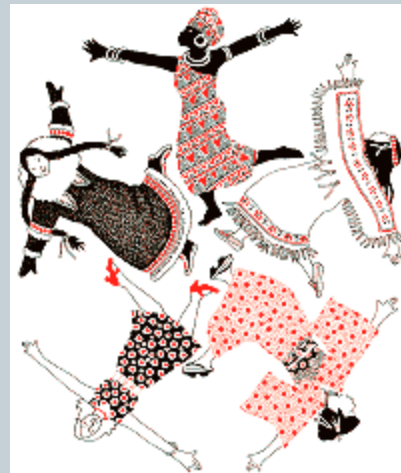


# Status of Women Council of the NWT



**NORTHERN WOMEN IN MINING,  
OIL & GAS PROJECT  
2007 - 2010**



# Agenda



- **Status of Women Council of the NWT**
  - Mandate
  - Mission
- **Northern Women in Mining, Oil & Gas Project (NWMOG)**
  - Background
  - Premise & Research Question
  - Training Approach
  - Courses
  - Support Services
  - Evaluation Process
  - Results
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- **Questions/Comments**

# Status of Women Council of the NWT



# Mandate



- The Council was established under the NWT Status of Women Council Act in April 1990. Its mandate is to work towards the equality of women through:
  - advice to the Government of the NWT
  - research
  - public education
  - advocating on behalf of women
  - assistance to women's groups and other groups working on issues of concern to women

# Mission



- The Status of Women Council of the NWT is dedicated to achieving equality for all NWT women through:
  - public education and awareness
  - research
  - advocacy
  - community development
  - interagency cooperation
  - advice to government
  - identification and development of opportunities for women

# Northern Women in Mining, Oil & Gas Project



# Background

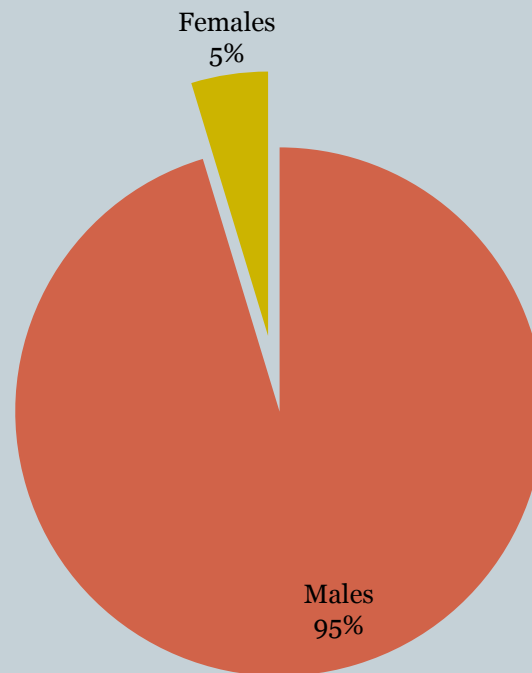


- NWT has experienced increased employment opportunities in the trades as a result of the demand for NWT's non-renewable resources
- Under-representation of women in the trades-based occupations of mining, oil, and gas
  - Between 1993 and 2006, 920 students enrolled in NWT apprenticeship programs – 47 were women (5.1%)
  - 23 of these 47 women (48%) entered the Food and Service Industry apprenticeships
  - Less than half (43%) of the women who entered any apprenticeship program, completed them

# Background



Northwest Territories residents working in trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations



[1] 2005 Socio-Economic Scan, NWT Bureau of Statistics.

# Background



- Why are women not entering trades-based occupations?
- Anticipated Barriers:
  - Lack of appropriate education and skills
  - Often the (and sometimes only) primary caregiver
  - Limited training opportunities
  - Financial restrictions
  - Perception and traditional perspective that trades occupations are not for women
  - Social issues (i.e. abuse and addictions)

# Premise & Research Question



- **Premise**
  - If the right training and skill development was provided to women, their representation in the trades-based occupations would increase
- **Research question**
  - Would implementing a dedicated, **women-only**, partnership based and strategic training program be an effective means to increase the interest level, participation, and retention rates of women in industrial and trades-based occupations in the mining, oil, and gas industry?

# Training Approach



- Training was uniquely designed to promote change by :
  1. Increasing women's interest through information sessions about the trades-based women-only training, and employment opportunities
  2. Increasing their participation by providing access to the required knowledge and skills through hands-on and academic training
  3. Increase their retention by providing wrap-around social supports and employment that addressed barriers

# Courses



- **Exposure Courses (11)**
  - Intention was for women to gain enough interest to want to pursue further formalized trades training
  - Carpentry / Yellowknife (7 courses offered) + 1 course in Fort Smith
    - ✦ 5-week courses offered mainly in the evenings
  - Heavy Equipment Operations course in Trout Lake
  - Summer Airport Maintenance course in Hay River

# Courses



- **Builder Trades Helper**
  - 12 week full-time program, combining hands-on training with basic academics and a Ready to Work North program
  - Prepares women for entry-level employment opportunities in construction/maintenance
  - 3 courses offered during Project
  - Intention was for women to complete the BTH and then move on to more formalized academic training or attain employment

# Courses



- **Trades Access Program**
  - 20-week academic program that challenges women to enter the Trades Entrance Exam
  - Course material includes Trades Math, Trades Science, Trades English, and Basic Introduction to Computers
  - 2 courses offered during Project
  - Intention was for women to write Trades Entrance Exam, move into Apprenticeship positions and/or attain employment in the trades

# Support Services



- **Supports included:**
  - Referrals
  - Upgrading and tutoring (by professionals)
  - Personal counselling (by professionals and NWMOG staff)
  - Housing (advocacy, finding placements)
  - Financial Assistance (SFA eligibility, advocacy, budgeting workshops)
  - Transportation (i.e. bus passes, travel to and from home community)
  - Childcare (advocacy, finding placements)
  - Work clothing
  - Long-distance phone cards
  - Grocery assistance

*Supports were provided to women once accepted into the training, and as long as needed*

# Evaluation Process



- Hired an external evaluator to both monitor and evaluate the Project
- Developed an evaluation framework at outset of the Project to guide the monitoring, evaluation, and reporting efforts
- Data mostly collected internally by the Project staff
- Monitoring reporting took place quarterly, with annual process (interim) evaluation reports conducted at the end of the first two fiscal years
- Summative evaluation

# Results



- **Women who apply for this type of training are:**
  - between 25 and 44 years old
  - for the most part, live in communities outside of Yellowknife
  - are of the Dene Ancestry
  - are unemployed
  - have completed their High School Diploma as their highest level of education
- **High interest among northern women to find trades-related training and employment in their home communities**

# Results



- The women-only aspect is important to women in order to sign up for non-traditional trades-related training
- Increasing amount of applications received each year:
  - Year 1 = 37 applications
  - Year 2 = 43 applications
  - Year 3 = 73 applications
- Participation rates most successful when hands-on training was incorporated/main focus

# Results



- Wrap-around supports provided to the women increased their retention in the training and/or employment
- The top three wrap-around support services accessed by students:
  1. Transportation (88% of students)
    - Bus passes
    - Transportation to and from home community
  2. Work Clothing (79% of students)
    - Steel toe work boots
    - Hard hats, etc.
  3. Personal Counselling (76% of students)
    - Provided by professionals
    - Provided by NWMOG PC and PO in advocacy role

# Results



- **Challenge meeting 2/3 course targets:**
  - Exposure = 100% of 100 women target met
  - BTH = 53% of 30 women target met (attrition)
  - TAP = 35% of 20 women target met (academic requirements)
- **Regardless of completion levels, women were provided with workplace readiness skills, even if they did not enter the trades**

# Results



- Top three barriers identified by applicants, and are consistent with proposal research:
  - Lack of the right skills/education
  - Financial concerns
  - Image that it's a man's working environment
- Barriers identified will help government, industry, training institutions and non-profit government, industry, training institutions, and non profit organizations put a gender-based lens on their services

# Summary



- 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

# Summary



- Training women in trades will be more successful if programs:
  - use a partnership approach that includes industry, civil society, and federal, territorial and local 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

# Contact information



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