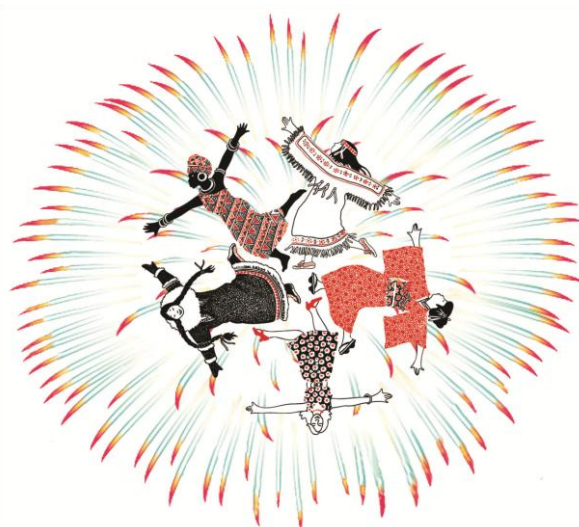


# 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of International Women's Day

## Conference Report

April 2011



Prepared for:



*Status of Women Council  
of the NWT*

Prepared by:



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## Special Acknowledgements

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Therese Boullard, Women in Human Rights presenter  
Rai Brown, self care through meditation  
Kirsten Carthew, Women in Leadership presenter  
Mary Lou Cherwaty, Women in Leadership presenter  
Karen Craggs, Keynote Speaker and GBA presenter  
Nancy Cymbalisy, Women's Health presenter  
Samantha Dechief, Conference Team member  
Myrna Driedger, Women in Leadership presenter  
Ramona Fordy, Women in Non-traditional Trades presenter  
Leela Gilday, self care through using your voice  
Arlene Hache, Women in Leadership presenter  
Diane Howe, Volunteer  
Hillary Jones, Women in Non-traditional Trades presenter  
Amy Lea, Women's Health presenter  
Honourable Sandy Lee, Women in Leadership presenter  
Sandra Malcom, Women's Health presenter  
Amanda Mallon, Women in Leadership presenter

Dorothy Matthews, Volunteer  
Lisa McLeod, Women in Leadership presenter  
Annemieke Mulders, Women in non-traditional Trades presenter + Conference Team member  
Rassi Nashalik, lighting of Qulliit  
Lorraine Phaneuf, Conference Team member  
Debbie Polakoff, Women's Health presenter  
Irene Savoy, Conference Team member  
Dolly Simon, Conference Team member  
Sarah Tautuajuk, Women in Non-traditional Trades presenter  
Lori Twissell, Women's Health presenter  
Anne Tyrie, Keynote Speaker  
Nora Wedzin, Women in Leadership presenter  
Lynn White, Note taking and moderating volunteer  
Karen Willy, Recommendations volunteer  
Karen Wright Fraser, Master of Ceremonies  
Jennifer Young, Note taking, moderating, and evaluation volunteer

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# Acronyms

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GBA	Gender-based Analysis
GNWT	Government of the Northwest Territories
IWD	International Women's Day
NWT	Northwest Territories

# Introduction

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It all began one year ago, on International Women's Day in 2010 when 40 women from across the NWT met to discuss a dream of hosting a conference to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of International Women's Day. That dream came true when the Status of Women Council of the NWT hosted the, *Celebrating Northern Women: A Century of Achievement* conference from March 7-9, 2011. The achievements were showcased throughout the conference through<sup>1</sup>:

- *100 Minutes of Culture* - evening of speakers and entertainment;
- a banner identifying 100 achievements of women over 100 years;
- a resource room;
- 100 quotes that were posted around the conference walls; and
- 100 brain teasers that were placed on the conference tables.

In addition to celebrating a century of northern women's achievement, the purpose of the conference was to develop a set of recommendations that focussed on the future economic, political, and social developments of women in the NWT. To help focus the recommendations, the conference proceedings were, for the most part, split into five major themes:

- Gender-based Analysis
- Women and Human Rights
- Women in non-traditional Trades
- Women's Health and Wellness
- Women in Leadership – Federal, Territorial, and Municipal Government; and
- Women in Leadership – Community Development.

A total of 116 people attended the conference, from 23 of the 33 NWT communities<sup>2</sup> and two attendees from outside of the NWT (Calgary and Ottawa). The participants represented various perspectives – non government, government, territorial, regional, community, and individual). A summary of the conference proceedings, the evaluation results, and the prioritized recommendations that resulted from the discussions are what constitute the remainder of this report. The information included herein will not only help guide the work of the Status of Women Council of the NWT moving forward, but will also assist in knowing what successes to build upon and challenges to address should the Council undertake a similar conference in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> To obtain a copy of the banner please refer to the Status of Women Council of the NWT's website: [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca).

<sup>2</sup> Bechoko, Deline, Dettah, Fort Good Hope, Fort Liard, Fort McPherson, Fort Providence, Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Fort Resolution, Gameti, Hay River, Inuvik, Lutsel Ke, Ndilo, Norman Wells, Trout Lake, Tuktoyaktuk, Tulita, Ulukhaktok, Whati, Wekweti, and Yellowknife.

# Conference Proceedings

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The following information summarizes the five conference themes. It is organized according to the agenda that was undertaken during the meeting. Each sub-section **briefly summarizes** the information presented by the assigned presenters as well as any discussions that took place in relation to the topic being addressed. The recommendations that may have resulted from these discussions are included in a separate section later on in the report.

## Welcome

*Therese Dollie Simon, President of the Status of Women Council of the NWT*

During her welcome Therese introduced the board and staff of the Status of Women Council. She thanked them for their dedication and hard work in organizing the conference. She wished everyone a productive and informative two days of conferencing.

## Opening Remarks

*Lorraine Phaneuf, Executive Director of the Status of Women Council of the NWT*

During her opening remarks, Lorraine thanked the participants for attending the conference and for the community support that made the conference possible. She also identified that the ultimate purpose of the conference was to celebrate the achievements of northern women as well as to make recommendations for addressing the economic, political and social developments of women in the NWT. Lorraine identified that it was the Council's hope that the recommendations that surfaced through the conference would represent the voices of northern women, government, industry, and community agencies alike – presenting a unified voice. The Council would then take the prioritized recommendations and incorporate them in their mandate of working towards the equality of women in the NWT through advice to the GNWT, research, and public education, advocacy on behalf of women, community outreach, and assistance to women's groups.

## Gender-based Analysis (GBA)

*Karen Craggs, Director of Gender Equality Incorporated*

Both through the keynote presentation and her workshops, Karen provided information related to the state of women today in an international, Canadian, and Territorial (NWT) focus, and also discussed the principles of GBA as well as lessons for moving gender equality forward.

Karen identified that women have made much progress in health, education, and work, on all three geographic fronts, but still have much more work to do in terms of decision making (i.e. there are still few women owning businesses and working within the political field) and delegating domestic work. By entering in a GBA, answers can be provided to three questions:

1. Why is the situation like it is?
2. What are the differential impacts for both women and men?

### 3. What are the differential needs for both women and men?

Karen went on to say that when these three questions are examined, the four dimensions of gender equality are incorporated:

- Closing the gaps between the differential impacts and needs
- Meeting the unique needs of both women and men
- Doing no additional harm to women or men; and
- Transforming gender relations.

By applying the GBA lens in these four dimensions, the differences between gender are examined: condition and position; access and control; equity and equality; strategic and practical needs; and presence, participation and decision-making. Through this lens, Karen argued that the question doesn't become about when GBA matters, but when it doesn't, and applied the following lessons learned:

- GBA is relevant not only in gender related policies and projects, but in all policies and projects. It should be used as a core methodology for all effective program and policy development
- GBA should not be limited to the sector in question – it should break sectoral silos in order to look at issues more holistically, including intersectional diversity, men, culturally relevant holistically analysis
- GBA is not a one-time exercise. GBA needs to be included in planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- GBA should not be a stand-alone exercise. It should contribute to substantive, measurable results (see CIDA's GB approach)
- GBA should not just validate intended impacts only. It should also identify unintended differential impacts (positive/negative)
- GBA is not a desk review exercise. It should, by definition, involve all segments of community. When conducting GBA consultations, ask the question – who is not here?
- Ask the right questions, get answers, and include in a strategy to do something about the information collected.

### Discussion

For the most part, the discussion focused on the need to reflect on gender as a right; not as a political inequality. With this focus in mind, it was felt that the media needed to do a better job of supporting women rather than putting them in a light that made them seem less equal than men. It was discussed that although there will always be different aspects of experience and different viewpoints, each has to be heard within their own contexts to determine what exactly the issues is; recognizing that equality is diverse and has many different faces. For equality to occur to its fullest extent, it was argued that negotiations have to occur on an ongoing basis until equality is rea

## Women and Human Rights

Therese Boullard, NWT Human Rights Commission

This workshop covered three topic areas - human rights and equality, legislative framework within which human rights are framed, and the current status of human rights.

### HUMAN RIGHTS and EQUALITY

The workshop identified that human rights are born with us. Legislation imposes an obligation on government to protect those rights and ensure that they are not taken away from us.

There were two types of equality identified in the workshop – formal and substantive. Formal equality is based on the premise that if we treat everyone the same, there should be equality. The challenge with formal equality, however, is that it assumes we live in a society where people do have equal opportunity. It doesn't recognize the other social factors. Substantive equality recognizes that there are contexts within which equality exists. It also recognizes that even though there are laws that say we are equal, we might not be able to act on those laws.

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Legally, there are five main frameworks that apply to human rights, as follows:

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (International document)
2. Declaration of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (International)
3. Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Canada)
4. Canadian Human Rights Act (Canada)
5. NWT Human Rights Act (NWT)

### CURRENT STATUS

In 1995, the UN World Conference identified 12 points<sup>3</sup> for advancement of women's equality, entitled the *Beijing Platform for Action*. Governments are required to report under all 12 items, in addition to the reporting requirements under the convention, which include<sup>4</sup>:

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<sup>3</sup> Women and poverty; education and training; violence against women; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights of women; women's health; women in the media; women and armed conflict; women and the environment; and the girl-child.

<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, time did not allow for all 12 items to be discussed in detail.

- Women and poverty
- Education and training
- Violence Against Women
- Women and the Economy
- Women in Power and Decision-making
- Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
- Human Rights of Women
- Women's Health
- Women and the Media
- Women and Armed Conflict
- Women and the Environment
- The Girl-child

## Discussion

In part, the discussion focused on the partnerships that exist between the Human Rights Commission and other women's organizations in the NWT. To this end, Therese identified that although no formal partnership currently existed, there was a pilot project occurring to examine barrier's to women's equality and where difference groups are party to all complaints. The results are meant to ensure that complaints are fair since not everyone has representation.

The discussion also focused on the need to focus on equality of men and women. It was argued that education should be a priority for both women and men, and that there is a need to encourage youth to participate academically, regardless of gender. As well, some participants felt that men should have been represented at the conference to convert them to have a better understanding of women's rights.

A larger part of the discussion, however, focused on family violence and the need to address this issue in the NWT. Therese agreed with the need to address the issue at a territorial level, and knew of some information on the government's website, but regretted that she didn't have enough information to comment on whether what the government was doing, was enough. She did, however, identify that if there were concerns about how the government was addressing women's issues moving forward, then the participants would be provided an opportunity to hold governments accountable by voting with the party that best supports women's rights.

## Women in non-traditional Trades

Ramona Fordy, Trapper from Fort Resolution

Hillary Jones, Mine Training Society

Annemieke Mulders, past Northern Women in Mining Oil and Gas Project

Sarah Tautuajak, past participant Northern Women in Mining Oil and Gas Project

This session focused on women working in the non-traditional trades of trapping and mining. Ramona spoke from her experience as a registered trapper. Trapping since she was 10 years old, Ramona identified that she learnt her traditional skills from her father and was granted the role of his trapper assistant when he saw she could do it. Ramona also identified that men often do not believe she can trap until they see it with their own eyes.

Hillary spoke to women working in the mining industry, identifying that statistically, women represent 5% of the working population in the mining industry, and how there are many challenges and benefits for women to work in the mine. One of the biggest challenges for women working in a two and two rotational work schedule is the lack of childcare available in the home community. One of the biggest successes however is that women can act as role models, showing the rewards of working in the mining industry – financial independence, greater opportunities, greater self confidence, etc. Additionally, there are many opportunities for advancement in the mines with the right training. This is because the average age of a miner is between 45 and 55, and based on a recent needs assessment that was completed, up to 5,000 positions will be needed with trades, technology and management skills to replace the retirees up to 2013.

Annemieke and Sarah also spoke to women in the mining industry. Annemieke spoke about the Northern Women in Mining and Oil and Gas Project which was a three year pilot to determine if by providing women-only trades training, impacts were made in terms of increasing the interest, participation, and retention of women in the mining industry. Based on the monitoring and evaluation components that resulted from the pilot project, the following results were attained:

- Women who applied for the training were between the ages of 25 and 44; mostly lived in communities outside of Yellowknife; were unemployed; completed their High School Diploma as their highest level of education; and were of the Dene ancestry.
- There was high interest among northern women to find trades-related training and employment in their home communities
- The women-only aspect is important to women in order to sign up for non-traditional trades-related training
- Increasing among of applications was received each year as the project became recognized: Year 1 = 37; Year 2 = 43; and Year 3 = 73.
- Participation rates were most successful when hands-on training was incorporated/main focus of the training

- Wrap around supports (transportation, work clothing, personal counselling) increased women's retention in the training and/or employment
- There was a challenge meeting 2/3 of the course targets due to attrition and academic level requirements for some of the training.
- Regardless of completion levels, women were provided with enough workplace readiness skills even if they did not enter the trades.
- Top three barriers identified by applicants, which were consistent with the original baseline research: lack of the right skills/education; financial concerns; image that it's a man's working environment
- The barriers identified will help government, industry, training institutions and non-profit organizations to put a gender-based lens on their services
- Training women in trades will be more successful if programs:
  - Are designed specifically for northern women and to address the actual challenges faced by northern women are initially women-only
  - Are designed specifically to train women in communities for the jobs available in their communities
  - Use hands-on training as the main focus of the training
  - Use a partnership approach that includes industry, civil society, as well as federal and territorial governments
  - Include supports and resources aimed at increasing the success rates of women in the program
  - Include dedicated staff that are tasked with providing resources and supports for the project

Sarah spoke from her experience as a student in the Northern Women and Mining Oil and Gas Project. As a single parent, the Project helped her to get the skills she needed to attain employment at one of the diamond mines making good money to support her son. Not only was she able to do her job at the mine, but she was also able to do handyman work at her Mom's house. However, with being a single parent, Sarah identified that the two and two rotation was too hard on her son and on her as a single parent. She ended up quitting her job and finding something in Yellowknife. Although it is less pay, she is still working in the trades field and happy to be doing so.

## Discussion

The discussion focused on the need to get more women in the trades and deciding how to do that. Hillary mentioned that the role model campaign is an approach that is working for them, and noted that although there have been discussions about providing day care at the mine site, there are too many safety and liability issues to do so. Annemieke also mentioned that funding for women-targeted training has

lapsed, but that the Status of Women was committed to looking for funding to provide women-only training at the community level where non-traditional jobs existed.

## **Women's Health and Wellness**

Nancy Cymbalisky, Breast Cancer Action Group

Amy Lea, Department of Health and Social Services, GNWT

Sandra Malcom, Department of Health and Social Services, GNWT

Caroline Newberry, Department of Health and Social Services, GNWT

Lori Twissell, Stanton Territorial Hospital

This session focused on women's health and wellness specific to promoting alcohol-free pregnancies in the NWT, the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Diagnostic Clinic, Breast Health/Breast Cancer, and sexual health.

Working as a FASD Specialist at the Department of Health and Social Services, Sandra spoke of how alcohol affects every part of a baby's development process in utero and that if FASD plays a factor in a child's life, there is no cure. It lasts a lifetime. The extent of the impact, however, will vary depending on when the woman drank during her pregnancy. Sandra also identified that although some studies identify that it's okay to lightly drink alcohol while pregnant, the reality is that a true safe amount of alcohol is not known. What is known is that alcohol is a serious problem in the NWT, especially among youth. Thus, it is important to get a consistent message out in the public about the risks of FASD, and the importance of an alcohol-free pregnancy.

Lori spoke to the pilot FASD Diagnostic Clinic that is being implemented through the Stanton Territorial Hospital. The program is based on referrals and is used to diagnose FASD (based on confirmation of exposure to prenatal alcohol) as well as design the appropriate support teams and intervention strategies particular to each child. Referrals are not based on a first-come, first-served basis, but rather, are rated against a pre-determined set of criteria to determine highest need. In the diagnosis, there are four Canadian guidelines that are examined: pre-natal exposure, growth, facial features, and brain functioning. Lori also identified that through the pilot, one clinic per month is held on average, and with 1-2 children diagnosed each clinic depending on past testing.

As a volunteer of the Breast Cancer Action Group, Nancy spoke about the Group's history, some statistics in breast health, and the work that the Group conducts. The Breast Cancer Action Group started 15 years ago by a group of volunteers who wanted to fill the gap of supports available to women with breast cancer. Funding for the Group comes from the local breast cancer fundraising event, *Run for Our Lives*, which pays for the coordinator. Nancy went on to identify that on average, 445 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every week in Canada. Results are comparable in the NWT in that breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the NWT. To provide supports, the Group has produced a Breast Health and Healthy Living Kit which were developed and funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada and piloted in 5 NWT communities. Most of the material is in English, but there are some items which can be available in other NWT languages. Currently, there is a kit in each NWT community health

centre. The key message to pass on to everyone Nancy identified was to practice breast self examinations and get mammograms when you are old enough.

Amy and Caroline spoke about sexual health, which is defined by the World Health Organization (2002) as: *a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.* A serious concern in sexual health is that the rates of sexually transmitted infections are generally increasing in the NWT, and are much higher when compared to Canada. Specifically, rates are highest in the younger population, and particularly young females. The reality, as Caroline pointed out, is that many factors are associated with sexually transmitted factors, not just unprotected sex. These factors include poverty, education, fear, etc. To address the high rates in the NWT, Amy spoke about the various sexual health initiatives that are being implemented in the NWT. These include: clinical practice audits; clinical case management; clinical practice guidelines; HPV Vaccine; and various health promotion initiatives, including the [www.respectyourself.ca](http://www.respectyourself.ca) website.

### **Discussion**

The discussion on women's health and wellness generated a vast amount of discussion. Regarding FASD, the discussion was around supports for students with FASD; whether father's confirmation of exposure to alcohol played any factor in diagnosing FASD; and how to get more kids and adults into the clinic for diagnosis. Responses to this end identified that resources are being used to target youth diagnosed with FASD, and that although research is beginning to look into a father's use of alcohol and its impacts on pregnancy, it is not a criteria that is examined in the diagnosis. Additionally, it was identified that the clinic was at capacity and could not accept more referrals than it already has.

Regarding sexual health, the discussion focused on legal consent to attain the HPV for young women and how parents can get more information about what it means for their daughters. In response, it was identified that the policy stipulates that at age 14, or at any age when recommended by a healthcare practitioner, a parent's consent is not needed. It is felt that at age 14; the girl can understand the benefits and risks of the vaccine and give their own consent. Although information is often sent home to parents, there are circumstances where the information is not provided to the parents or gets lost.

## **Women in Leadership – Federal, Territorial, and Municipal Government**

Myrna Driedger, Member of Parliament

Sandy Lee, Minister Territorial Government

Lisa McLeod, Member of Provincial Parliament

Amanda Mallon, City Councilor

Nora Wedzin, Tliche Government

This session focused on women in leadership at the federal, territorial, and municipal government levels.

As a MLA for 12 years and the Vice President of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) – Canadian Region, Ms. Driedger is a big advocate of women in politics. She identified that the CWP was formed in 2005 for the purpose of bringing women together each year in a conference to share ideas and encourage more women in politics. There is also an outreach program through the CWP that focuses on parliamentarians going to various organizations (schools, shelters, women’s groups) to speak about the importance of women in politics. Ms. Driedger also noted that the Canadian target is to have 30% female representation across provincial and territorial governments. To date, only Manitoba has achieved this target. Although there is reason to be proud of this achievement, Ms. Driedger argued that we need to do more than just reach the target, we need women to be respected by their voice at any target, and find the means to reach beyond these targets. Ms. Driedger noted that the need for more women in politics stems from the fact that they have a different perspective and a desire to focus on consensus-building.

Ms. McLeod spoke about her personal experiences of being a woman in politics. She spoke of how her father told her that anything she wanted to do was possible, and how at the age of 31 with a young family, she took that advice and ran her first political campaign, resulting in her acclamation to the position. Ms. McLeod also spoke of the struggles women have in politics and the need to stand up for what they believe in and encourage change.

Working in politics for the past 12 years, Ms. Lee identified that politics is a way for diverse voices to be heard. She identified that her dream was to have more women elected into the assembly in the fall session, including Aboriginal women. Ms. Lee further recognized that the answer to run for political office or not is not always an easy one, and often, the answers are not black or white. She went on to say that women just have to decide to run for political office and go for it because politics are better when more women are involved.

Ms. Mallon spoke about getting people into leadership positions. She acknowledged that leadership comes in different forms – coaching, politics, business, etc and argued that when leadership qualities are evident in someone, it needs to be acknowledged, encouraged, and supported. Further, Ms. Mallon noted that once a person is in a leadership position, it’s a huge responsibility; not only to stay true to what you believe in, but to maintain the qualities that led you to be in that role.

Ms. Wedzin was elected as an Executive Member of the Tlicho Government in 2009. She is the second woman elected to the Executive and the first to the Government. She identified that even though she is an elected politician, she doesn't forget where she came from, and she doesn't consider herself greater than anyone else. Instead, she is honored to represent women's voices and the voices of her culture in her position. Ms. Wedzin acknowledged the importance of family support to encourage the strength and self confidence in you to make a difference.

### **Discussion**

There were no questions raised in this session, and therefore no discussion.

### **Women in Leadership – Community development**

Mary Lou Cherwaty, Northern Territories Federation of Labor

Kirsten Carthew, co-Founder Taiga Camp

Arlene Hache, Past Wise Women, Order of Canada, Centre for Northern Families

This session focused on women in leadership through a community development perspective.

Kirsten spoke to how Taiga Camp offers a chance for young girls to talk about leadership and develop leadership skills through the various activities that take place. Through Taiga, the young girls are taught that there are different types of leaders, not just leaders at the political level and that the skills they learn at camp are transferrable to life outside of camp – examples include, public speaking, self confidence to do activities that you might not have otherwise, self esteem, socialization, etc. The success of Taiga Camp is identified through the repeat campers that attend each year, and the camper testimonials.

Mary Lou identified that there have been strong female leaders in the NWT such as Ethel Blondin Andrew, Audrey McLaughlin, and Lena Pederson and that internationally progress has been made through the elimination of all forms of discrimination in the world in 2003, and in 2008 when the UN urged countries to accelerate female representation in elected positions by at least 30%. Compared to other countries, Canada ranks 52<sup>nd</sup> out of 133 related to female representation in their electorate. Yet, when you compare that ranking with the fact that females represent 52% of the female population in Canada, it is hard to understand why we are not meeting the 30% target. The importance of reaching this target as Mary Lou identified is that it is the percentage of female voices needed to make any impact on such political concerns as child care and poverty. Some of the barriers that exist to reach this target include: few women role models, poor media representation of women in leadership roles, lack of opportunities for women to exist in leadership roles. Mary Lou further stated that now is the time to start addressing these barriers through such things as Taiga Camp and better campaign messaging.

Arlene spoke about how she is thinking of running for MLA again because she feels strongly that women need to be in politics to have the opportunity to discuss the social issues they care about and to determine how best to spend government funding. It was Arlene's belief that people become leaders because of their principles and belief that anything is possible. For Arlene, she admits she became interested in

politics by default when she rallied with younger women who stood for causes they believed in – she didn't want to let them down. Although she admitted to being initially scared at first, Arlene decided to push through those fears and recognize that if she can look in the mirror and acknowledge that she has done the right thing for the people she stands by, and then she is meant to push through her fears. But Arlene was quick to point out that she didn't become the leader she is today without a lot of prayer and the encouragement and support from her friends and family.

### **Discussion**

There were no questions raised in this session, and therefore no discussion.

## Prioritizing the Recommendations

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Throughout the conference, women were invited to identify recommendations on present and future economic, political and social development in the NWT. The purpose of gathering these recommendations was to provide the Status of Women Council of the NWT guidance on how best to address northern women's issues moving forward.

Recommendations could either be posted on the banner that was displayed in the conference room, or they could have been included in a worksheet that was provided as part of the conference package. Various reminders about the avenues to post recommendations were provided throughout the conference.

On the last day of the conference, these recommendations were gathered and allocated into themes by conference volunteers; resulting in 68 recommendations across 8 themes, which to a large extent, resulted from the workshop/panel presentation topics. A prioritizing session was then held as the last agenda item of the conference to identify what were the top three recommendations that resulted from the conference. This prioritizing session required participants to allocate a vote to the top three recommendations of their choice. Only one vote could be used per recommendation.

A brief dialogue was then held about the top three recommendations to make them more realistic and applicable to the Council's mandate. The dialogue associated with the top three prioritized recommendations is identified below. The remaining 65 recommendations are provided in an Appendix in the back of the report. (Note that where the Status of Women Council of the NWT does not have the mandate to address some of the remaining recommendations, they will be sent to the appropriate agencies to address. Additionally, the number in brackets following each recommendation represents the number of votes it received in the prioritizing exercise.)

### Prioritized Recommendations

The top three recommendations, and the associated dialogue, that resulted from the prioritizing session were as follows:

#### 1. Gender Based Analysis

**Recommendation:** Develop and implement a Gender-based Analysis policy and action plan that includes the requirement to use the analysis in the development of all GNWT legislation, policy and programs to achieve gender equality (28)

**Dialogue:** Participants also wanted to see GBA go beyond the GNWT, to include all levels of Boards and Agencies funded by the GNWT.

## 2. Poverty

**Recommendation:** Reduce poverty of families (most of whom are single mothers) by 40% in three years through increases to income support amounts and real support and assistance (23)

**Dialogue:** Participants recognized that this recommendation as written is beyond the scope of the Status of Women Council of the NWT. This is because the reduction of poverty is influenced by factors beyond what the Council can address (i.e. housing, income, etc). Rather, for this to be a more manageable recommendation, it was felt that the Council could *advocate* for the reduction of poverty. To this end, it was felt that the Council could work with the Poverty Reduction Strategy stakeholders (who include?) to address the recommendations that resulted from this conference as it relates to poverty: childcare, affordable housing, no claw-backs on income assistance, support of basic needs, etc. It was also felt that a baseline of where the NWT population is at related to poverty would first need to be determined.

## 3. Family and Childcare

**Recommendation:** Universal and affordable and accessible child care within next ten years (17)

**Dialogue:** Participants recognized that this recommendation as written was also beyond the scope of the Status of Women Council of the NWT. Much like the reduction in poverty recommendation, universal day care is influenced by factors beyond what the Council can address. Rather, for this recommendation to be more manageable, it was felt that the Council could *advocate* for accessible daycare training and the access of daycares in all communities.

## Conference Survey Results

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Conference participant surveys were handed out at the end of the conference. To help increase the response rate, participants were notified that they would receive a door prize for completing and submitting their surveys. Of the 116 participants who attended the majority of the conference<sup>5</sup> 57 (49%) completed the participant survey.<sup>6</sup> At a 10% confidence interval, this means that if 47% percent of those surveyed picked an answer we can be 95% 'sure' that if the question was asked of all conference participants, between 37% (47-10) and 57% (47+10) would have picked the same response.

Based on the 57 survey responses received<sup>7</sup>, the majority of participants were between the ages of 25 and 29 (n=35), and there was a split representation of aboriginal (n=27) and non-aboriginal (n=23) participants attending from both Yellowknife (n=24) and communities outside of Yellowknife (n=21). Overall, the majority of these respondents (93%) identified that they would attend a similar conference in the future (n=53), and 98% were either very satisfied or satisfied that overall, the whole conference met their expectations (n=48).

As identified in the previous section, there were two workshops and four panel presentations offered in the conference, as follows:

- Gender-based Analysis workshop
- Women and Human Rights workshop
- Women in non-traditional Trades panel
- Women's Health and Wellness panel
- Women in Leadership – Federal, Territorial, and Municipal Government panel; and
- Women in Leadership – Community Development panel.

The participants were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with each of the workshops and panels based on three criteria: meeting expectations; providing useful information; and ability to use the information provided during the workshop/panel in their home community. Specifically, Figure 1 on the next page identifies that participants were most satisfied with the usefulness of the information provided by the Leadership panels, non-Traditional Trades panel, and the Human Rights Workshop. Figures 2 and 3 identify that the participants were most satisfied with the Leadership panels in terms of meeting their expectations and being able to use the information presented in their home community.

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<sup>5</sup> There were seven social worker students who only attended the GBA keynote. Additionally, because they were not present at the end of the conference, they did not fill out an evaluation form and thus, did not comment on their level of satisfaction with the GBA workshop.

<sup>6</sup> There were five other surveys that could not be used because they were either not completed in full or were spoiled surveys.

<sup>7</sup> Note that were n= does not equal the 57 respondents, this means that people either self identified that they did not attend a particular session or did not respond to the question at all.

Figure 1: Workshop/Panel provided useful information (avg. = 94.8%)

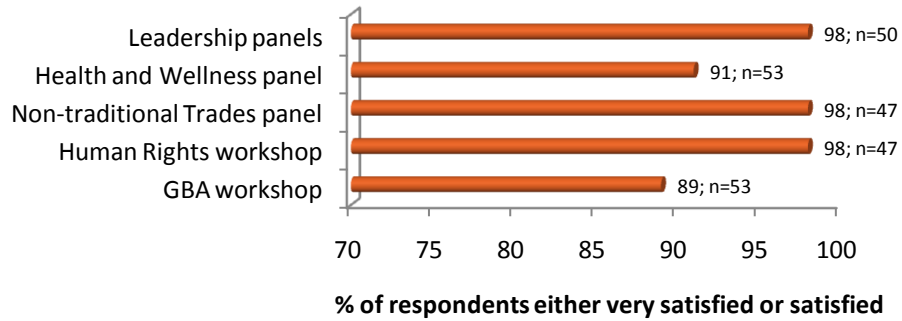


Figure 2: Workshop/Panel Met Expectations (avg. = 94%)

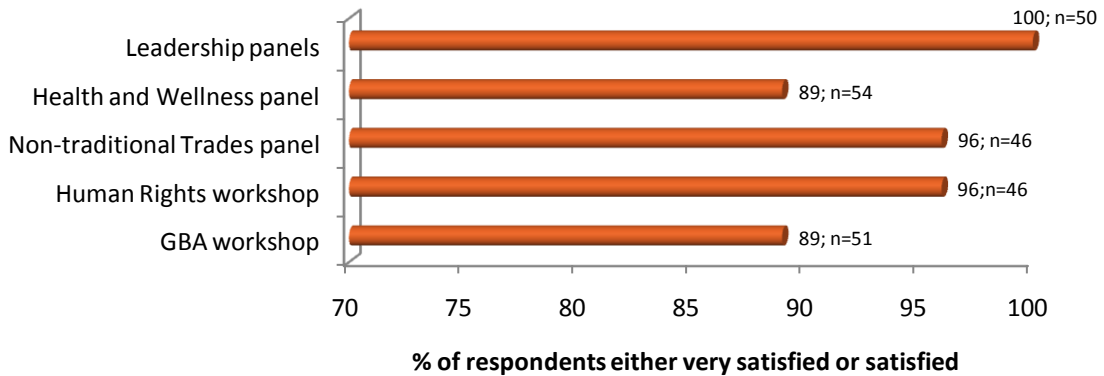
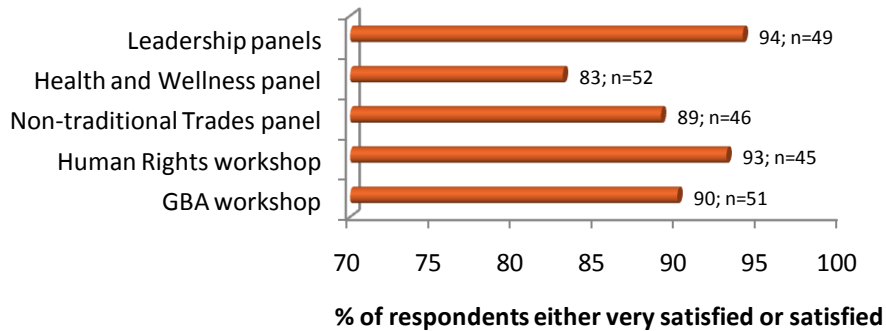


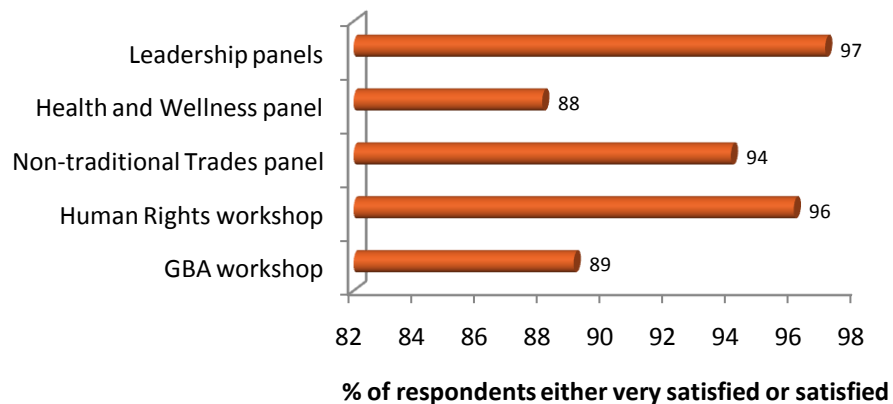
Figure 3: Will be able to use information in community (avg. = 89.8%)



Overall, when the ratings were averaged within each category above, the results showed that the workshops/panels were most successful at providing the participants with useful information (94.8%), followed by meeting participants' expectations (94%), and to the least extent (although still positive), providing information that participants could use in their home communities (89.8%).

Additionally, as depicted by Figure 4 below, when the respondent's ratings were combined and averaged on all three criteria for each workshop/panel, respondents were most satisfied with the Leadership panels, followed by the Human Rights workshop, the Non-traditional Trades panel, the GBA workshop, and the Health and Wellness panel.

**Figure 4: Average satisfaction of all three conference criteria**

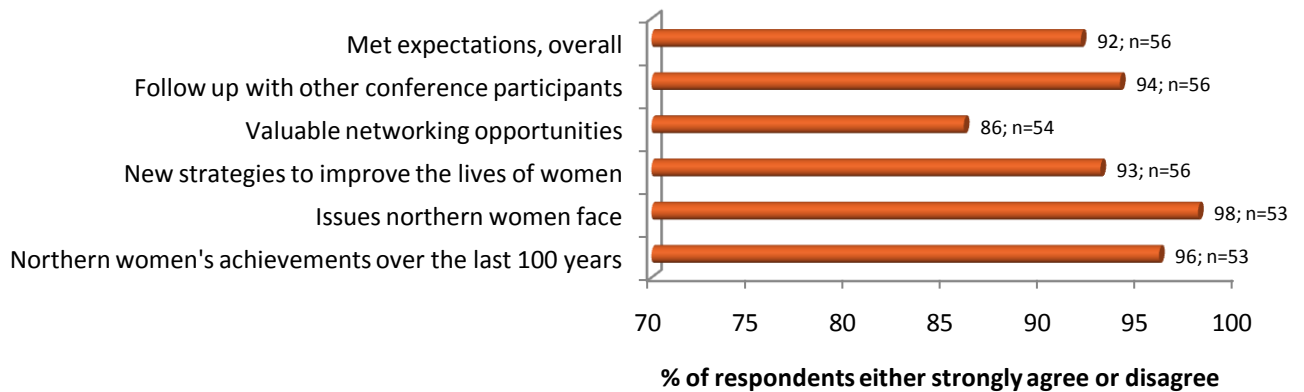


In addition to their ratings on each workshop/panel, the respondents also rated their level of agreement with particular statements regarding the ability of the conference to meet its objectives. In the survey, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement related to whether the conference:

- taught them about northern women's achievements over the last 100 years
- taught them about the issues northern women face
- taught them new strategies to improve the lives of women; and
- Provided them with valuable networking opportunities during the conference.

Conference participants were also asked to state their level of agreement as to whether they would follow up with other conference participants in the future, and whether the conference met their expectations overall. Figure 5 on the next page depicts that the respondents' level of agreement was strongest in terms of the conference teaching them about the issues northern women face, followed by learning about northern women's achievements over the last 100 years; following up with other conference participants in the future; learning about new strategies to improve the lives of women; meeting overall expectations, and providing valuable networking opportunities.

Figure 5: Respondent level of agreement with conference objectives



In addition to rating their level of agreement or satisfaction on different conference elements, the participants were asked to provide qualitative feedback related to what they liked most about the conference and what they would change about the conference. The following subsections identify the themes that arose from these two questions.

### Would have changed about the conference

Of the 57 survey respondents, 49 (86%) provided comments regarding what they would have changed about the conference. When the responses were themed, the response that was provided the most was “nothing”. Second to those responses, respondents felt that the workshops and overall conference could have been longer to allow more time for discussion and action planning in small groups. As one respondent stated, “some of the workshops could have been longer; only enough time to scratch the surface.”

A third theme that arose from the responses was that respondents would have preferred that the conference include more northern women from small communities, especially young women. As one respondent stated, “have more youth women attending from communities.”

### Liked most about the conference

Of the 57 survey respondents, 54 (95%) provided comments regarding what they liked most about the conference. Themes gathered from those comments identified that what respondents liked the most about the conference were the diverse types of workshops/panels that were provided, and the way the presenters were engaging with the audience. As one respondent stated, “I liked the skill and strength of almost all presenters.”

The cultural events and entertainment that were provided throughout the conference were also a success. Respondents pointed out the 100 minutes of culture, evening events (i.e. *Roises of the North* movie), and Leela Gilday's *Using Your Voice* workshop as a good way to learn about women's achievements. As one respondent stated, "*I was inspired by their stories and enjoyed the variety of talents of the women.*"

Finally, respondents felt the conference to be very organized. Respondents liked that they did not have to choose between workshops and panels and that each person had their own agenda listed on the back of the name tags. Respondents also felt that the tone of the conference was very positive as a result of how things were organized. As one respondent stated, "*Great attention to detail.*"

## Next Steps

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Moving forward, the Status of Women Council of the NWT commits to redefining the top three prioritized recommendations around GBA, poverty, and childcare to fit within their mandate based on the dialogue that took place at the conference. The Council will also ensure to redefine the recommendations in such a way that they will be able to measure their progress toward addressing all three.

The Council also commits to reviewing the remaining 65 recommendations with their Board of Directors to determine where recommendations fit within their mandate, and the extent to which they can be incorporated into their work moving forward. Where recommendations are not within the Council's mandate, the Council would bring the recommendations to the attention of other appropriate organizations.

Finally, the survey results will be used by the Council to inform future conference and event planning.

## Appendix A – Other Recommendations

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The other recommendations that resulted from the themed work, in order of prioritization included the following. (Note that where the Status of Women Council of the NWT does not have the mandate to address some of the remaining recommendations, they will be forwarded to the attention of the appropriate agencies to address. Additionally, the number in brackets following each recommendation represents the number of votes it received in the prioritizing exercise.)

### EDUCATION

- Raise the bar for our education system. No more social passing. (13)
- Partner with GNWT Education, Culture and Employment to designate funding for a student leadership program (0)
- Offer home economics and partnering classes as mandatory for both boys and girls in school (0)

### EQUALITY

- Implement Gender-based Analysis throughout GNWT departments for all legislation, policies, and programs (17)
- Revitalize the *Women's Voices in Leadership* program for young women (3)
- Mandatory Gender-based Analysis for all GNWT management. Increase training sessions by 20% over next 3 years (2)
- Shine a gender lens on all public spending (2)
- Re-instate the Special Advisor to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women to a Senior Management position reporting directly to the Minister (1)
- End discrimination against women (1)
- Mobilize and support women's group in all NWT communities and link these group to youth and elders (1)
- Women to have a voice (be seen and heard) at all levels of government – record stories as evidence (1)
- NWT Harvesters Program needs to be more accessible to all harvesters and not only trappers with fur records (0)
- Equality in wages; ensure they become equal (0)
- 15% of girls in school to have access to age appropriate information on gender-based analysis within three years (0)
- Increase the number of women in leadership roles by 20% in three years. Do this through a 3-year project with a facilitation team working for a leadership Coalition of northern women's groups (0)

## **FAMILY AND CHILD CARE**

- Decrease the number of child apprehensions by 50% in three years by instating real assistance and support to women and families to deal with their personal family and social barriers (4)
- Advocate for foster homes in the NWT so our children are raised in their own cultures (4)
- Establish a non-government Family Resource Centre in each community with free childcare (2)
- Develop family programs that help heal all members of the family and enable families to stay together (0)

## **FAMILY VIOLENCE**

- Provide resources for women who experience domestic violence within remote communities (14)
- Establish safe homes in every NWT community (10)
- Create rehabilitation program(s) for spousal abusers (6)
- GNWT to continue to provide funding and support to the Coalition Against Family Violence for Phase 3 of the Family Violence Action Plan (2)
- Educate men to recognize why they abuse and educate women in dealing with abusive situations (2)
- Reduce family violence by 10% in three years (1)
- Support research efforts with communities to address violence in our lives, as evidenced by inclusion in strategic plans (0)
- Regional networks with a paid coordinator who specializes in family violence and abuse (0)
- Seek funding for a Coordinator for the Coalition Against Family Violence (0)
- Multi-year funding for all shelters in the NWT (0)
- GNWT to carry on the capacity building and shelter enhancement funds for all NWT shelters (0)
- Make abusers do more jail time (0)
- Mandatory statistics gathering and data collection in a consistent format to better understand the incidents of abuse by gender, age, type, etc.

## **LEADERSHIP**

- Recognize and name NWT women in leadership positions and achievements (5)
- Women leaders, get together for dinner regularly (monthly or quarterly) to network and encourage each other (3)
- Have campaign schools be part of high school curriculum (3)
- Provide the campaign school in each Region at least once prior to the next election (2)
- Work to develop campaign programs for municipal politics (0)

## OLDER ADULTS

- Forming community and regional networks to provide support for older adults to remain independent and remain safe and secure in their homes as long as possible (5)
- Let's have more end of life programs and facilities and less long term care facilities so we keep people at home until the end of their lives (1)
- Safe home or shelters for older men + women who need a place to be safe when there is abuse/neglect in their homes (1)
- Have more tools to stop elder abuse (1)
- Older adults need to be given an opportunity. Elders need to have their voices heard (0)
- Tools and resources are needed to provide service providers with the support they need to address elder abuse (0)
- Education and raising awareness about abuse of older adults (0)
- Examine Adult Protection Legislation or Acts which will ensure the unique needs of older adults who are abused are met. Where appropriate, have the mandate and power to do something for older adults (0)
- Link youth and elders in activities where they can learn from each other and thereby make communities safer for everyone (0)
- Enhancement of supports for older adults to ensure all older adults feel valued and respected (0)
- Resources are identified to enable older adults to teach their language in the school system (0)
- Programs are funded to keep older adults active and healthy in their communities – example: using the recreation centers of gyms for all age groups (0)
- One person in each region who works with older adults to give information and support and advocates for better care and programs for older adults (0)
- A 24hr-7day per week Senior Crisis Help line for elders who need a safe place to get away from abuse or violence (0)
- Funding for a program coordinator for any group of seniors/elders who want to form a group or committee to get together (0)
- RCMP who are trained and sensitive to the abuse of older adults and provide timely responses to the older adults who need to be safe (0)
- An Elder Abuse Team and Special Unit within the RCMP locally and through the NWT (0)

## POVERTY

- Status of Women Council of the NWT to get involved to eliminate poverty in our communities. Push the GNWT to connect the dots on policies and programs that contribute to poverty (2)
- Advocate on housing issues on behalf of northern women (0)

- Increase the amount of resources and access to resources within remote communities through government programs (0)

#### **OTHER**

- Promotion of Victim Services in the communities (3)
- At future conferences, have more youth participating and provide daycare to participants (3)
- More funding for community awareness programs – for example, AIDS, STIs, FASD (2)
- Have International Women’s Day declared a National Holiday (0)
- Promote NWT Status of Women’s programs by visiting the communities (0)
- Need more culturally relevant session to deliver FASD information (0)
- Follow-up conference three years from now (0)
- Tlicho region to have their own region (0)