, and increased cooperation.

Women's Centres are a well-respected cornerstone of the service network in their communities, providing essential services for women and adolescent girls that are not provided elsewhere. The strength of Women's Centres is that they were created by and within their communities, to address issues not being addressed by other services and programs. Women find that Women's Centres services are critical to their well-being as indicated in the following statement by women who have used services and programs.

The Women's Resource Centre has been vital in providing me with accessible and consistent programs and support in numerous areas of concern to me as a single parent and as a woman. I know I always have somewhere to turn.

I've learned a tremendous amount and it has helped me to establish my financial independence. If I hadn't (used the services), I'd probably be on welfare or some other kind of government program.

Programs and outreach activities are based on the identified needs of women within communities and continue to grow as the demand for them increases. Working in collaboration with other organizations & with government in their communities and provincially through Women's Centres CONNECT!, Women's Centres work to strengthen social and economic policies, services and programs that affect women, their children, their families and communities.

This planning exercise was undertaken at the request of the Provincial Department of Community Services. Women's Centres were asked to provide a recommended list of Core Services, identify service improvements, cost efficiencies and to look for opportunities for cooperation and collaboration to strengthen service and program delivery.

During this planning process, Women's Centres reviewed their current situation in the context of social and economic changes occurring in rural Nova Scotia, of Government restructuring of funding and services to local communities and to community-based women's organizations. Through this review, Women's Centres identified the strengths, challenges and opportunities for delivering effective and efficient services and programs in rural communities throughout Nova Scotia.

The report begins by describing the broader social, economic and political context. The second section reviews the strengths and challenges of Women's Centres geographic location. Next, "A Profile of Women Who Use Women's Centres" describes why women use Women's Centres, what services they use, their level of satisfaction and strengths and opportunities from their perspective. The linkages with other community-based organizations and government agencies are identified in the section, "Links and Cooperation With Other Organizations. Women's Centres Core Services are then articulated within an integrated Service and Program Impact Framework in the section, "Women's Centres Services and Programs". These Core Services are clearly supported by the women who use our services and programs and by the community organizations and government agencies with which we work, on a daily basis, in the delivery of those services and programs. Potential service improvements are identified through a discussion of the "Current Demand For Services" followed by a section on "Cost Efficiencies". "A Final Reflection" urges Government to acknowledge the contribution Women's Centres make to the overall health of the community.

The Conclusions and Recommendations encourage the Department of Community Services to work with Women's Centres to continue to strengthen and develop our programs and services. They also encourage the Government to work with Women's Centres to find creative ways to fully account for and acknowledge the value of the investment they have made and are making in the future of women, their families and their communities through the continued funding and support of Women's Centres.

THE CONTEXT

THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

Communities and families across Nova Scotia are coping with the impacts of dramatic change in social and economic structures. Resource industries, in particular fishing, mining and forestry, are no longer the certain workplace of a large proportion of the rural population, particularly in the predominantly rural and coastal communities in Nova Scotia where Women's Centres are located. Divorce and family breakup are increasing, and more women and children are living in single-parent homes, frequently in poverty.

While these shifts affect the whole community, women are often the first and most seriously affected. For example, women are the most likely to be caregivers for old or ill family members, and often bear the stress of balancing this demand against those of children and a job outside the home. In addition, most single-parent families are headed by women and most female lone-parents in Nova Scotia have low incomes. In 1997, 67.3% of female lone-parents with children under the age of 18 were poor.¹

Poverty captures individuals and families in a cycle from which it is difficult to escape. It is often the reason young people drop out of school early and the reason women find it difficult to access further education and training. The proportion of single parent social assistance recipients with less than high school graduation is 61.5 per cent. Poverty affects mental and physical health. It increases the likelihood of depression and decreases the resistance to disease. It leaves women and children vulnerable to living in inadequate or unaffordable housing.

The costs of poverty to society and communities are very high. Poverty generates a range of complex economic, social and personal issues and barriers that prevent many women from entering the work force, from being effective in their child rearing and active in their communities. Furthermore, children from low-income families are likely to be at higher risk of poor health and experience social, educational and employment problems and the cycle of poverty repeats itself.

Daily Women's Centres see the impact of growing poverty and economic disparity in our local communities. Women's Centres in Nova Scotia see the effects of what happens when people don't have – and can't get – the education, jobs, decent housing and other things they need in order to live comfortably. Women's Centres see the impact of the lack of affordable housing on women and their families, of the disappearance of jobs in primary resource industries, of non-existent or collapsing rural infrastructure, and of increasingly higher walls to scale to secure adequate employment. At the same time, we know there is no quick fix. Breaking the cycle of poverty - particularly poverty that is generational - and supporting women in becoming fully participating community

¹ Money Matters: Women in Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 2000

members takes time, adequate resources, and a comprehensive approach. Women's Centres have demonstrated it is possible.

THE RESTRUCTURING OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The Provincial Government in Nova Scotia has been re-structuring and downsizing its services and Departments in Education, Health, Economic Development and Community Services. The effect of this re-structuring has been fewer resources in communities to respond to and address the growing demand for services by people dealing with the effects of the social and economic changes such as unemployment, increased poverty and homelessness. Women's Centres and other community-based organizations are directly experiencing the impacts of this restructuring, particularly increased referral from other government agencies due to their shrinking resources. They are experiencing a significant increase in the numbers of women and youth coming to Women's Centre in crisis looking for support and help who have nowhere else to go. There is an identified need for collaborative community development initiatives to address current community gaps in services and programs, particularly the need for affordable housing for women and support programs for youth at risk.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY-BASED WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

In the last ten years, both the structure and the amount of funding from federal and provincial governments have been changing. The operating or sustaining grants from the Federal Government that supported the work of community-based women's organizations have changed in two ways. First, the sustaining grants are now shorter term project funding that often excludes administrative expenses, and secondly, the criteria request a regional or provincial policy-oriented focus, rather than a community-based program focus. This shift in the nature of the funding has led to community-based women's organizations spending a significant amount of time chasing project funding from an array of government departments and agencies to support local programs and services. This has not only reduced the available "stable" or "core" funding to women's organizations, it has also increased the effort required to achieve support.

In Nova Scotia, the Department of Community Services has continued to provide sustaining grants to agencies, including Women's Centres, but the maintenance of this program is uncertain in light of current fiscal pressures. In 1999-2000 the Department increased the grant to Women's Centres. During that period, the Department also participated with other government Departments in the Province of Nova Scotia/Women's Centres CONNECT! Joint Planning Committee. The purpose of the committee was to investigate and recommend on ways in which the revenue of the Women's Centres across the Province could be stabilized and dependence on Government grants could be reduced. The Joint Planning Committee completed its work in November 2000 with a final report and recommendations for continued cooperation between the Government and Women's Centres in two areas: negotiated service contracts between government and the Women's Centres and development of non-government revenue sources. There has been no further action on this report since

November 2000. Some Women's Centres remain under-funded and overall funding remains insecure.

In April 2002, the Provincial Government announced a budget reduction of \$890,000.00 to Transition Houses, Men's Intervention programs and Women's Centres and put forward a "Family Violence Re-design" proposal. After six months of discussion and negotiation between the Department of Community Services and the Coalition of Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, the Association of Men's Intervention Programs and Women's Centres CONNECT, the Department of Community Services has requested that the three associations work together to develop a recommended list of proposed core services, identify service improvements, identify cost efficiencies, and look for opportunities for cooperation and collaboration for service delivery. During this process, the Provincial Government has kept funding for services at the same level.

The combined impact of the social and economic changes occurring in rural Nova Scotia, the restructuring of Government services, and the restructuring of Government funding has had a significant impact on Women's Centres. This situation is presenting both opportunities and significant challenges. On the one hand, Women's Centres are in a very precarious position, with increased demand for services and increasing deficit positions. On the other hand, it offers a potential opportunity for Women's Centres and the Provincial Government to find ways to creatively work together to strengthen and enhance women's social and economic development throughout Nova Scotia.

TRENDS IN VALUING COMMUNITY SERVICE

Recent initiatives at all levels of government suggest that there is a growing recognition of the value of the community sector represented in the countless not for profit organizations. The Broadbent report on Governance in the Voluntary Sector, the report of the Joint federal and sector round tables, and work by Statistics Canada and Nova Scotia through the Genuine Progress Index to measure the value of community service are all indications of that shifting trend.

Women's Centres feel that the work of the Genuine Progress Index, in particular, may be an excellent opportunity to find creative ways to track and measure the short term and long term outcomes of Women's Centres work in order to effectively account for the full benefits of the Provincial Government's investment in Women's Centres. This work could provide opportunities for accounting for and measuring the full contribution that Women's Centres make, not just to the economic development of a community, but also to the immense social and human development of the community through Intervention, Prevention and Community Development.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

The eight Women's Centres are community-based organizations located primarily in rural areas of Nova Scotia. Historically, Women's Centres have, therefore, provided services and programs in local communities and have linked with each other provincially to strengthen local services and programs. Recently, Women's Centres have also cooperated within and across regions. There are strengths, opportunities and challenges related to geographic location that are discussed in this section.

LOCAL FEATURES

Women's Centres are locally based with local Boards of Directors that ensure local control over decision-making. This enables *inclusive processes where women living in local communities have a voice* in what programs and services Women's Centres offer. In addition, Women's Centres are able to meet women's needs and consider various community characteristics, such as availability of transportation and other services. Remaining relatively small and locally based enables Women's Centres to be accessible, flexible and versatile.

Working locally offers distinct opportunities for women in these communities who have not been connected with and haven't had access to services. There are, however, a number of challenges. One of these is reaching women in outlying areas who are often the most in need of services and are not able to travel to access services. These are women living on social assistance or other basic income, who have no access to transportation or telephone. Many of the rural communities and outlying areas served by Women's Centres do not have public transportation systems.² This is illustrated by the following description.

According to the Eastern Shore-Musquodoboit Community Health Plan, To Our Good Health: From the Cradle to the Grave "*the tri-community area (Sheet Harbour, Musquodoboit Harbour & Musquodoboit Valley) is the largest community in the Central Region. It has by far the most scattered population, the oldest highest percentage on a fixed income, nearly the poorest and arguably the most deprived as far as education is concerned...it is not uncommon in the eastern areas of the community to find individuals who do not have a car or access to transportation*" (Community Health Board, 1997).

Women's Centres are currently receiving requests for services to communities anywhere up to an hour and a half distance from each centre. One option to address these challenges is to deliver *outreach services* to outlying communities. Although some Women's Centres do deliver some outreach programs, at present this is very limited. Within current funding arrangements, Women's Centres have neither the funds nor staff to deliver quality outreach programs on a consistent basis.

² See Appendix 2, Maps of Services of Women's Centres in Nova Scotia

PROVINCIAL FEATURES

In 1988, the Women's Centres of Nova Scotia officially formed Women's Centres CONNECT! CONNECT! provides a forum for sharing information and resources among Women's Centres throughout the province. This consolidation of information, resources and tools ensures both effective and efficient use of program and service resources, including human, financial and material resources. It also helps to identify where there are new demands for services or gaps in services throughout the province. For example, there have been requests for new Women's Centres or satellite centres in five communities (see also the section, "Current Demand for Services", page 4-27).

While there are many examples of these kinds of efficiencies, the following two examples help to illustrate.

A good example of information sharing is the recent research, *Social Assistance Reform in Nova Scotia: Is It Working for Women?* Both the research outcomes and the pamphlets developed through this research have been distributed, not only to other Women's Centres throughout the province, but also to other local organizations. In this way, all eight Women's Centres have benefited from the work undertaken by three of the centres. In addition, presentations and discussions with the Department of Community Services provides direct feedback to the Department of Community Services about how policy is being implemented and allows them to improve policy implementation. Not having to duplicate this research offers both broader efficiencies and benefits for other community organizations and government agencies, including the Department of Community Services.

An example that illustrates efficiencies in program development is the women's re-entry program and the program manual, *Starting Point*. This facilitator's manual has been recently developed using both the expertise and the experience of three Women's Centres who have been offering re-entry training. The availability of this manual will save countless hours of program development time by other Women's Centres who have similar demands for this kind of training in their communities.

CONNECT! works on a provincial and national level in collaboration with other organizations & with government to strengthen social and economic policies, services and programs that affect women, their children, their families and communities. This builds capacity for both effective and efficient use of available resources and information. While there are countless examples of this work over the last fifteen years, one current example is the *Nova Scotia Advisory Council's Roundtable on Women's Economic Security*. Two of the goals are to exchange information and to foster cooperation and collaboration across governments and departments and between government and community organizations to resolve ongoing issues, identify opportunities, and build capacity for joint action on issues of mutual concern.

The most significant challenge for Women's Centres to continue to build and strengthen these coordinated efforts are limited funds and staff at the provincial level. At this time,

Women's Centres allocate resources from each Centre's operational budget for provincial coordination, which enables only a part-time position and minimal expenses. Women's Centres use technology (e-mail, conference calls, etc) to facilitate information exchange and communication, although face-to-face meetings are required from time to time to support coordinated efforts.

REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Recently, Women's Centres have cooperated within and across regions to secure funding for local projects. One example, is the project referred to in the previous section, *Social Assistance Reform in Nova Scotia: Is It Working for Women?* Three Women's Centres across two regions cooperated to secure funding for one project that was then carried out locally through the three Women's Centres. Women's Centres in some regions also meet jointly with government officials or with joint government regional action teams that consider development projects and activities for various regions in Nova Scotia.

The benefits of this regional activity are increased cooperation and communication among Women's Centres across a region or regions related to program development. There are, however, significant challenges, including additional administrative costs and associated travel to facilitate this regional coordination which is often not covered in funding criteria. In considering any future regional cooperation, it is critical that costs do not outweigh benefits.

STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

One considerable strength in Women's Centres geographic location is their local, community base where any woman, but in particular women living in poverty, can access services and programs. In addition, services and programs can be developed to meet local needs and new demands for services can be readily identified and clarified. Another strength is the provincial cooperation among all Women's Centres through CONNECT, which enables sharing of program information and considerable program efficiencies and, therefore strengthens the local, community-based services and programs for women. It also enables identifying gaps in services in communities throughout Nova Scotia. Regional cooperation is beneficial in developing and strengthening relationships with various government departments on a regional level.

Significant opportunities are the potential of outreach programs and the potential of new Women's Centres or satellite centres in communities throughout Nova Scotia. However, with these opportunities are some clear challenges. Because outreach programs, by their very definition, must be delivered in local communities, one challenge is having adequate funds and staff to deliver outreach programs on a consistent basis. Another challenge is having adequate funds to facilitate coordinated work at the provincial level through CONNECT! and similarly, to facilitate any regional cooperation among Women's Centres.

In considering all the aspects of geographic location and the various strengths, challenges and opportunities, Women's Centres recommend that Women's Centres require adequate funds to enable all Women's Centres to develop and deliver outreach programs in local communities on a consistent basis. Women's Centres also recommend adequate funding for provincial coordination through CONNECT!, so that the continued information sharing and program efficiencies will ensure a effective province-wide services to women throughout Nova Scotia.

PROFILE OF WOMEN WHO USE WOMEN'S CENTRES

In 1999-2000, research was conducted and a report prepared on "Nova Scotia Women's Centres, Profile of Users" by the Joint Working Group on Women's Centre Profiling. This was part of a larger joint planning initiative between the Province of Nova Scotia and Women's Centres CONNECT undertaken from 1998 to 2000.³

Within the parameters of the research⁴, 277 women were surveyed in six locations. The survey gathered demographic information as well as information on why women used services, what services they used and the level of satisfaction with services. This section provides a brief overview of some of the information gathered.

As noted in the research report, the picture provided represents *a single point in time*. Women's Centres are always changing to meet changing needs of their communities. In addition, the needs of women change along with the social and economic climates of their communities, which of course are tied to political and global forces and trends.

AGE, SOURCE OF INCOME, EDUCATION, WORK HISTORY AND BARRIERS TO THE WORKFORCE

The research indicated that Women's Centres serve a wide range of age groups, with the majority being between 19 and 49 (73.3%). Women who use services are likely to be single parents, single, or married/co-habiting, with almost half of the women (50%) having children at home.

Just under one-third of Women's Centres participants are on social assistance, while others have a range of sources of income from part-time and full-time employment to other forms of fixed and casual income.⁵

With respect to levels of education, 23.9% had completed Grade 12 with another 38.8% having completed Grade 12/GED. Another 27.9% had completed some post secondary education, either from a college/trade school or university. When asked about their work history, most respondents reported having worked in a variety of jobs.

Over half of the women indicated they were not currently in the workforce. Just over a third indicated that they would like to improve their work situation, either from a part-

³ The Province of Nova Scotia/Women's Centres CONNECT! Joint Planning Committee members were: Women's Centres CONNECT!, the Department of Community Services, Department of Justice, Department of Education, Labour Market Development Secretariat, Department of Health, Department of Economic Development and the Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

⁴ Each Women's Centre (six at that time) would interview up to 50 women and women "in crisis" would not be asked to complete the survey. The locations were Antigonish, New Glasgow, Sydney, Lawrencetown (Annapolis), Bridgewater and Sheet Harbour.

⁵ Sources of income ranged from social assistance (29.2%) to employment income (12.9% full time and 12.9% part time), and other forms of fixed income such as disability, pension, EI (12.9%), "no income" (3.4%), and other forms of income ranging from parents, student loans, casual work, child maintenance (20.4%) and partner's income (7.1%).

time, seasonal or low-waged job to a better position, or from not having a paid job to being in the workforce. The following were cited as barriers to being in the workforce:

- Lack of education and training (15.1%)
- Lack of transportation (15.1%)
- Lack of childcare (14.6%)
- Community economics/no jobs (14.1%)
- Poor health (13.5%)
- Lack of financial resources (eg. clothes for work) (8.1%)
- Need to care for family (7.6%)
- Disability (6.5%)
- Other (5.4%).

WHY WOMEN USE WOMEN'S CENTRES

The research indicated that women seek help from Women's Centres during periods of crisis and transition in their lives. Women were looking for both crisis intervention as well as personal and skill development opportunities. Their issues are multi-faceted, with the most common reasons cited for seeking Women's Centres services being: poverty (housing), employment, education, mental and physical health, legal issues, parenting, and sexual violence.

Almost half (45.5%) of the women indicated that the Women's Centre was their first avenue of assistance, with another 17% indicating they had been referred to the Women's Centre by another agency.

When asked why they came to the Women's Centre, 260 respondents offered a variety of reasons ranging from quality of services (42.2%) to services such as advocacy and support not offered elsewhere (related to their issues) (25.6%) to confidential, non-judgmental and safe place (14.4%), staff understand women's issues (7.9%) and other (3.6%).

SERVICES USED BY WOMEN

The 1999 –2000 Profile of Users found that the women surveyed participated in the range of services and programs offered by the Women's Centres. This snapshot indicated that Support Counselling/Crisis Intervention and Programs had a similar percentage of use, with Information, Advocacy and the Library at similar percentages of use. The range of services used and percentages were:

- Programs (22.5%)
- Support Counselling/Crisis Intervention (20.4%)
- Library (11.9%)
- Information (10.1%);
- Individual Advocacy (10.3%)
- Drop-in (8.5%)
- Referral (2.4%)
- Other: (4.9%) referred to specific programs such as poverty relief in Sydney and Women in Business in Lawrencetown; and GED tutoring in Sheet Harbour.

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH WOMEN'S CENTRES SERVICES

When asked how Women's Centres had helped them in the past, the respondents indicated a number of positive outcomes. Their problems were resolved or they received the information needed (36.1%). Their mental health was improved (25.8%). They received good support (21.4%). They were treated with respect and validated (9.9%) and trusted workers (4%).

When asked if they could not come to the Women's Centre where they would go, over half of the respondents indicated either they had no idea (26%) or no other place offers the same service (25.6%). Others indicated they would go to a friend or to other government or community agencies.

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES AS SEEN BY WOMEN WHO USE WOMEN'S CENTRES

Women use Women's Centres because they are accessible to them in their communities, and provide non-judgemental, confidential, quality services, that are not provided elsewhere. Women see Women's Centres as supporting them to solve problems, get information and improve their skills and knowledge related to a range of issues, specifically poverty, housing, employment, education, mental and physical health, legal issues, parenting and sexual violence. Women use the range of Women's Centres services from programs and support counselling/crisis intervention to information, advocacy, drop-in and referral.

Just under half of women using Women's Centres are on social assistance or another form of fixed or low income, with some having no income. Women's Centres provide women with a range of opportunities and support them to improve their social and economic circumstances and their health and well-being.

LINKS & COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Women's Centres work with government agencies and community-based organizations in their communities to strengthen programs and services in their communities and to strengthen other agencies responses to women's concerns. The Maps of Services for each Women's Centre (Appendix 2) illustrate both the extent and range of these community linkages.

Part of the work of the joint planning initiative between the Province of Nova Scotia and Women's Centres CONNECT undertaken from 1998 to 2000 was to undertake a community partners survey. In this community consultation⁶, 80% of respondents indicated that their relationship with the Women's Centres was "positive, mutually beneficial, collaborative and supportive".⁷ Some key findings of the survey reported to the Joint Planning Committee are cited briefly here.⁸

THE RANGE OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE COMMUNITY

The survey found that the range of human services available across Nova Scotia is delivered by a mix of Government and community-based services, with various government Departments (Community Services, Economic Development, Education, Employment, Health and Justice) providing services regionally and locally. These services are complemented and extended by a variety of community-based services providing a network of community services.

The Map of Services for each Women's Centre (Appendix 2) also shows the range of services available in the communities where Women's Centres are located.

THE ISSUES OF CONCERN FOR WOMEN WHO USE SERVICES

The community consultation found that all the services were struggling with a number of key issues in one combination or another. From the large list of issues, the main issues of concern included poverty, mental health, violence, legal issues, employment, and education/literacy among others. Most of these issues have particular relevance to the day-to-day work of the Women's Centres, and with respect to family violence, to Transition House member organizations and Men's Intervention Programs.

⁶ One hundred (100) agencies were contacted with a 77% response rate. The agencies consulted represent the full range of human services across the province and reflect the various departments and services with which Women's Centres work on a daily basis.

⁷ "Draft Report of the Working Group on Community Consultation on Services, November 26, 1999", by the Women's Centre Planning Committee, p.12.

⁸ These key findings were reported in the "Draft Report of the Working Group on Community Consultation on Services, November 26, 1999", by the Women's Centre Planning Committee.

REFERRAL TO WOMEN'S CENTRES BY GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES

One conclusion of the community consultation is that there are effective referral patterns and working relationships in all the communities. Specifically related to Women's Centres, the consultation revealed that there is wide-spread awareness of Women's Centres and their services within local service networks. Most agencies (90%) reported referring their clients to Women's Centres and for the range of services that are offered, including information, advocacy, referral, support, crisis intervention, programs and community development. When asked if they referred clients to Women's Centres, the largest number said "occasionally" (75% of Government agencies and 63% of community-based agencies) and some said "often" (18% of Government services and 30% of community-based agencies).

Furthermore, when asked why they referred, about half indicated for the services provided, while others offered other reasons such as "high quality of services" and "high level of expertise".

FILLING GAPS AND STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The community consultation also concluded that the gaps in services most often identified by respondents are related to the above "Issues of Concern to Women Who Use Services".

Women's Centres provide leadership in bringing agencies together to work on major community development initiatives, such as affordable housing for women and youth housing. They also participate in developing and strengthening community networks that support and strengthen communication and cooperation within the community service network, therefore improving services for women.

Some examples of these current initiatives and networks are shown in the Maps of Services (Appendix 2). These initiatives and networks⁹ are working toward "filling gaps in services" in each community and therefore, focus on the issues of concern to women in that particular community. Some examples of "networks" from the Maps of Services (Appendix 2) are Anti-Poverty Network, Employment Equity Committee, PATH¹⁰ Network, Health and Education Networks, Interagency Committees on Family Violence, Youth Interagency Committees and The Coastal Community Network. Some examples of community initiatives are Women and Non-Traditional Work, numerous housing and homelessness initiatives, a range of women's health initiatives and community events.

⁹ The "networks" themselves also generate/create community initiatives.

¹⁰ PATH is People Assessing Their Health.

WOMEN'S CENTRES SERVICES PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN THE NETWORK OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The community consultation concluded that particular strengths that Women's Centres bring to this network of services is the focus on multiple issues and working closely with other services in their communities to ensure that women have access to the services they need. This was clearly seen as a complementary support to the respondents' services, which focused on specific issues (income support, health, mental health, addictions, violence, education, employment, business development, and victims of crime). The Final Report of the Province of Nova Scotia/Women's Centres CONNECT! Joint Planning Committee cites that the community consultation indicated strong support by the agencies surveyed for the services provided by Women's Centres noting the following:

Indeed in some communities, Women's Centres are considered by the formal health care system to be part of the treatment plan. One strength of Women's Centres identified through the survey, is the breadth of their mandate. This was viewed by other organizations as a critical adjunct to their own more specialized and necessarily narrower focus.

Another conclusion of the community consultation was that Women's Centres play an essential role in their local service networks. If Women's Centres were not there, there would be a significant gap in services or more costly government services would be called to upon to fill the gaps.

For example, when asked if they *could not* refer their clients to the Women's Centres where would they refer them, 23 of 77 indicated they could not refer anywhere, and 22 of 77 indicated they would refer to other government agencies and community-based agencies. A number of respondents made the following comments:

There is nowhere else. The Women's Centre is a "unique service" that is not duplicated in the community.

There would be no place other than the traditional system which is overburdened and unprepared in many ways.

Their services are unique and all encompassing and therefore we feel it is not duplicated in our area. Other agencies offer portions but not the overall support in all areas.

STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF LINKS AND COOPERATION

A clear strength of Women's Centres is their unique focus on multiple issue entry points, working closely and cooperatively with other services to ensure women have access to services and programs they need, and providing an essential link in the service network of their local communities through quality services and a high level of expertise.

The 1999 Community Consultation explored the opportunities and challenges in collaborating with Women's Centres. In general, respondents indicated a willingness to continue to work with Women's Centres to address community gaps in programs and services. The biggest challenge was shortage in funding and resources both for themselves and for the Women's Centres. Two other challenges identified by the agencies consulted were more frequent communication to improve working relationships, and Women's Centres should provide more information about their work in general and program schedules both to service providers and the general public.

WOMEN'S CENTRES SERVICES & PROGRAMS

The strength of Women's Centres is that they were created by and within their communities, to address issues not being addressed by other services and programs. Services and programs have developed out of twenty-five years of experience, are based on the identified needs of women within communities, and continue to grow as the demand for them increases.

OPEN DOOR POLICY AND MULTI-ISSUE ENTRY POINTS

A unique feature is an *open door policy* where any woman, whether a teen at risk, a single mother or a senior, can find support and information. Another important feature is the *multi-issue entry points*. An entry point for a woman or adolescent girl can be poverty, economic concerns, education and training, workforce re-entry, housing, legal issues, mental and physical health, parenting, relationships, sexuality and sexual violence.

KEY COMPONENTS: INTERVENTION, PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The three key components of Women's Centres services and programs are Intervention, Prevention and Community Development.

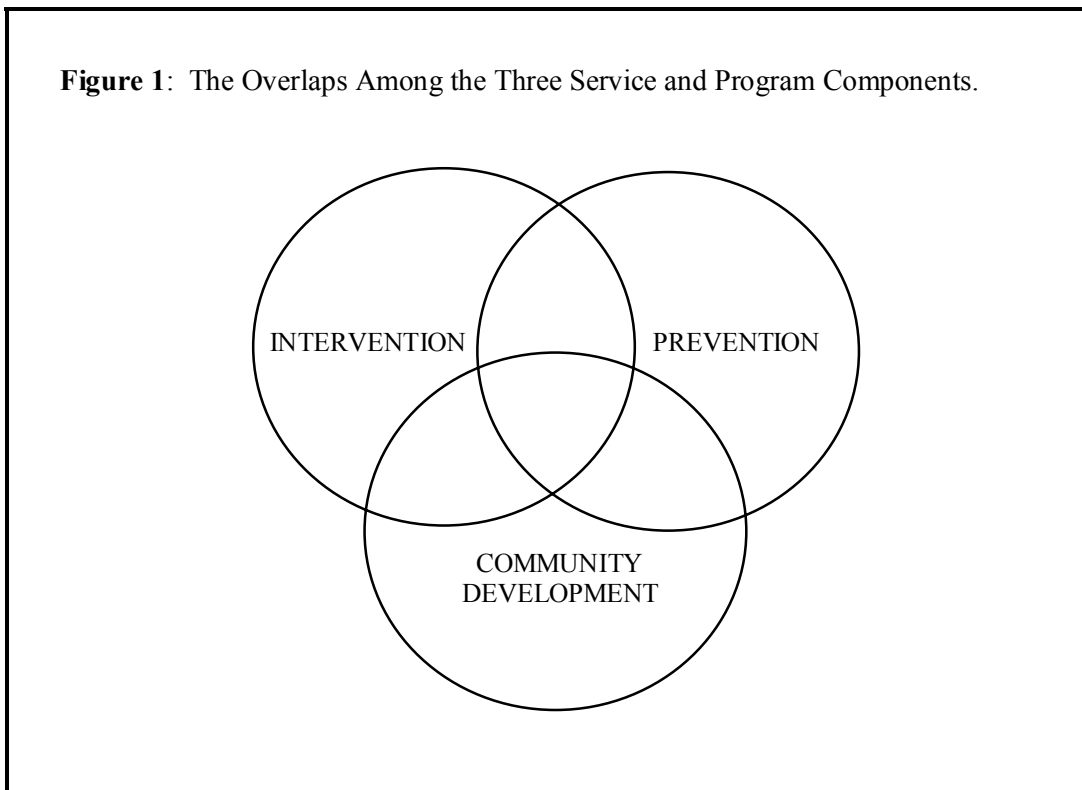
- *Intervention* addresses a woman's acute and immediate problems and focuses on providing practical support and assistance in a crisis situation or with emergency needs.
- *Prevention* concentrates on the development of individual skills and knowledge that will enable individual women to identify and address the complexity of issues and barriers they experience and to go forward in their lives. Prevention can include educational or support programs that enable women to move through transition periods in their lives. Early intervention is also prevention, by preventing more serious issues from arising, therefore preventing more costly treatment of a problem.
- *Community Development* involves working with women directly affected by an issue and in partnership with government and community agencies to analyze community issues, build on existing assets and develop sustainable community-based solutions. This leads to new programs, services and policies that support women at all stages of their lives, increased community leadership skills and involvement of women in community decision-making, strengthened community organizations and, in the long term, healthier communities.

These three components, Intervention, Prevention and Community Development, are *inter-related* and *contingent on a set of core services* that focus on strengthening capacities at *multiple levels*: at the individual level, organizational level and community level. This multidimensional approach ensures that immediate crises are addressed, while investing in capacity building over the long term to prevent the more costly ongoing and recurring crisis intervention activities.

INTER-RELATIONSHIPS AMONG INTERVENTION, PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Acting in one area often informs action in the other two areas. For example, intervention and prevention often overlap with each other in a continuum of supporting and empowering individual women who use services and programs. Intervention and prevention also involve direct connections to community through delivery of services such as information, referral and community education. Working with women and agencies related to a particular set of issues in an intervention or prevention context, often leads to identification of broader community issues and the development of new programs, services and policies to address those issues, leading to a community development activity. These overlaps are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Overlaps Among the Three Service and Program Components.



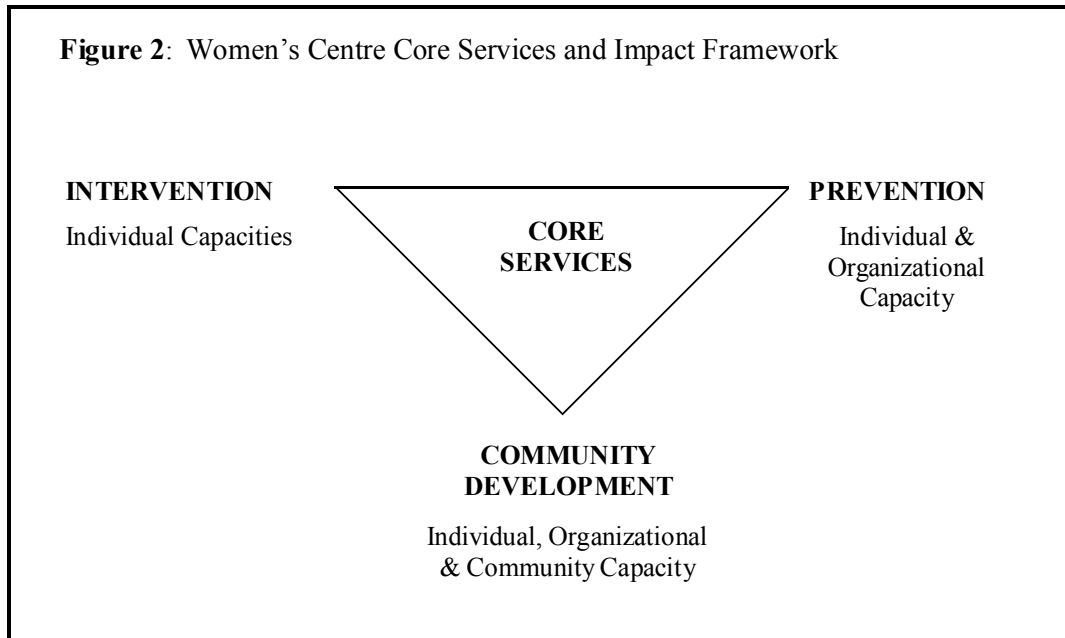
CORE SERVICES

Intervention, prevention and community development are contingent on a set of core services. The current Core Services provided by Women's Centres are:

- Direct Services
 - Individual Support Counseling and Crisis Intervention
 - Information and Referral
 - Individual Advocacy and Accompaniment
- Programs
- Outreach
- Community Education
- Community Development Initiatives and Networks

These core services were identified as important and crucial to both the women who use the centre and to the community network of services as demonstrated through the "Profile of Women's Centres Users"¹¹ and the community consultation with community agencies in 1999/2000.¹² Table 2 (page 4-26) provides a description of the Core Services.

The range of Direct Services, Programs, Community Education and Community Development Initiatives and Networks offered by the eight Women's Centres are documented in the Maps of Services, Appendix 2. It is also important to note that the newer centres, particularly Yarmouth, are at a different stage of development and still in the process of developing their program and services. One Core Service, not identified in 1999/2000, but for which there is increasing demand is outreach services. Outreach services have the potential to create opportunities for women who currently are not accessing services. The challenges, however, (as outlined under Geographic Location) leave Women's Centres limited in what they can offer at this time.



WORKING AT DIFFERENT LEVELS TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITIES

Intervention, Prevention and Community Development have multiple impacts and outcomes at different levels. Intervention tends to focus primarily on strengthening individual capacities, while Prevention strengthens individual capacities and, also organizational capacities. Community development, while focusing on the 'bigger picture' of building community capacity also strengthens individual and organizational capacities. Figure 2 shows these various levels of impact. These different outcomes and impacts are shown in more detail in Table 1.

¹¹ Report of the Joint Working Group on Women's Centre Profiling. Nova Scotia Women's Centres Profile of Users, 1999/2000.

¹² The Women's Centre Planning Committee. Draft Report of the Working Group on Community Consultation on Services, November 26, 1999.

**TABLE 1: WOMEN'S CENTRES CORE SERVICES IMPACT FRAMEWORK
SHOWING POTENTIAL OUTCOMES**

SERVICE AND PROGRAM COMPONENT	INTERVENTION	PREVENTION	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CORE SERVICES¹³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling/Crisis Intervention - Individual Advocacy & Accompaniment - Information and Referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Advocacy & Accompaniment - Information and Referral - Programs, Outreach - Community Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programs, Outreach - Community Education - Community Development Initiatives & Networks
LEVEL OF IMPACT	Individual capacities	Individual & Organizational Capacities	Individual, Organizational & Community Capacities
SHORT TERM OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual support - Reduced isolation - Awareness of options - Access to community programs and services - Increased coping skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthened individual skills and knowledge - Change in attitudes - Better informed workers - Policies and procedures in community and government agencies that enable improved responses to women's concerns.¹⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive community partnerships and networks - Participation by women in community decision-making
MEDIUM TO LONG TERM OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced social support networks - Improved well-being of women and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased educational levels - Increased economic status - decreased individual and generational dependency on social assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership development - New programs, services and policies - Strengthened community-based organizations - Economic Development

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN'S CENTRES SERVICE AND PROGRAM APPROACH

A key strength of Women's Centres services and programs is the multidimensional approach that uses multiple strategies and works at different levels, to ensure the immediate crises are addressed, while investing in capacity building over the long term to prevent the more costly ongoing and recurring crisis intervention activities. Both the women who use Women's Centres and the community networks of services have

¹³For each component, the Core Services used may vary and there is overlap from one component to another, depending on the individual/community situation.

¹⁴ Province of Nova Scotia/Women's Centres CONNECT Joint Planning Committee Final Report and Recommendations November 2000. Appendix II: Report of the Working Group on Community Consultation on Services, November 26, 1999 p. 21.

identified Women's Centres Core Services as crucial and important to them and their work.

An ongoing challenge is to continue to meet the needs of women in local communities as changing social and economic circumstances impact on women and their families, particularly women living on low and fixed incomes. This requires flexibility, versatility and, simply "being in the community". Being community-based, Women's Centres continually address this challenge by supporting women, most affected by the various issues, to have input into Women's Centres services and programs and to be involved in developing community programs and projects that address community gaps in services.

TABLE 2: A PROVINCIAL VISION OF SERVICES AND A DESCRIPTION OF CORE SERVICES OFFERED BY WOMEN'S CENTRES IN 2003

A PROVINCIAL VISION OF SERVICES

Community-based Women's Centres, as defined by CONNECT!, will be supported by the Government of Nova Scotia with adequate secure funding to enable women throughout Nova Scotia to access and use services and programs. Women's Centres will continue to be multi-issue access centres. Women's Centres services, programs, policies and practices will continue to be informed by women's lived experiences, which will be the primary impetus for ongoing advocacy and social action.

DESCRIPTION OF WOMEN'S CENTRES CORE SERVICES

Individual Support Counselling and Crisis Intervention

Experienced staff, knowledgeable about women's lives, issues and crisis situations provide one-to-one, confidential support. This service is crucial to early intervention, prevention and long-term support.

Information and Referral

Some women need services or support of other agencies. Women's Centres know the services available, understand the "system", and have working relationships with agencies and groups and support women in finding the service that will best help them. Each Centre maintains a resource library offering books, videos, periodicals, articles, and other publications. Women and community agency professionals use this resource for self-education and information.

Individual Advocacy and Accompaniment

For some women, cultural issues, discrimination, fear, intimidation, and unfamiliarity with the "system" are roadblocks to getting the help they need. Women's Centres work on a woman's behalf, and at her request, to move through the challenges in the system to get the answers and help she is seeking.

Programs

Each Centre develops and delivers programs to women of all ages based on the identified needs of women within their communities.

Outreach

As much as it is feasible, Centres provide an outreach program to communities that are a distance from the centre. This means that women and families isolated by travel distance and travel cost can still benefit.

Community Education

Presentations and workshops are a key prevention education and public awareness service. These are provided by Women's Centres to schools, community colleges, service clubs, professional associations, businesses, church groups and others on request.

Community Development Initiatives and Networks

Women's Centres work with women and cooperatively with community and government organizations to mobilize skills and resources to address identified community issues. This leads to the development of new community initiatives and networks that will enable women to achieve social and economic independence.

CURRENT DEMAND FOR SERVICES

In the last few years, Women's Centres in Nova Scotia have experienced an increased demand for services on many levels – both within the communities in which they operate and from other communities. Clear evidence of this increased demand are two new Women's Centres in Truro and Yarmouth within the last two years, and current requests for new Women's Centres in other areas of Nova Scotia as outlined in this section. Other areas of increased demand are for outreach services, for programs such as Re-Entry Training, and for Direct Services such as individual support counselling, crisis intervention, information and referral, and individual advocacy and accompaniment. The opportunities afforded by this increased demand helped to shape a Provincial Vision of Women's Centres Services, shown in Table 2 (previous page) and at the end of this section. The gaps in services for each Women's Centre are shown in Appendix 2, Maps of Services in the fourth column under the heading, "Women's Centres Services Unfilled Needs/Waiting List".

INCREASED DEMAND FOR DIRECT SERVICES

Some Centres have experienced a significant increase in Direct Service activities, to the extent that their current demand for this service requires an additional full-time crisis support worker. Specifically the increase in demand has been for individual support counselling and crisis intervention, information and referral, individual advocacy and accompaniment.

The following represents the number of women accessing Direct Services through the eight Women's Centres in a recent **one-month period**.¹⁵

- Women's Centres served 1,043 individual women through Direct Services, in particular, (1) individual support counseling and crisis intervention, (2) information and referral, and (3) individual advocacy and accompaniment.
- The total Direct Service contacts were 1,958. Of the 1,043 individual women, some women contacted each Centre more than once, varying from 1-3 times to 1-28 times (see Appendix 3, Statistical Summary for each Centre's statistics).
- Over that same period, of the 1,043 individual women, there were 442 "initial contacts" and 601 "follow-up contacts".

The presenting issues for Women's Centres Direct Services related to the above statistics were: poverty, housing, legal issues, economic concerns, education and training, unemployment, job readiness, sexual violence, childcare, parenting, relationships, divorce and separation, maintenance and access, mental health, self esteem and substance abuse.

Not only are some Women's Centres seeing more women, but more often and for longer periods. The following is one example:

¹⁵ The number of women served by each Women's Centre varies by community. This is shown in the statistical summary for the eight Women's Centres in Appendix 3.

One Women's Centre, in January 2003, offered crisis intervention/support counseling to 60 women. Each contact ranged from 30 minutes to three hours per session. Each session required the crisis support worker to do advocacy calls and follow-up calls, as well as, in some cases, accompaniment to court or to medical appointments. Medical appointments were serious issues related to self-harm, requiring stitches. Many situations also require case conferencing among the staff at the centre. If one takes an average of 4 contacts per woman and an average of 1.5 hours per session, the total number of hours for 60 individual women in January was 360 contact hours. This is more than two full-time staff positions.

INCREASED DEMAND FOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Women's Centres have an increase in demand for outreach services. As already noted in the Geographic Location section of this report, these requests are coming from as far away as an hour and a half from the Centre. At this time, the outreach services are only offered where time within current staffing permits. All the Women's Centres are interested in offering outreach, but to meet the objective of establishing outreach services in these communities would require additional resources, including staff.

INCREASED DEMAND FOR PROGRAMS

Women's Centres have also experienced an increased demand for programs that address personal development, education and foster mutual support. In a recent **one-month period**,¹⁶ the number of individual women in Women's Centres programs was 251 individual women with total program participation at 520.

Another area of increasing demand is for re-entry training. Four Women's Centres have experience in offering re-entry training, three most recently. They have been able to do this through project funding that is no longer available. The program is both needed and wanted by women in local communities, demonstrated by waiting lists and by the excellent success rate, with 80% of the women who take this program either entering the workforce or furthering their education. The capacity has been developed for Women's Centres to deliver the program throughout Nova Scotia through an excellent facilitator's program manual. What is now required is ongoing stable, funding for this program.

INCREASING REQUESTS FOR NEW WOMEN'S CENTRES

Women's Centres are also receiving requests for information from women who wish to establish Women's Centres in other communities in Nova Scotia, specifically Halifax, Amherst, lower Cape Breton Island (Richmond/Inverness Counties) and, either for satellite centres, or Women's Centres in Digby and Shelburne Counties. These requests are in addition to the requests for "outreach" services.

¹⁶ These statistics were for January 2003 and are also shown in Appendix 3.

WHY AN INCREASED DEMAND FOR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS?

Women's Centres attribute this increased demand for services and programs to a number of issues as follows:

1. *Funding cuts and re-structuring of other agencies* means that those agencies do not have the staff to handle the workload and are referring more often to Women's Centres. There have been examples of referrals where the agency in the past would have handled the situation.
2. *Changes in the economic situation in a community*, such as shutdown of a major employer or a resource industry, such as the mines in Cape Breton and the fish plant in Canso have increased demands for the services and programs mentioned above. Women are looking for information, support, re-training opportunities and economic and small business development activity, which is the particular expertise of Women's Centres.
3. *The high quality of services*, as demonstrated through the "Profile of Women's Centres Users"¹⁷ and the community consultation with community agencies in 1999/2000.¹⁸ means that more women are finding out about and using the services and programs of Women's Centres to improve their social and economic circumstances.
4. In some communities *increased interest by culturally diverse communities* in particular the Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian communities for support in developing and delivering programs and services.
5. The *extent and depth of the community linkages and networking* means that Women's Centres are being asked to provide leadership in the development of new programs and services for women related to some of the critical community issues such as housing.
6. The *consequences of increasing poverty* (such as homelessness) and *gaps in community-based services to address these consequences* (such as affordable housing), means that women and youth are coming to Women's Centres in crisis. In some cases, women have nowhere else to go.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR SERVICE AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

This increase in requests for in-house services and programs as well as outreach services, and the potential of new Women's Centres being developed in communities offer tremendous opportunities for women in Nova Scotia who are currently not accessing services and programs. Based on what we know about how and why women use Women's Centres and the approach that Women's Centres use to develop services and programs, this opportunity will expand services to women in rural communities *based on their identified needs*. A review of both short and long-term outcome potential (Table 1: Women's Centres Core Services Impact Framework Showing Potential Outcomes, page 4-24), would indicate that this opportunity will support *improving individual well-being*

¹⁷ Report of the Joint Working Group on Women's Centre Profiling. Nova Scotia Women's Centres Profile of Users, 1999/2000.

¹⁸ The Women's Centre Planning Committee. Draft Report of the Working Group on Community Consultation on Services, November 26, 1999.

of women and their families, educational and economic status, decrease generational dependence on social assistance, and improve programs, services and economic development in local communities.

Women's Centres have demonstrated that they have the expertise locally and through CONNECT! to support these service improvements. The critical challenges are timing and appropriate financial resources that take into consideration both immediate short term and longer term needs for various Women's Centres. For example, the need for crisis support workers in many centres is critical.

Women's Centres are looking forward to working with the Department of Community Services to effectively plan for and address these opportunities and challenges in the immediate short term and over the long term. With this in mind, Women's Centres have developed a provincial vision of services (see also Table 2) as follows:

A PROVINCIAL VISION OF SERVICES

Community-based Women's Centres, as defined by CONNECT!, will be supported by the Government of Nova Scotia with adequate secure funding to enable women throughout Nova Scotia to access and use services and programs. Women's Centres will continue to be multi-issue access centres. Women's Centres services, programs, policies and practices will continue to be informed by women's lived experiences, which will be the primary impetus for ongoing advocacy and social action.

COST EFFICIENCIES

Women's Centres have reviewed the issue of cost efficiencies and have identified a number of areas where Women's Centres are currently cost efficient. The review indicates that the current investment in Women's Centres services and programs saves the government thousands, perhaps millions of dollars

THE COST TO GOVERNMENT SERVICES IF WOMEN'S CENTRES WERE ABSENT

As noted in the Final Report and Recommendations of the Province of Nova Scotia/Women's Centres CONNECT Joint Planning Committee, "One important point for government to consider is the referral option identified by the community agencies surveyed. In the absence of Women's Centres, many clients would be referred to Government operated services and agencies. This would have serious cost and service quality implications."¹⁹ The recent increase in demand for Women's Centres services, through referral by government agencies, would indicate that this is even a *more critical* cost efficiency than it was two years ago. In addition, other women would be without services and their crises would escalate until they require costly interventions.

Another area that offers direct cost savings to Government is the Prevention component of Women's Centres services and programs. These services and programs concentrate on the development of individual skills and knowledge that enable women to address the complexity of issues and barriers they experience and to go forward in their lives, thus saving not only immediate costs to government services, such as costs for social assistance, mental health services, etc, but also longer term costs for an individual woman and for her children by addressing and preventing the cycle of poverty.

One example of these cost efficiencies is provided here by a Women's Centre participant who was on social assistance and now works full time. This is only one of hundreds of examples of women who use Women's Centres services. When multiplied by hundreds, the cost savings is in the millions.

MOTHER AND FOUR CHILDREN - WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE HELPS THEM TO ESCAPE CYCLE OF POVERTY.

"The province may be millions of dollars in debt to community programs like the ... Women's Resource Centre." Susan says the support and resources she received at the local Women's Centre helped her break the cycle of poverty in which she and her children lived. "My family may have been costing the Nova Scotia government ...\$50,000. a year", she says. Multiplied by 18 years, this makes for a \$900,000 price tag. These are the types of numbers that the (local) Women's Centre has saved the NS Government for just one family", (she) says.

¹⁹ Province of Nova Scotia/Women's Centres CONNECT Joint Planning Committee Final Report and Recommendations November 2000, p. 4

Susan....says the support she received at the centre is key to her success, as a mother, university graduate and full-time employee. "I walked through the doors of the (local) Women's Resource Centre soon after they opened with four small children on social assistance and absolutely no self worth."

Susan has been working full time for the past four years. Her three children are 'basically self reliant' she points out. "The cycle of dependency has been broken in our family." From article in local newspaper 2002.

COST EFFICIENCIES OF LINKAGES AND COOPERATION

As already discussed in this report, Women's Centres CONNECT! provides a forum for sharing information and resources among Women's Centres throughout the province. This consolidation of information, resources and tools ensures both effective and efficient use of program and service resources, including human, financial and material resources.

Similarly, the current level of linkages and cooperation among community organizations and government agencies to strengthen services within existing agencies and to develop programs and services to fill much needed gaps in communities is both cost efficient and effective. Linkages and cooperation among community agencies are integral to delivery of the Core Services. Most of these linkages occur with current levels of funding support, or additional project funding, with relatively little overhead and administrative costs covered. The potential outcomes shown in the Women's Centres Core Services Impact Framework (Table 1, page 4-24), illustrates the incredible short term and potentially longer term outcomes related to "linkages and cooperation" that benefit individuals, organizations and the overall health and sustainability of rural communities.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN CURRENT COST EFFICIENCIES

What is currently invested by the Government of Nova Scotia that enables the present level of Intervention, Prevention, and Community Development that has been documented in this report is a mere \$50.00 per hour or \$400.00 per day per Women's Centre. Women's Centres, however, are under-resourced which creates a peculiar, but resolvable dilemma. While, on the one hand, the current investment by Government in Women's Centres is extremely cost efficient; on the other hand, there has been and is a severe toll on the human and financial resources of Women's Centres. As summarized previously, Women's Centres cannot meet current demands for crisis intervention services with present levels of funding, nor can Women's Centres meet demands for increased outreach and community development activities due to already stretched resources.

Women's Centres suggest that, for a minimal increase in investment by Government as outlined in our conclusions and recommendations, the enhanced Intervention and Prevention services will not only support additional benefits for women, their families and communities in rural Nova Scotia, but continue to provide significant cost savings to Government in the short and long term. Considering this, Women's Centres see a tremendous opportunity. Remaining relatively small and locally based enables Women's Centres to be accessible, flexible and versatile. With increased requests for services and

programs, Women's Centres are in an excellent position to continue to offer services and programs and work with other organizations to support and strengthen economic and social development of women in Nova Scotia.

A FINAL REFLECTION

Women's Centres contribute to the overall health of their communities.

A local Community Health Board recently facilitated a health impact assessment of the proposed funding cuts (by Government in the April 2002 Budget) to the local Women's Centre and the impact of those cuts on the health of the community²⁰. The result of this impact assessment was that *cuts in funding to the Women's Centre* would have significant negative impacts as follows:

- *Negatively impact on both the income and social status of women who use the Women's Centres programs and services. This in turn would negatively impact on the women's families and the community as a whole.*
- *Negatively impact on individuals who are vulnerable to social isolation, and, therefore, on the social fabric of the whole community.*
- *Have a significant negative impact on the availability of educational programs, such as re-entry programs, student placement, peer education training, and literacy programs.*
- *Have a negative impact on the employability of women and youth. In addition, as a community employer, cuts would reduce paid employment opportunities in the community.*
- *Have a significant negative impact on the well-being of women, youth and their families in the community as well as the efforts of the community to advocate for healthy public policy supportive of personal health practices.*
- *Have a significant negative impact on the ability of women to provide adequate housing, food security and family income for their children.*
- *Have a significant negative impact on the health promotion activities in the community offered by the Centre in cooperation with other community organizations.*
- *Have a significant negative impact on services and programs for women, opportunities for women voice their concerns, and the quality of information available that reflects women's perspectives and concerns.*

In recognition of the potential overall negative impact, Women's Centres urge the Provincial Government to consider Women's Centres current contribution to the overall health of the community.

²⁰ This session was facilitated by the Antigonish Town and County Community Health Board using the Community Health Impact Assessment Tool designed to assess the impact of services, programs and policies on the health of Antigonish Town and County.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the strengths, challenges and opportunities identified throughout this report, this section puts forward a number of conclusions and recommendations directly related to the request by the Department of Community Services in their proposal, of January 3, 2003. The conclusions and recommendations are organized in four sections: Women's Centres Core Services, Addressing Current Demand for Women's Centres Core Services and Service Improvements, Cost Efficiencies, and Linkages and Cooperation.

WOMEN'S CENTRES CORE SERVICES

1. **It is recommended that the Department of Community Services recognize Women's Centres Core Services are distinct, essential and integral to the community network of services provided for women.**

Women's Centres are unique in Nova Scotia and have an essential role in their local service networks. The flexible open door policy and multi-issue entry points enable any woman to access information and support related to poverty, economic concerns, education and training, workforce re-entry, housing, legal issues, mental and physical health, parenting, relationships, sexuality and sexual violence.

Services offered through multi-issue entry points are not offered by any other organization in the province, as indicated by women who use the services and community agencies who refer to and work with Women's Centres in local communities. If Women's Centres did not exist, many women would have nowhere else to go and other agencies would have nowhere to refer women, leading to more costly and recurring interventions by government departments.

2. **It is recommended that the Department of Community Services recognize the following list of Core Services as Women's Centres Core Services to be supported and fully funded by the Department of Community Services. Women's Centre Core Services are:**

1. **Direct Services:**
 - **Individual Support Counseling**
 - **Crisis Intervention**
 - **Information and Referral**
 - **Individual Advocacy and Accompaniment**
2. **Programs**
3. **Outreach**
4. **Community Education**
5. **Community Development Initiatives and Networks**

Women's Centres deliver services and programs using an effective holistic multi-dimensional approach that uses multiple strategies and works at different levels to ensure that immediate crises are addressed, while investing in capacity building over the long term to prevent more costly ongoing and recurring crisis intervention activities. The Core Services are delivered through three key core components of intervention, prevention and community development that are inter-related and enable the Core Services to have multiple impacts and outcomes that build and strengthen individual, organizational and community capacities. Integral to Women's Centres approach and delivery of Core Services is the open door policy and multi-issue entry points.

Women's Centres are locally based with local Boards of Directors that ensure local control over decision-making. This enables inclusive processes where women living in local communities have a voice in what programs and services Women's Centres offer. This enables Women's Centres to be accessible, flexible and versatile and to design Core Services to meet women's needs.

Women who use Women's Centres services and programs use the range of Core Services and indicate they benefit significantly from them. Community agencies state they refer to Women's Centres due to the services offered and the high quality of services.

ADDRESSING CURRENT DEMAND FOR WOMEN'S CENTRES CORE SERVICES AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

- 3. It is recommended that the Department of Community Services fully support and fully fund Women's Centres Core Services. That "fully supported and fully funded" means funding that enables the staff complement as defined by each Women's Centre in order to effectively deliver Women's Centre Core Services.**

The current level of funding does not enable Women's Centres to meet the current demand for services, particularly for direct services such as crisis intervention and individual support counselling, individual advocacy and accompaniment, information and referral and for outreach services to outlying communities.

This increase in demand for services is due to a number of factors including: (a) cuts in funding and re-structuring of other agencies in communities; (b) changes in the economic situation in communities; (c) the high quality of services offered by Women's Centres; (d) increased interest by culturally diverse communities; (e) the extent and depth of community linkages and networking; and (f) the consequences of increasing poverty and current gaps in community-based services to address these consequences.

- 4. It is recommended that the Department of Community Services enlist the support of other federal and provincial government departments, to fully support and fund Re-entry Training Programs to be delivered by Women's Centres in their communities.**

Women's Centres have demonstrated both the need for and benefits of Re-entry Training to be offered by Women's Centres in their local communities. This has been demonstrated by waiting lists and by the excellent success rate, with 75% of the women who take this program either entering the workforce or furthering their education. Furthermore, Women's Centres have developed the capacity to deliver the program throughout Nova Scotia through an excellent facilitator's program manual and trained facilitators in some communities. What is now required is ongoing stable, funding for this program.

- 5. It is recommended that the Department of Community Services fully support and fully fund Tri-County Women's Centre in Yarmouth in 2003-04. That the Department of Community Services fully support and fully fund new Women's Centres that are members of CONNECT! and are providing Core Services as defined by CONNECT!**

The increased requests for new Women's Centres are an opportunity for service and program improvements for women living in communities who are currently not accessing services and programs, particularly women living on low/fixed incomes.

COST EFFICIENCIES

- 6. It is recommended that the Department of Community Services work with Women's Centres to find creative ways to track and measure the short term and long term outcomes of Women's Centres work in order to effectively account for full benefits of the Provincial Government's investment in Women's Centres.**

This work would include developing clear indicators and ways to measure and account for the full contribution that Women's Centres make, not just to the economic development of a community, but the immense social and human development of the community through intervention, prevention and community development.

Women's Centres reviewed cost efficiencies and have identified a number of areas where Women's Centres are currently cost efficient. The review indicates that the current investment in Women's Centres services and programs saves the government thousands, perhaps millions of dollars. For a minimal increase in investment, the Government will be able to ensure enhanced program and services for women.

While the current investment in Women's Centres is cost efficient, Women's Centres are under-resourced and there has been severe toll on Women's Centres human and financial resources. As demonstrated in this report, Women's Centres cannot meet

current service demands, nor can they make service improvements with current funding levels and stretched resources.

As noted in the Final Report and Recommendations of the Province of Nova Scotia/Women's Centres CONNECT! Joint Planning Committee (2000), "One important point for government to consider is the referral options identified by the community agencies surveyed. In the absence of Women's Centres, many clients would be referred to Government operated services and agencies. This would have serious cost and service quality implications". The recent increase in demand for services would indicate this is an even more critical cost efficiency than it was two years ago. In addition, other women would be without services and their crises would escalate until they require costly interventions.

The prevention component of Women's Centres services and programs, that concentrate on the development of skills and knowledge, enable women to address issues and barriers and go forward in their lives, thus saving not only immediate costs to government services, such as costs for social assistance, mental health services, etc, but longer term costs for an individual woman and for her children by addressing and preventing the cycle of poverty.

Not only are Women's Centres cost efficient, but they contribute to the overall health of the community in the following ways:

- Women's Centres contribute to women's economic stability and independence, provide people with skills and support that they require to participate in the economic, social, political aspects of community life.
- Women's Centres sponsor specific educational programs for women and youth as well as for community agencies and the general public.
- Women's Centres offer programs and services that help women and girls develop healthy life and career goals, skills and decision-making abilities.
- Women's Centres provide programs and services to women, youth and their families that directly support the development of healthy personal health practices and coping skills.
- Women's Centres advocate for public policies and new community programs and services that enable women to provide adequate housing, food security and family income for their children.
- Women's Centres support the well-being of women and, therefore, the well-being of families and the community.
- Women's Centres work collaboratively with each other and with government and community-based organizations to strengthen and enhance individual, organizational and community capacities within their own communities and throughout Nova Scotia.

7. It is recommended that the Department of Community Services fully support and fund the services of Women's Centres CONNECT!

Currently Women's Centres CONNECT is funded through an allocation of funds by each Women's Centre, not through a separate operational grant. CONNECT performs both collaborative and development functions for local Women's Centres that contribute to both effectiveness and cost efficiencies of programs and services delivered in local communities.

LINKAGES AND COOPERATION

8. It is recommended that the Department of Community Services recognize the strength of Women's Centres' current linkages and cooperation and that these are integral to the delivery of Women's Centres Core Services.

Within communities, Women's Centres cooperate with government and community agencies to address gaps in services, strengthen programs and services and to strengthen other agencies' responses to women's concerns. The Maps of Services for each Women's Centre (Appendix 2) shows the extent of and kinds of cooperative relationships. There are effective referral patterns and working relationships in the communities studied in 1999 (six communities), and community agencies are aware of Women's Centres and their services within local service networks. Community agencies cooperating with Women's Centres indicated they referred due to the services offered and the high quality of services, and services were seen to be complementary to the agency's own services. Most agencies reported referring to Women's Centres and indicated that current community cooperation is positive, mutually beneficial, collaborative and supportive.

Women's Centres provide leadership in bringing agencies together to work on major community development initiatives. Positive community partnerships and networks are indicated as an outcome of community development activity.

Women's Centres cooperate within and across regions to secure funding for local projects and to meet jointly with government officials that consider development projects and activities for various regions across Nova Scotia. Women's Centres cooperate provincially with each other through CONNECT! as a forum for sharing information and resources which facilitates both effective and efficient use of program and service resources. Women's Centres also cooperate provincially and nationally with other organizations and with government to strengthen policies, services and programs.

WOMEN'S CENTRES IN NOVA SCOTIA 2003

ANTIGONISH WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

204 Kirk Place, 219 Main Street
Antigonish, NS B2G 2C1
Contact: Lucille Harper

phone - 902-863-6221
fax 902-867-1144
lucilleawrc@ns.sympatico.ca

EVERY WOMAN'S CENTRE

102 Townsend Street
Sydney, NS B1P 5E4
Contact: Louise Smith MacDonald

phone - 902-567-1212
fax - 902-567-1911
<http://welcome.to/EveryWomansCentre>
woman.centre@ns.sympatico.ca

LEA PLACE

PO Box 245
Sheet Harbour, NS, B0J 3B0
Contact: Myrene Keating-Owen

phone - 902-885-2668
fax - 902-885-2629
leaplace@dunmac.com

PICTOU COUNTY WOMEN'S CENTRE

PO Box 964
New Glasgow, NS B2H 5K7
Contact: Bernadette MacDonald

phone - 902-755-4647
fax 902-752-2233
pcwcbernadette@ns.sympatico.ca

SECOND STORY WOMEN'S CENTRE

PO Box 119
12 Dominion Street
Bridgewater, NS B4V 2W8
Contact: Edith Leopold

phone - 902-543-1315
fax 902-543-8653
secstory@auracom.com

THE WOMEN'S PLACE

PO Box 118
Lawrencetown, NS B0S 1P0
Contact: Della Longmire-Chaban

phone - 902-584-7195
fax 902-584-3701
womens.place@ns.sympatico.ca

CENTRAL NOVA WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

550 Prince Street phone
Truro, NS B2N 1G1
Contact: Krista Poole

phone - 902-895-4295
fax 902-895-9095
kristapoole@eastlink.ca

TRI-COUNTY WOMEN'S CENTRE

126 Brunswick Street Rm 12
Yarmouth, NS B5A 2H3
Contact: Dianne Crowell

phone - 902-742-0085
fax 902-742-6068
tricountywomen@msn.com

WOMEN'S CENTRES CONNECT!

2208 Sherbrooke Rd,
RR#5 New Glasgow, NS B2H 5C8
Contact: Peggy Mahon

phone - 902-922-2556
connect@ns.sympatico.ca

APPENDIX 2: MAPS OF SERVICES WOMEN'S CENTRES OF NOVA SCOTIA

ANTIGONISH WOMEN’S RESOURCE CENTRE -- SNAPSHOT OF SERVICES JANUARY 2003

AREA SERVED: Primarily Antigonish Town and County. Women from Guysborough, Sherbrooke, Canso and Port Hawkesbury also use our services.

CHARACTERISTICS: Town plus low-density, widely dispersed rural communities. No public transportation. High unemployment in rural areas.

CENTRE CORE SERVICES	OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES LOCATED IN AWRC AREA	CURRENT LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE	GAPS IN SERVICE
<p>DIRECT SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling - Crisis Intervention - Information & Referrals - Advocacy & Accompaniment <hr/> <p>PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stage I, II & III Therapy Groups for Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse - Self-Esteem Program - Assertiveness Program - Income Tax Preparation for Low-Income Women - Financial Planning Workshops - Programs for Adolescents - Exploring Our Lives Together (girls) - Inspire (at-risk girls) - Teens Take Action (mixed) <p>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, WORK PLACEMENT, ALTERNATIVE MEASURES/FINE OPTIONS, SERVICE LEARNING</p> <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY EDUCATION: TRAINING, WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact of Poverty - Sexual Violence Awareness & Prevention - Gender Role Stereotyping - Healthy Relationships Awareness & Prevention - Divorce, Separation, Custody & Access <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND NETWORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Antigonish & Area Inter-Agency Committee on Family Violence - PATH Network - Antigonish Affordable Housing Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - St. Martha’s Regional Hospital Mental Health Services - Public Health Services - Addictions Services - Family Services Association - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Kids First Family Resource Centre - Naomi Society - Antigonish Community Food Bank - Antigonish County Adult Learning Association - Antigonish Career Resource Centre - Antigonish Town & County Community Health Board - HRDC - Antigonish-Guysborough Black Development Association (BDA) 	<p>CLOSE WORKING LINKS/COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Antigonish Town and County Community Health Board (ATCCHB) - Addictions Services - Strait Regional School Board - Sisters of St. Martha <hr/> <p>REFER TO/FROM (WITHIN ANTIGONISH AREA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services (Antigonish, Port Hawkesbury, Guysborough) - Addictions Services - Naomi Society - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - RCMP - Public Health Services - St. Martha’s Regional Hospital (SMRH) Mental Health Services - Victims Services, Dept. of Justice (New Glasgow) - Kids First Family Resource Centre - Antigonish Regional Housing Authority - St. F.X.U. Health & Counselling Services - HRDC - Antigonish Career Resource Centre - Correctional Services - Antigonish Community Adult Learning Assoc. <hr/> <p>WORK WITH ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Naomi Society - Addictions Services - St. Andrew Junior School Guidance Department - Dr. J.H. Gillis Regional High School Guidance Dept. - East Antigonish Education Centre - Chedabucto Education Centre - New Leaf Men’s Intervention Program New Glasgow - ATTCHB - Antigonish-Guysborough Black Dev. Assoc. - SMRH Mental Health Services - Antigonish Career Resource Centre - Antigonish Town Council - Antigonish County Council 	<p>WOMEN’S CENTRES SERVICES UNFILLED NEEDS/WAITING LIST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate crisis support staff - Outreach Services to Guysborough, Canso & Sherbrooke - On the Road to Employment Programs (re-entry) - Separation & Divorce Support Group - Therapy group for adolescent girl survivors of sexual abuse. <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Services for Youth (16-19) - Supportive Housing for Adult Women ‘At Risk’ - Day Programs for Adult Women ‘At-Risk’ - Affordable Housing - Public transportation <p>Cuts in funding to other agencies and services add to the workload of the AWRC as referrals from those services to the AC increase.</p>

CENTRAL NOVA WOMEN’S RESOURCE CENTRE-- SNAPSHOT OF SERVICES JANUARY 2003

AREA SERVED: Primarily Town of Truro and Colchester County.

CHARACTERISTICS: Town plus low density, widely disbursed rural communities. No public transportation. Limited employment opportunities.

CENTRE CORE SERVICES	OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES LOCATED IN AREA	CURRENT LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE	GAPS IN SERVICE
<p>DIRECT SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling - Crisis Intervention - Information & Referrals - Advocacy & Accompaniment <hr/> <p>PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN INTERVENTION/PREVENTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ready or Not parenting program - Who’s In Control parenting program - Personal Development program - Assertiveness Training program - Computer Literacy program - Programs for Adolescents - Girls on the Go - Girl Power summer day camps <p>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES</p> <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY EDUCATION: TRAINING, WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adolescent Relationships and Preventions - Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships Awareness - Accessing Community Resources <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND NETWORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well Woman’s Clinic - Post Partum Support Group - Anti Poverty Network - Interagency on Family Violence - Coastal Community Network - Employment Equity Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - Children’s Aid Society of Colchester County - Colchester Regional Hospital - Adult Day Clinic - Mental Health Services - Public Health Services - Addictions Services - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Colchester Food Bank - Colchester Adult Learning Association - Career Works Nova and CAP site - Community Health Board - C.E.C. Youth Health Centre - RCMP - Parks & Recreation - Local Committee on Drug Awareness - Sexual Assault Centre - Third Place Transition House - Maggie’s Place – Resource Centre for Families - Bridges – Men’s Treatment Program - Mi’kmaq Family Treatment Centre - Truro Boys and Girls Club - Canadian Mental Health Association 	<p>CLOSE WORKING LINKS/COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Truro Boys and Girls Club - Colchester Hospital – Mental Health Department - Career Works Nova - Nova Scotia Community College <hr/> <p>REFER TO/FROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - Childrens Aid Society of Colchester County - Addictions Services - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - RCMP - Public Health Services - Colchester Regional Hospital - Mental Health Services - Colchester Food Bank - Career Works Nova & CAP site - Nova Scotia Community College - Nova Scotia Agricultural College - Sexual Assault Centre - Victim Services - Maggie’s Place <hr/> <p>WORK WITH ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mental Health Services - Interagency Committee on Family Violence - Boys and Girls Club - Institute for Human Services Education - Nova Institute - Bridges 	<p>WOMEN’S CENTRES SERVICES UNFILLED NEEDS/WAITING LIST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate crisis support staff - Outreach Services - Employment Programs (re-entry) <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Services for Youth (16-19) - Planned Parenthood - Supportive Housing for Adult Women ‘At Risk’ - Affordable Housing - Mental Health Services - Outreach capabilities to communities outside Town of Truro - Public transportation <p>Cuts in funding to other agencies and services add to the workload of the Central Nova Women’s Resource Centre as referrals from those services to the CNWRC increase.</p>

EVERY WOMAN'S CENTRE, SYDNEY-- SNAPSHOT OF SERVICES JANUARY 2003

AREA SERVED: Primarily Cape Breton Regional Municipality. We offer service to women in other areas of Cape Breton upon request.

CHARACTERISTICS: Urban, rural, coastal community mix; high unemployment and poverty; community mosaic changing due to loss of schools, hospitals & jobs.

CENTRE CORE SERVICES	OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES LOCATED IN AREA	CURRENT LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE	GAPS IN SERVICE
<p>DIRECT SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling - Crisis Intervention - Information & Referrals - Advocacy & Accompaniment <hr/> <p>PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing: "226" - Poverty Relief - Christmas Relief: "Adopt a Family" - Parenting, School & Youth issues - Self-Esteem Program - G.A. & A.A. Program - Income Tax Preparation for Low-Income Women - Preparation of Do It Yourself Divorce Kit - Self-Management - Goal Setting/Communications - Problem Solving; - Budgeting - Assertiveness Training <p>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, WORK PLACEMENT, FINE OPTIONS, STUDENT PLACEMENT</p> <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY EDUCATION: TRAINING, WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Issues - Don't Sweat the Small Stuff - Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships - Impact of Poverty - Divorce, Separation, Custody & Access <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & NETWORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dec 06 Memorial - International Woman's Day Concert - Run for the Cure; Walk for Aids; Take Back The Night - Family Violence Week Committee - Community Christmas Network - Community Homelessness Network - Adopt-A-Family, Back to School Campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - Cape Breton Regional Hospital Mental Health Services - Public Health Services - Addictions Services - Family Services Association - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Family Resource Centre - Transition House - Food Bank - Adult Learning Association - Anne Terry Women's Employment Centre - Various Community Health Boards - HRDC - Whitney Pier Black Employment Agency - N.S. Native Council - Aids Coalition - Planned Parenthood - Youth Health Centre - Medical Walk-In Clinics - Help Line - Elizabeth Fry Society - Victim's Services - Salvation Army - St. Vincent Du Paul 	<p>CLOSE WORKING LINKS/COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addiction Services - C.B. Regional Housing Authority - Parent to Parent (N.S.) - Growing Together (N.S.) - Cape Breton Transition House <hr/> <p>REFER TO/FROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - Addictions Services - C.B. Transition House - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - RCMP - CBRM Police - Public Health Services - CBRH Mental Health Services - Churches, Service Groups, Teachers - Family Resource Centre - Cape Breton Regional Housing Authority - HRDC - St. Vincent DuPaul, Salvation Army - Youth Health Services - Self Referral <hr/> <p>WORK WITH ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cape Breton Transition House - Addictions Services - C.B. Regional Housing - HRDC Re-Entry Programs - Dept. of Community Services - Salvation Army - Wellness Clinic, UCCB <hr/> <p>PROVINCIAL/REGIONAL BOARDS & COMMITTEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member of Boards: I.W.K. Board, Community Health Board, Provincial/Regional Advisory Board Addictions Services, SCPI Advisory Board. - Member of HRDC Action IT Team - Member of Camp Committee YMCA - Member of local committee discussing socio-economic influences on health. 	<p>WOMEN'S CENTRES SERVICES UNFILLED NEEDS/WAITING LIST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach services - Adequate staff to present programs requested from the Community. <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Services for Youth (16-19) <p>Although services are well represented in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, there are shortages in service due to cuts in programming, especially for legal aid and mental health. The diminished capacity of other services impacts on Every Woman's Centre by increasing the workload.</p>

LEA PLACE WOMEN'S CENTRE-- SNAPSHOT OF SERVICES JANUARY 2003

AREA SERVED: Primarily eastern part of the Eastern Shore (East Ship Harbour to Ecum Secum; including west to Beaver Dam).

CHARACTERISTICS: Widely dispersed rural coastal communities with low population. No public transportation. High unemployment.

CENTRE CORE SERVICES	OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES LOCATED IN AREA	CURRENT LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE	GAPS IN SERVICE
<p>DIRECT SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling - Crisis Intervention - Information & Referrals - Advocacy & Accompaniment <hr/> <p>PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women In Business - Income Tax Preparation for Low-Income Women - Parent Time - Community Kitchen - Alzheimer Support Group - Other Affected Support Group <p>PROGRAMS FOR ADOLESCENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre Teen Group (girls) - Youth In Action (mixed) <hr/> <p>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, CO-OP</p> <p>COMMUNITY EDUCATION: TRAINING, WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Custody & Access - Women & The Law Series - Healthy Relationships Awareness & Prevention - Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & NETWORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14 Days in December Committee - Health & Education Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Sheet Harbour Memorial Hospital - Adult Day Clinic - Mental Health Services - Public Health Services - Addictions Services - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Rainbow Food Bank - Eastern Shore /Musquodoboit Community Learning Initiative - Employment Resource Centre & Capsite - Eastern Shore /Musquodoboit Community Health Board - Sheet Hbr. & Area Youth Health Centre - Planned Parenthood Sheet Harbour - RCMP - Parks & Recreation - Local Committee on Drug Awareness 	<p>CLOSE WORKING LINKS/COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eastern Shore /Musquodoboit Community Health Board - Rainbow Food Bank - Addictions Services - Halifax Regional School Board - Employment Resource Centre <hr/> <p>REFER TO/FROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Addictions Services - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - RCMP - Public Health Services - Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital - Mental Health Services - Planned Parenthood Sheet Harbour - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Rainbow Food Bank - Employment Resource Centre& Capsite <hr/> <p>WORK WITH ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eastern Shore /Musquodoboit Community Health Board - Local Committee on Drug Awareness - Duncan MacMillan High School - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Mental Health Services 	<p>WOMEN'S CENTRES SERVICES UNFILLED NEEDS/WAITING LIST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate crisis support staff - Outreach Services - Employment Programs (re-entry) <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Services for Youth (16-19) - Supportive Housing for Adult Women 'At Risk' - Affordable Housing - Mental Health Services - Family Resource Centre - Transition House - Public transportation <p>Cuts in funding to other agencies and services add to the workload of the LEA Place as referrals from those services to the LEA Place increase. Especially true in area due to shared services.</p>

PICTOU COUNTY WOMEN'S CENTRE -- SNAPSHOT OF SERVICES JANUARY 2003

AREA SERVED: Pictou County

CHARACTERISTICS: Our main centre is New Glasgow surrounded by 4 other towns, the largest being Pictou. The county has a large rural population with the overall population being approximately 47,000. No public transportation. Unemployment rate of 9.7%

CENTRE CORE SERVICES	OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES LOCATED IN AREA	CURRENT LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE	GAPS IN SERVICE
<p>DIRECT SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling - Crisis Intervention - Information & Referrals - Advocacy & Accompaniment <hr/> <p>PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self Esteem Program - Financial Planning <p>PROGRAMS FOR ADOLESCENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teen Empowerment - G/L/B Youth group <p>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, WORK PLACEMENTS, ALTERNATIVE MEASURES/FINE OPTIONS</p> <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY EDUCATION: TRAINING, WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sexual Harassment - Assertiveness/Setting Boundaries - Lesbian Relationships - Poverty & It's Impact - Feminism/Women's Movement/ Gender Stereotyping - Women's & Economic Security/ Decision Making - Smoking Cessation for Adult women/Adolescents <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & NETWORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adolescent Housing - Youth Access/ Interagency Work on Adolescent Issues - P.C. Interagency Committee on Family Violence - Women & Non-Traditional Work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Aberdeen Hospital - Mental Health Services - Public Health Services - Addictions Services - Early Childhood Intervention Program - P.C. Food Bank - Central Highland Assoc. for Community Learning - Career Connections Resource Centre - Central & West Pictou Community Health Board - Youth Centres - Planned Parenthood P.C. - RCMP/ Town Police - Recreation Depts. - P.C. Crime Prevention - Black Development Association - Pictou Landing 1ST. Nation's - Tearmann Society - 2ND. Stage Housing - Kids First Family Resource Centre - NS Legal Aid - Pictou County Continuous Learning Association - Housing Authority - Family Services - New Leaf 	<p>CLOSE WORKING LINKS/ COLLABORATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planned Parenthood PC - Pictou Landing 1ST. Nation's - Black Development Office - United Way - Tearmann/ Interagency Committee - Family Services/ Mental Health Services <hr/> <p>REFER TO/FROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Addictions Services - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - RCMP/ Town Police - Public Health Services - Family Doctor's - Mental Health Services - Planned Parenthood P.C. - Career Resource Centre - Tearmann House/ 2ND. Stage Housing - Probation Services/ Courts - Victim Services' - Kids First Family Resource Centre - HRDC - Help-Line - Family Services - Black Development Office <hr/> <p>WORK WITH ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interagency Committee on Family Violence for PC - Dept. of Housing - United Way - Planned Parenthood PC - Youth Access - West Pictou Primary Health Care Project - African United Baptist Assoc. (AUBA) - Women's Institute. 	<p>WOMEN'S CENTRES SERVICES UNFILLED NEEDS/WAITING LIST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate crisis support staff & Administrative support - Outreach Worker - <i>Starting Point</i> Program (Re-Entry) - Program for Women in Conflict with the Law - Sexual Assault Survivor's Group - Smoking Cessation Programs for Women & Adolescent girls - Lesbian Discussion/ Support Group - Additional Self-esteem programs for women - Programming in our culturally diverse communities <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Services for Youth (16-19) programs - Open-support group for older women - Supportive Housing for Youth 'At Risk' - Affordable Housing for Adult Women (with & without children) - Youth Health Centre - Public transportation - Cuts in funding to other agencies and services add to the workload of the Pictou County Women's Centre as referrals from those services has increased.

SECOND STORY WOMEN’S CENTRE -- SNAPSHOT OF SERVICES JANUARY 2003

AREA SERVED: Women and organizations in Lunenburg County and from Queens County upon request.

CHARACTERISTICS: Population 30,000 women in Lunenburg and Queens Counties. The area is rural with no public transportation. High unemployment rate.

CENTRE CORE SERVICES	OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES LOCATED IN AREA	CURRENT LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE	GAPS IN SERVICE
<p>DIRECT SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling - Crisis Intervention - Information & Referrals - Advocacy & Accompaniment <hr/> <p>PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Income Tax Preparation for Women - Realistic Living Budgeting Program - Self Esteem Program <p>PROGRAMS FOR ADOLESCENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Girl Talk Summer Program - Bully Busters - Sexual Harassment <hr/> <p>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, WORK PLACEMENT, ALTERNATIVE MEASURES/FINE OPTIONS, COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS</p> <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY EDUCATION: TRAINING, WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bullying Presentations - Stress Management - Women Living in Lunenburg County <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & NETWORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternatives - Parent Education - Lunenburg Queens County Interagency on Family Violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Four Food Banks - Acadia Centre for Small Business - ACOA - Addiction Services - Big Brothers and Sisters - Bridgewater Family Support Centre - Career and Transition Services - Chester Family Resource Centre - Community Health Board - Department of Community Services - Early childhood Intervention Program - Empire House - Family and Children Services - Fisherman’s Memorial Hospital - Harbour House - HRDC - Disabilities - Lunenburg County Adult Learning Network - Lunenburg Family Resource Centre - Native Council of Nova Scotia - New Ross Family Resource Centre - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - Planned Parenthood - Public Health Services - South Shore Opportunities - South Shore Regional Hospital - South Shore Work Activity Program - The Wherehouse Youth Drop-In Centre - Regional Development Agency 	<p>CLOSE WORKING LINKS/COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acadia Centre for Small Business - Action Council for People with Disabilities - Bridgewater Family Support Centre - Empire House - Harbour House - Lunenburg Family Resource Centre - Municipality of Chester Recreation Department - Municipality of Lunenburg Recreation Department - Regional Development Agency - South Shore Opportunities - Verge House <hr/> <p>REFER TO/FROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access Nova Scotia - Action Council for People with Disabilities - Addictions Services - Alternatives - Empire House - Family and Children Services - Family Support Centres - Fisherman’s Memorial Hospital - Food Banks - Harbour House - Justice Society - Legal Aid - Lunenburg/Queens Native Council - Mental Health - Planned Parenthood - Public Health Services - Salvation Army - South Shore Regional Hospital <hr/> <p>WORK WITH ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternatives - Bridgewater Family Support Centre - Family and Children Services - Harbour House - Planned Parenthood - Public Health Services - RCMP and Regional Development Agency 	<p>WOMEN’S CENTRES SERVICES UNFILLED NEEDS/WAITING LIST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach Workers - On-site Support Staff - Re-entry Training Programs for employment - Survivors of Sexual Abuse <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable Dependent Care - Affordable Housing - Public Transportation - Parent Abuse - Parents Abandoning Teens - Preventing Sexual Abuse for Children - Custody and Divorce –how to cope - Survivors of Sexual Abuse - Adequate Health Care - Mental Health Services - Counselling Services

THE WOMEN'S PLACE RESOURCE CENTRE -- SNAPSHOT OF SERVICES JANUARY 2003

AREA SERVED: Western Annapolis Valley, Digby County not including the District of Claire: Population 38,000.

CHARACTERISTICS: Widely dispersed rural communities with low population. Inadequate public transportation. High unemployment in rural areas.

CENTRE CORE SERVICES	OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES LOCATED IN AREA	CURRENT LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE	GAPS IN SERVICE
<p>DIRECT SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling - Crisis Intervention - Information & Referrals - Advocacy & Accompaniment <hr/> <p>PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women In Business - Well Women's Clinics - Making Connections (networking) - Rural Senior Women Making Decisions - Addictions, 1 2 3 - Re-entry <p>PROGRAMS FOR ADOLESCENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standing Up <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY EDUCATION: TRAINING, WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Custody & Access - Women & The Law Series - Women's Health - Healthy Relationships Awareness & Prevention - Hassles in the Hallways - Re-entry <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & NETWORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well Women's Clinics - Tuesday Morning Coffee and Conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Soldiers Memorial Hospital - Mental Health Services - Public Health Services - Addictions Services DHA 1,2&3 ((Middleton) - Area Food banks (11) - NSACSW Field program - Employment Resource Centre & Capsite - Red Door - RCMP - Parks & Recreation - Chrysalis House - CASA - Family Resource Centres - NS Legal Aid - NSCC Annapolis Campus 	<p>CLOSE WORKING LINKS/COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NSCC Annapolis Campus - Food Banks - Addictions Services - Mental Health - Employment Resource Centre - Public Health - Chrysalis House - Family Resource Centres - Department of Housing - CBDC - NSACSW Field Program <hr/> <p>REFER TO/FROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Addictions Services - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - RCMP - Public Health Services - Mental Health Services - Planned Parenthood (The Red Door) - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Area Food Banks - Employment Resource Centre& Capsite <hr/> <p>WORK WITH ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NSCC Human Services program - CBDC Annapolis Ventures - NSACSW - Public Health Services 	<p>WOMEN'S CENTRES SERVICES UNFILLED NEEDS/WAITING LIST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach Services - Employment Support program (re-entry) - Chronic Pain Support Group <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Services for Youth (16-19) - Affordable Housing - Public transportation - Inter Agency

TRI-COUNTY WOMEN’S CENTRE - 9 MONTHS OLD NOT CURRENTLY FUNDED BY DCS

AREA SERVED: South West Nova from Briar and Tiverton Islands around to rural Shelburne County;

CHARACTERISTICS: Widely dispersed rural communities with low rural population. Low literacy rates. High unemployment in rural areas. Large economic disparity

CENTRE CORE SERVICES	OTHER SERVICE AGENCIES LOCATED IN AREA	CURRENT LINKS WITH OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE	GAPS IN SERVICE
<p>DIRECT SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual Support Counselling - Crisis Intervention - Information & Referrals - Advocacy & Accompaniment <hr/> <p>PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-Esteem Workshops - Women and the Law - Support Group for Survivors of Sexual abuse <p>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, CO-OP</p> <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY EDUCATION: TRAINING, WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS</p> <p>WOMEN’S CENTRE DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self Esteem Workshops - Stress Management - Custody & Access - Women and the Law Series <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & NETWORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14 Days in December Committee - Health & Education Network - Brown bag Lunch Intro Series - International Women’s Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - Yarmouth Regional Health Centre - Adult Day Clinic - Mental Health Services - Public Health Services - Addictions Services - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Yarmouth Food Bank - Yarmouth/Shelburne Learning Centre’s - Employment Resource Centre & Cap site - Parents Place - Juniper House - Planned Parenthood - RCMP - Parks & Recreation - Local Committee on Drug Awareness - Big Brother and Sisters - Salvation Army - Pregnancy Crisis Centre - Community Health Board - HRDC - NS Legal Aid 	<p>CLOSE WORKING LINKS/COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health Board - Yarmouth Food Bank - Yarmouth Fuel Bank - Addictions Services - Yarmouth Regional School Board - Employment Resource Centre - Parents Place - Juniper House - Youth Service Coordinator <hr/> <p>REFERRALS TO/FROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Community Services - DCS Child Protection - Addictions Services - Nova Scotia Legal Aid - RCMP - Public Health Services - Yarmouth Regional Hospital - Mental Health Services - Planned Parenthood - Early Childhood Intervention Program - Yarmouth Food Bank - Yarmouth Fuel Bank - Employment Resource Centre& Cap site <hr/> <p>WORK WITH ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inter Agencies Committee - Emergency Shelter - ACOA - Friendly Feeding Train the Trainer 	<p>WOMEN’S CENTRES SERVICES UNFILLED NEEDS/WAITING LISTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate crisis support staff - Outreach Services - Employment Programs (re-entry) - Budgeting Workshops Support <hr/> <p>COMMUNITY GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Services for Youth (16-19) - Supportive Housing for Adult Women ‘At Risk’ - Affordable Housing - Mental Health Services - Accessible transportation in rural areas

WOMEN'S CENTRES STATISTICAL SUMMARY
PERIOD: ONE MONTH JANUARY 2003

NAME OF CENTRE	DIRECT SERVICE CONTACTS ²¹ (# OF INDIVIDUALS)	DIRECT SERVICE RANGE OF CONTACTS (# OF TIMES PER INDIVIDUAL)	DIRECT SERVICE INITIAL CONTACTS (# OF INDIVIDUALS)	FOLLOW-UP CONTACTS (# OF INDIVIDUALS)	TOTAL DIRECT SERVICE CONTACTS	PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS (INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS)	TOTAL PROGRAM CONTACTS	TOTAL CONTACTS
Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, Antigonish	177	1-28 contacts each	26	151	417	7	7	424
Central Nova Women's Resource Centre, Truro	196	1-8 contacts each	123	73	426	23	61	487
Every Woman's Centre, Sydney	218	1-10 contacts each	76	142	346	36	108	454
LEA Place, Sheet Harbour	74	1-3 contacts each	64	10	100	51	176	276
Pictou County Women's Centre, New Glasgow	124	1-6 contacts	37	87	305	10	40	345
Second Story Women's Centre, Bridgewater	63	1-3 contacts each	19	44	84	112	116	200
The Women's Place, Lawrencetown	136	1-5 contacts each	72	64	213	0	0	213
Tri-County Women's Centre, Yarmouth ²²	55	1-4 contacts each	25	30	67	12	12	79
TOTALS (ALL THE CENTRES)	1043	1-3 to 1-28	442	601	1958	251	520	2478

²¹ These are the "different" individual contacts for Direct Services: Individual Support Counselling/Crisis Intervention; Information and Referral; Individual Advocacy and Accompaniment.

²² Tri-County Women's Centre does not have DCS funding at this time. Direct Services cannot be sustained over time without this funding.