



An Evaluation of Strengthening NB Regional Violence Prevention Networks - Phase 1

Final Report

July 2006

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Executive Summary

Background

Violence against women is a serious issue across Canada, including New Brunswick. The Government of New Brunswick established the Minister's Working Group on Violence Against Women in December 2000 as a partnership between government and various community groups. This Working Group is chaired by the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and includes 8 deputy ministers and 30 representatives of community organizations. In response to recommendations from the Working Group, government released an action plan titled 'A Better World for Women' and established the 'Women's Issues Branch' in 2002 to coordinate its implementation. A second action plan is now underway, 'A Better World for Women: Moving Forward 2005-2010.' This document outlines five key results areas including 'Key Results Area 5: Leadership and Coordination' which includes strategy # 3: 'Provincial Advisory Group / Regional Violence Prevention Networks.' This project was funded to implement this strategy in Year 1 of the action plan: 2005/2006.

Executive Council Office – Women's Issues Branch

The sponsoring organization for this project was the Women's Issues Branch of Executive Council Office, Province of New Brunswick. The Women's Issues Branch responsibilities include ensuring the leadership and co-ordination function of 'A Better World for Women: Moving Forward 2005-2010.' Among the commitments contained in the action plan are the strengthening of Regional Violence Prevention Networks and the creation of new networks in regions where the need is identified.

To help reach these objectives, the Women's Issues Branch created a Provincial Advisory Committee (now called 'Provincial Partnerships in Action' - PPA), which met for the first time in November 2005. This Provincial Advisory Committee will play a key role in the implementation of new services and strategies that support community violence prevention initiatives as outlined in the action plan.

After the Committee's first meeting, the Women's Issues Branch agreed to submit a proposal for funding through the Crime Prevention Action Fund. The proposal was successful and supported the Women's Issues Branch to oversee the implementation of the project.

Project Description

The project included two streams of activities:

1. A conference, which was organized in March 2006 to offer training sessions, and skills-building conferences in the areas previously identified by the representatives. This

conference also gave the Provincial Partnerships in Action committee an opportunity to meet as a whole a second time during the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

2. Hiring of part-time network coordinators for each of the fourteen volunteer-led violence prevention networks to prepare for the implementation of new services in communities through out the province by:
 - Defining the boundaries of each Network
 - Mapping service delivery in each region
 - Preparing needs assessments

Goals and Objectives

The goals were to:

- Strengthen the standing of each existing network by providing the opportunity to learn from each other and to share tools and resources
- Assist regional networks by addressing their training and development needs
- Create a give-and-take forum that promotes an effective way of staying connected to communities year-round
- Organize training events, distributing information and tools, and getting feedback as needed

As outlined in the proposal, the project objectives were:

- 1.1) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their awareness of better practices in N.B.
- 1.2) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their awareness of service delivery models in N.B. (i.e., sexual assault services)
- 1.3) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their networking skills
- 2.1) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their knowledge of available family violence services/resources in N.B.
- 2.2) To provide the Provincial Advisory Committee with an opportunity to increase their knowledge of the boundaries of each family violence prevention network in the province

Evaluation Approach

An external evaluation firm was contracted to design and conduct the evaluation. A participatory approach was taken to the evaluation to ensure participation of project representatives and relevant/useable evaluation results. The methods of data collection included document review,

semi-structured interviews with network representatives and coordinators, questionnaires completed by conference participants, and a session held with representatives of the Women's Issues Branch to present and discuss the results of data collection and to discuss other aspects of the project and its context.

This evaluation report outlines activities completed, supports and challenges to completing the activities, outcomes, and potential improvements.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are supported by the results of the evaluation:

1. The project successfully completed both streams of activities including a two and a half day conference and hiring of part-time network coordinators for each of the fourteen volunteer-led violence prevention networks to prepare for the implementation of new services in communities throughout the province.
2. The conference was very positively received by participants. The greatest benefits included learning about working with the media; networking; finding out about services, best practices, resources, etc.; gaining tools for recruiting and retaining volunteers; and the motivational guest speaker. The conference assisted the training and development needs of most networks and created an opportunity to share resources, information and tools. Participants increased their awareness of better practices, available services, and service delivery models and networked with participants from other networks, services, and government.
3. Several elements were critical to the success of the conference including the input of the Provincial Partnerships in Action Group, allowing multiple participants from each network, the family violence-specific aspects of the training and tools, and the ability to practice some of the techniques.
4. Network development activities completed with the support of the part-time coordinators lead to better awareness of the boundaries of each region (although in some cases there were still issues with gaps or overlap), better awareness of services in each region, and for some networks a better awareness of needs in their region. Each network was strengthened as a result of the activities completed.
5. The part-time coordinator positions were essential to the achievement of the developmental activities of each network given the busy schedules and commitments of volunteers. The effort was also supported by in-kind services of partner organizations in each network, including space and equipment. However, the short time period that coordinators were available (eight weeks) was a major challenge and additional funding for coordinators was seen to be essential to continue to move forward in a timely fashion.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based upon by the results of the evaluation:

1. The Women's Issues Branch seek further funding to continue the work of coordinators for an additional period of time to ensure that additional, necessary development activities are completed.
2. The Women's Issues Branch proceed as planned with the Provincial Partnerships in Action Group to organize a second conference with participants from the fourteen networks to address additional training and development needs utilizing the key elements that led to the first successful conference while continuing to pay attention to the needs of participants in both official languages and to provide additional opportunities for networking.
3. The Provincial Partnerships in Action group continue to work on any unresolved network boundary issues.
4. Future work of the Provincial Partnerships in Action group include flexibility for networks at different stages in development.
5. Future work of the Provincial Partnerships in Action group include a focus on issues of family violence in rural communities.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Violence against women is a serious issue across Canada, including New Brunswick. A statistical profile prepared by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women¹ outlined the extent of the problem. The five-year prevalence of violence against women age 15 and older in New Brunswick was estimated to be 9% in both 1993 and 1999 surveys. This represents an estimated 18,000 women according to the 1999 survey. The lifetime prevalence of spousal assault, other sexual assault, and other physical assault among women in New Brunswick was 46%, representing an estimated 126,000 women age 18 and older. From 1974 to 2000, 51 women were victims of spousal homicide in New Brunswick.

1.2 A Better World for Women: Moving Forward 2005-2010

The Government of New Brunswick established the Minister's Working Group on Violence Against Women in December 2000 as a partnership between government and various community groups. This Working Group is chaired by the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and includes 8 deputy ministers and 30 representatives of community organizations. In response to recommendations from the Working Group, government released an action plan titled 'A Better World for Women' and established the 'Women's Issues Branch' in 2002 to coordinate its implementation. A second action plan is now underway, 'A Better World for Women: Moving Forward 2005-2010.'² This document outlines five key results areas including 'Key Results Area 5: Leadership and Coordination' which includes strategy # 3: 'Provincial Advisory Group / Regional Violence Prevention Networks.' This project was funded to implement this strategy in Year 1 of the action plan: 2005/2006.

1.3 Executive Council Office – Women's Issues Branch

The sponsoring organization for this project was the Women's Issues Branch of Executive Council Office, Province of New Brunswick.

The Women's Issues Branch provides policy advice and support to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women; coordinates the implementation of the government's action plan on violence against women; supports the work of the Wage Gap Roundtable; and liaises with

¹ Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women (2002). Assessing Violence Against Women: a Statistical Profile. Cat. no. SW21-101/2002E-IN.

² Province of New Brunswick (2005). A Better World for Women: Moving Forward 2005-2010. Fredericton, NB: Province of New Brunswick.

departments of government and the Advisory Council on the Status of Women on issues of concern to women.

As described in the final project report,³ the Women's Issues Branch responsibilities include ensuring the leadership and co-ordination function of 'A Better World for Women: Moving Forward 2005-2010.' Initiatives in this area are aimed towards more cohesiveness and integration of programs and services between government departments and community stakeholders. Among the commitments contained in the action plan are the strengthening of Regional Violence Prevention Networks and the creation of new networks in regions where the need is identified.

To help reach these objectives, the Women's Issues Branch created a Provincial Advisory Committee (now called 'Provincial Partnerships in Action' - PPA), which met for the first time in November 2005. This Provincial Advisory Committee will play a key role in the implementation of new services and strategies that support community violence prevention initiatives as outlined in the action plan. Some of those services are:

- Sexual assault services
- Treatment and support program for children exposed to violence
- Prevention programs for children and youth
- Public education strategies
- Outreach and crisis intervention

As outlined in 'A Better World for Women: Moving Forward 2005-2010,' the Provincial Advisory Committee will meet up to three times per year to address these goals. During these meetings, three streams of activities will take place, including skills development, showcasing of different regions' services/projects, and resource sharing.

After the Committee's first meeting, the Women's Issues Branch agreed to submit a proposal for funding through the Crime Prevention Action Fund. The proposal outlined two activities: support for the regional networks that would allow part-time coordinators to be hired and another opportunity to meet as a whole committee before year-end at a provincial conference. The proposal was successful and supported the Women's Issues Branch to organize these activities before the end of March 2006.

³ Provincial Advisory Committee (2006). Strengthening NB Regional Violence Prevention Networks (Phase 1): Final Report. Fredericton, New Brunswick: Women's Issues Branch, Executive Council Office.

1.4 Project Description

The project included two streams of activities:

1. A conference, which was organized in March 2006 to offer training sessions, and skills-building conferences in the areas previously identified by the representatives. This conference also gave the Provincial Partnerships in Action committee an opportunity to meet as a whole a second time during the 2005-2006 fiscal year. The agenda for the conference was determined by feedback provided by representatives at the first Provincial Advisory Committee meeting, and through subsequent communications.
2. Hiring of part-time network coordinators for each of the fourteen volunteer-led violence prevention networks to prepare for the implementation of new services in communities through out the province by:
 - Defining the boundaries of each Network
 - Mapping service delivery in each region
 - Preparing needs assessments

Target Population

The target population for activities included members of the Provincial Partnerships In Action committee, other network representatives, part-time coordinators to be hired, and representatives of transition houses who were not otherwise included.

Goals and Objectives

The goals were to:

- Strengthen the standing of each existing network by providing the opportunity to learn from each other and to share tools and resources
- Assist regional networks by addressing their training and development needs
- Create a give-and-take forum that promotes an effective way of staying connected to communities year-round
- Organize training events, distributing information and tools, and getting feedback as needed

As outlined in the proposal, the project objectives were:

- 1.1) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their awareness of better practices in N.B.
- 1.2) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their awareness of service delivery models in N.B. (i.e., sexual assault services).

- 1.3) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their networking skills
- 2.1) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their knowledge of available family violence services/resources in N.B.
- 2.2) To provide the Provincial Advisory Committee with an opportunity to increase their knowledge of the boundaries of each family violence prevention network in the province

Activities, Outputs and Outcomes

A 'Program Logic Model' was developed that described the detailed activities, outputs (i.e., what was produced during the project), and outcomes of the project. This Program Logic Model is included in Appendix A and was used to guide the evaluation.

2. Evaluation Methods

2.1 Purpose

The goals of the evaluation were:

- To evaluate the extent to which the project achieved its goals and objectives
- To identify areas for improvement in future phases

The specific evaluation objectives were:

- To summarize the activities completed and outputs produced
- To document the impact of these activities on participants and regional family violence prevention networks
- To identify emerging issues and trends that may affect future activities
- To explore ways in which future activities can be improved

2.2 Approach

An external evaluation firm was contracted to design and conduct the evaluation. A participatory approach was taken to the evaluation to ensure participation of project representatives and relevant/useable evaluation results. Steps in the evaluation process included:

- Development of the Program Logic Model (see Appendix A), evaluation framework, and data collection instruments
- Presentation of draft results and data interpretation session with the Women's Issues Branch
- Preparation of the evaluation report

2.3 Sources of Data

The methods of data collection included:

- Document review, including review of each network's report of activities completed, the final project report, letters to network representatives, funding proposal, and other relevant documents.
- Semi-structured interviews with 24 network representatives and coordinators with approximately half of the interviews in English and half in French. Interviewees included 12 representatives, 11 coordinators, and 1 person holding both positions. All fourteen networks were represented in the interview process.

- Questionnaires completed by 31 of the 42 conference participants near the end of the conference.
- A 'Data Interpretation Session' held with three representatives of the Women's Issues Branch to present and discuss the results of data collection and to discuss other aspects of the project and its context.

3. Findings

3.1 Conference

Activities

The two and a half day conference was held from March 29 to 31, 2006. The activities successfully completed to prepare for and deliver the conference were as follows. Additional detail can be found in the final project report.

- Hired a coordinator to organize the conference
 - The coordinators role included logistical legwork, getting input of those who missed the Provincial Partnership in Action meeting via one English and one French session, preparing materials and organizing translation of those materials, lining up speakers, meeting with the external facilitator, conference registration, and other preparatory activities.
- Hired an external facilitator
 - The external facilitator was hired to focus on preparing and delivering the conference.
- Conducted training sessions and skill-building conferences in areas identified by respondents
 - A communications officer from Communications New Brunswick presented “Talking to the Media” to assist participants in preparing a media strategy. This included information on media bias, things to be mindful of, and tips to get your message across. Several participants were provided with the opportunity to be interviewed on camera and then critiqued.
 - Another skills development exercise focused on recruiting and retaining committee members.
- Conducted networking skills development activities
 - A number of tools were included in the Toolkit (see below) regarding teambuilding and exercises were completed around improving the effectiveness of the regional networks.
 - Committee members had suggested that hearing from women about their stories would be an important part of getting together for networking. Therefore, Susan Aglukark was booked as a guest speaker and presented on her personal story as well as her theories of the Aboriginal people and the process of criminality. A

broader evening session included a broader perspective and details on the healing processes she went through. This also served as a fundraiser for two community organizations with over 200 people in attendance.

- Participants also spent time on action planning including the recommended steps in forming an action plan and spent time to determine what steps need to be taken with their local network.
- Explored better practices and showcased new initiatives, tools, and resources from communities across the province
 - The conference included sharing of information on provincial initiatives such as the 'Process of Leaving' diagram, the 'Ending Abuse in Your Relationship' booklet for women who have left or are leaving abusive relationships, and the Domestic Violence Court.
 - Showcase 1 involved the sharing of information from two well-established networks. Showcase 2 outlined services offered by the Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, the only such Centre in the province. Showcase 3 was a presentation on the Violence-Free Tool Kit by the Beausejour Family Crisis Centre. Showcase 4 included several presentations by recipients of funding through the "A Better World for Women Action Fund."
 - Ten exhibitors from local and provincial organizations were allowed to give a series of ten-minute presentations during a two-hour block. Participants broke into small groups and rotated through the exhibits (often termed a carousel format). Exhibitors also had an opportunity to interact with participants and share information during one session. This was seen to be important for exhibitors, especially provincial organizations, who would not have the resources to individually meet and present to these key stakeholders across New Brunswick.
- Distributed information and tools
 - Each participant was provided with a Participant Toolkit binder, with copies of all the tools and notes from many of the presentations for their future use (see Appendix D for the Table of Contents). Each network received a small toolbox filled with tools to conduct effective meetings and presentations including a CD containing a digital format of all the tools included in the binder. This toolkit included options to consider for network membership. It also included a beginning list of training resources. It also included tools and models in different aspects of teambuilding including Effective Teamwork, Group Decision Making Process,

Candour Rating Exercise, Conducting Effective Meetings, and Action Planning. Tools were included on recruiting and retaining committee members.

- Mapped all fourteen provincial networks
 - A provincial map of all fourteen networks was drawn to highlight areas of potential overlap between networks and areas of the province that are not currently covered by any of the fourteen networks.
- Obtained feedback from participants
 - A one-page conference evaluation questionnaire was distributed to respondents to obtain their ratings of the extent to which each objective was met.
- Shared results of conference and evaluation
 - A project final report has been prepared with extensive detail on the conference that will be circulated to participants once translation is complete.

Participants

As described in the project final report, the conference was attended by 42 participants including representatives from each of the fourteen regional networks, as well as each of the fourteen network coordinators. Executive Directors of Transition Houses, in regions where they were not represented on the Provincial Advisory Committee, were also invited to participate in the conference, with four in attendance.

Supports

A number of factors supported the successful delivery of the conference including:

- The Women's Issues Branch did not decide who the network representatives and alternates would be for the initial Provincial Advisory Committee (prior to conference planning). In most cases, they were chosen by the networks.
- The input of the Provincial Partnerships in Action committee to the agenda at various stages. Another result of this input was the inclusion of Transition House representatives who weren't network representatives. The PPA input was instrumental in changing from three annual meetings to two but having broader representation at the conference including the primary network representative, their alternate, the coordinators, and additional Transition House representatives.

Challenges

Some of the challenges identified included:

- Completing all the planning and preparatory work in the short time period prior to the March 31 deadline.
- Finding a bilingual external facilitator familiar with family violence issues. A unilingual English-language external facilitator was hired and a Women's Issues Branch staff person served as the French-language co-facilitator.
- Ensuring all participants hear everything the same way, which can be a challenge with simultaneous translation by translators who may not necessarily understand the context of what is being said.
- Balancing French and English aspects of the conference. The second day worked out to be mostly in English because of the flow of the agenda.

Outcomes

The most useful aspects of the conference identified by interviewees were as follows (in descending order of frequency):

- Media presentation, including the ability to practice skills and the focus on the family violence aspects of working with the media (17 interviewees)
- Networking with other networks across the province and government representatives and gaining contacts (15)
- Finding out about services, practices, other networks, etc. (12)
- Toolkit and/or specific tools (11)
- Recruiting and retaining volunteers including how to motivate people and get community buy-in (8)
- Allowing two or more people from each network to attend helped build momentum as there were more people to take it back to the local network and network members had a chance to work together and plan during the conference (6)
- Susan Aglukark was informative and inspirational (6)
- Well-organized conference (5)
- Team-building exercise and tools (4)
- The feeling that you are not alone in this work (4)
- Understanding the roles and purpose of the networks (4)

- Getting everyone to the same level of awareness or on the 'same page' (4)
- Inspirational and motivational experience (3)

The following verbatim quotes illustrate these outcomes.

“Hands down that’s the best conference we’ve ever been to. The fact that they asked us what we wanted, found it, and delivered it was the most positive aspect.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“So easy to continue the momentum ... because its more than just one person.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“Knowing that the government and province as a whole is on board... is helpful.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“I thought they did a fabulous job.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“That conference was amazing. Gave us a chance to realize we were all working toward the same thing.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“This was the best conference as a woman to go to. It wasn’t experts dictating to us. They wanted to hear our voice ... that was really empowering.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“They tailored that workshop [media] to the kind of work that we are doing... the issues that we face.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“[The toolkit gave me] a variety of resources that I have referred back to and used.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“I did gain something from it. I wouldn’t say that I went in green and was able to gain a tremendous amount. – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“Really enjoyed Susan Aglukark as a focal point and inspirational person.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“We are all becoming far more aware of what each other is doing.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

Table 1 shows the conference questionnaire results that indicated participants improved their awareness of better practices; improved their awareness and knowledge of resources and service delivery models; increased their networking skills; and gained knowledge of the boundaries of each network.

Table 1: Conference Questionnaire Results.	
Questionnaire item	Mean rating (from 1 to 5)
This conference provided me with an opportunity to increase my awareness of better practices in N.B.	3.9
This conference provided me with an opportunity to increase my awareness of service delivery models in N.B. (i.e., sexual assault services)	3.8
This conference provided me with an opportunity to increase my networking skills.	3.9
This conference provided me with an opportunity to increase my knowledge of available family violence services/resources in N.B.	4.0
This conference provided the Provincial Advisory Committee with an opportunity to increase our knowledge of the boundaries of each family violence prevention network in the province.	3.8

The most interesting things participants learned at the conference (as per the results of an open-ended question on the questionnaire), in decreasing order of frequency, were:

- Media presentation (10 respondents)
- Finding out about services, resources, exhibitors, etc. (10)
- Susan Aglukark guest speaker (8)
- Good facilitation (5)
- Toolkit/binder (5)
- Interesting speakers or information (5)
- Hands on activities or application of skills (5)

The following verbatim quotes from the conference evaluation questionnaire illustrate these outcomes.

“The binders are great tool: We’ll use them a lot” – Conference participant

“Very well run conference – lots of learning opportunities. Lots of hands on activities...” – Conference participant

“The workshops and display booths were very educational. They provided new ideas to take back to our communities.” – Conference participant

“Some excellent new ideas & resources from exhibitor event.” – Conference participant

“Talking to the media skills development session was the most informative & interesting – first time I’ve had the opportunity to hear advice from the media perspective – valuable!” – Conference participant

“Susan A. was incredibly inspiring and encouraging.” – Conference participant

“Overall a very good day – informative, challenging & worthwhile.” – Conference participant

“I believe it would be beneficial to hear from each network their strengths and weaknesses.” – Conference participant

Potential Improvements

Most people were very pleased with the conference and were reluctant to suggest improvements. Nevertheless, some potential improvements in future conferences that were raised during interviews included:

- More networking/exchange between people from different networks (4 interviewees)
- Need to have a bilingual facilitator and to have more of the conference in French (4)
- An opportunity for coordinators to meet as a group and share ideas (3)
- A longer conference (3)
- A shorter conference (2)
- More opportunities to practice skills (2)
- Hold another conference (2)

The following verbatim quotes from the conference evaluation questionnaire illustrate these suggestions:

“L’animatrice était très bonne, mais il aurait été approprié d’avoir une animatrice bilingue car je crois que le flot des conversations aurait été plus facile.” – Conference participant

“Des francophones, c’est fatigant de passer la majeure partie de la journée avec les écouteurs.” – Conference participant

3.2 Network Activities

Activities

The activities completed to support network development included:

- Hired a coordinator to organize and support the network development activities
 - The project coordinator hired to organize the conference also worked to support the network development activities.
- Put part-time coordinators in place
 - All fourteen networks hired network coordinators who completed their assigned contract period.
- Representatives and coordinators attended provincial conference
 - At least one representative and the coordinator from each network attended the March conference.
- Defined the boundaries of each network
 - All networks defined the geographical boundaries of their network and often assessed the geographic boundaries of agencies in their network.
- Mapped service delivery in each region
 - All networks completed mapping of the services in their area. These service listings were often very extensive including contact information, services offered, and geographic areas served.
- Prepared needs assessments
 - Ten of the fourteen networks completed preliminary needs assessments. One additional network had previously completed a needs assessment, which was forwarded to the Women's Issues Branch.
- Performed other activities, as needed
 - Regional networks were also given the opportunity to direct the coordinators as per the individual needs of their network, within the coordinator time and resources available. Part II of the final project report includes an extensive list of other activities completed by each of the fourteen networks including planning, recruiting members, various communication activities, research, organizing existing information and files of the network, reviewing committees and mandates, etc.

- Submitted regional network reports
 - All fourteen networks submitted reports with results of activities completed, accounting of monies spent, and a completed questionnaire that was developed for the project by the Women's Issues Branch.

Participants

The participants were the network coordinators and representatives who attended the conference plus the additional ones who were not able to attend the conference. Other participants in the activities were the other network members/volunteers and other organizations who were not part of the networks but contributed to or participated in the network activities implemented by the coordinators such as mapping of service delivery in each network.

Supports

A number of supports of the network coordinator activities were indicated by respondents. The most commonly mentioned were the provision of free or minimal cost office space and equipment (e.g., computers and telephone) as well as related services such as printing. Also mentioned several times were the support of the network members/volunteers and the Women's Issues Branch itself.

Challenges

Some of the challenges to completing the required network activities as part of this project that were most frequently mentioned by interviewees were:

- Volunteer time and commitments were a challenge to moving the network forward without a paid coordinator. Busy volunteers are less able to move things forward between meetings, especially as they often have many other work, volunteer and family commitments. Thus, a paid coordinator was seen as invaluable and it was felt that things will move forward more slowly without one. (9 interviewees)
- Limited funding to complete activities. Also concerns about interruptions in activities and progress while waiting for future funding. (7)
- Issues with involving people from rural areas in the network activities due to distance to attend meetings and issues with delivering services to rural areas due to attitudes in rural areas, fewer services available in rural areas, etc. (6)
- Limited time to complete required activities with the length of time the coordinator was available on a part-time basis. (6)

- Unresolved boundary issues were seen as an ongoing challenge with no clear means to resolve gaps or overlaps. (4)
- Getting broader community input, not just from the network representatives or not just from professionals on the network committee (3)

Outcomes

Representatives and coordinators interviewed were asked to describe the extent to which the network activities had impacted their networks in three specific areas. Almost all interviewees felt that their network had a better awareness of services in their region and/or across the province. Interviewees were split on whether there was better awareness of needs although it should be noted that three of the networks had not completed the preliminary needs assessment process. In some cases, this may have also been due to the fact that they were already aware of the needs in their area. Most of the interviewees felt that they had a better awareness of the boundaries of their network and sometimes of the boundaries of specific services available within their region. However, there were still some unresolved issues with overlap or gaps. Almost all interviewees felt that their network was strengthened as a result of the activities completed.

The specific benefits of the network activities noted by respondents included:

- Coordinator really helped complete activities, get organized, and encourage volunteer involvement (9 interviewees)
- Increased awareness of the network within their local communities, which in at least one case may have increased the calls to specific services (7)
- Developed requests for additional funding or were more able to apply for funding in the future (5)
- Better awareness of boundaries and communities not covered (5)
- Recruitment of additional committee members within the network (5)
- Enabled planning of activities for the future (5)
- Facilitated communication with partners (4)
- Created excitement and motivation among network members (4)
- Sense of support from government, that its being seen as an important issue (3)
- Better knowledge of services within the network and the specific people to contact at those services (4)
- Enabled a clearer direction of network priorities and future directions (3)

The following verbatim quotes illustrate these outcomes.

“People were more willing to chip in knowing they wouldn’t be burdened with the full responsibility [as the network coordinator was there].” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“It started on a really good foot. I hope it continues.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“There was so much good work that we started and I want to see it come to fruition.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“We fulfilled what was needed for the contract but at the same time we know that there are ongoing activities that are priorities.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“It helped us to look beyond that we had identified as our initial strategies.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“This seemed to galvanize the group to bring them all together... Without these exercises and team building, the group [network committee] would have slowly fallen apart.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

Potential improvements

Suggestions put forward by interviewees included:

- Need funding for coordinators to continue their work (10 interviewees)
- Need information on applying for future funding (5)
- Recognize that networks are at different stages – more flexibility in required activities (4)
- Need consistent, stable, and long term funding (3)

The following verbatim quotes from the conference evaluation questionnaire illustrate these suggestions:

“Its not enough to do that one shot. It has to be sustained to enhance and support the growth of these networks. – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

“Just when [the coordinator] was able to gain some momentum and know how it all works, [he/she] was almost done.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

3.3 Provincial Partnerships in Action

As noted above, the Provincial Advisory Committee, later named the Provincial Partnerships in Action committee, met for the first time in November 2005 and provided input regarding network needs that could be addressed and potential participants in the conference. Two subsequent meetings (one in each official language) were held to gather further input. The March 2006 conference was only the second time that the Provincial Partnerships in Action committee met as a whole, so time was included to have representatives work on the structure, vision, roles and responsibility of the committee. Participants also brainstormed how they could maximize their role on the committee via “commitment, communication, and collaboration.” An exercise was completed to pool suggestions for improvement in communications between PPA meetings. The conference concluded with a facilitated discussion of next steps for the PPA including the timing of the next meeting as well as the focus of that meeting.

Almost every PPA member interviewed felt that the conference and network activities addressed the needs of networks as identified by the PPA, although several people noted that it was just the beginning and that they are still working on where PPA is headed. The issue of being helpful to networks at each stage of development was noted. Some networks may be at a very developmental stage and needed more direction with regards to activities or have challenges in involving community members. This was of particular concern for a few networks. Alternatively, more established networks may already have some of the skills/tools. Nevertheless, getting everyone on the same page was seen as a useful exercise. The ongoing provincial support of the networks and ongoing funding was seen as very important. Finally, several interviewees were encouraged by the fact that the input from PPA members seemed to be actively considered and generally resulted in subsequent action (for example, the conference agenda and who was invited) as noted by the following verbatim quote:

“You can feel fairly confident that if this is what you say you need at the meeting, then it will at least be considered.” – Network representative/coordinator interviewee

4. Future Directions

4.1 Achievement of Objectives

The following table summarizes achievement of project objectives:

Table 2: Summary of Achievement of Project Objectives.	
Objective	Summary of Achievement
1.1) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their awareness of better practices in N.B.	<p>The conference included sharing of information on provincial initiatives such as 'Process of Leaving,' 'Ending Abuse in Your Relationship,' and the Domestic Violence Court.</p> <p>Finding out about services, best practices, resources, exhibitors, and other networks was one of the most frequently mentioned benefits of the conference during interviews and on the questionnaire.</p> <p>Mean rating on questionnaire = 3.9 out of 5.</p>
1.2) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their awareness of service delivery models in N.B. (i.e., sexual assault services)	<p>The conference showcased new initiatives, tools, and resources from communities across the province including information from two well-established networks, an outline of services offered by the Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, a presentation on the Violence-Free Tool Kit by the Beausejour Family Crisis Centre, and several presentations by recipients of funding through the "A Better World for Women Action Fund."</p> <p>Finding out about services, best practices, resources, exhibitors, and other networks were one of the most frequently mentioned benefits of the conference during interviews and on the questionnaire.</p> <p>Mean rating on questionnaire = 3.8 out of 5.</p>
1.3) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their networking skills	<p>Each participant was provided with a Participant Toolkit binder, with copies of all the tools and notes from many of the presentations for their future use. A number of tools were included in the Toolkit regarding teambuilding and exercises were completed around improving the effectiveness of the regional networks. This toolkit also included options to consider for network membership. It included a beginning list of training resources. It included tools and models in different aspects of teambuilding including Effective Teamwork, Group Decision Making Process, Candour Rating Exercise, Conducting Effective Meetings, and Action Planning. Finally, tools were included on recruiting and retaining committee members.</p> <p>Networking with other networks across the province and government representatives and gaining contacts was one of the most frequently mentioned benefits of the conference during</p>

	<p>interviews.</p> <p>Mean rating on questionnaire = 3.9 out of 5.</p>
<p>2.1) To provide participants with an opportunity to increase their knowledge of available family violence services/resources in N.B.</p>	<p>Ten exhibitors from local and provincial organizations were allowed to give a series of ten-minute presentations during a two-hour block.</p> <p>All networks completed mapping of the services in their area. These service listings were often very extensive including contact information, services offered, and geographic areas served.</p> <p>Finding out about services, best practices, resources, exhibitors, and other networks were one of the most frequently mentioned benefits of the conference during interviews and on the questionnaire.</p> <p>Mean rating on questionnaire = 4.0 out of 5.</p>
<p>2.2) To provide the Provincial Advisory Committee with an opportunity to increase their knowledge of the boundaries of each family violence prevention network in the province</p>	<p>A provincial map of all fourteen networks was drawn to highlight areas of potential overlap between networks and areas of the province that are not currently covered by any of the fourteen networks.</p> <p>All networks defined the geographical boundaries of their network and often assessed the geographic boundaries of agencies in their network.</p> <p>Most of the interviewees felt that they had a better awareness of the boundaries of their network and sometimes of the boundaries of specific services available within their region. However, there were still some unresolved issues with overlap or gaps.</p> <p>Mean rating on questionnaire = 3.8 out of 5.</p>

4.2 Conclusions

The following conclusions are supported by the results of the evaluation:

1. The project successfully completed both streams of activities including a two and a half day conference and hiring of part-time network coordinators for each of the fourteen volunteer-led violence prevention networks to prepare for the implementation of new services in communities throughout the province.
2. The conference was very positively received by participants. The greatest benefits included learning about working with the media; networking; finding out about services, best practices, resources, etc.; gaining tools for recruiting and retaining volunteers; and the motivational guest speaker. The conference assisted the training and development needs of most networks and created an opportunity to share resources, information and tools. Participants increased their awareness of better practices, available services, and

service delivery models and networked with participants from other networks, services, and government.

3. Several elements were critical to the success of the conference including the input of the Provincial Partnerships in Action Group, allowing multiple participants from each network, the family violence-specific aspects of the training and tools, and the ability to practice some of the techniques.
4. Network development activities completed with the support of the part-time coordinators lead to better awareness of the boundaries of each region (although in some cases there were still issues with gaps or overlap), better awareness of services in each region, and for some networks a better awareness of needs in their region. Each network was strengthened as a result of the activities completed.
5. The part-time coordinator positions were essential to the achievement of the developmental activities of each network given the busy schedules and commitments of volunteers. The effort was also supported by in-kind services of partner organizations in each network, including space and equipment. However, the short time period that coordinators were available (eight weeks) was a major challenge and additional funding for coordinators was seen to be essential to continue to move forward in a timely fashion.

4.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based upon by the results of the evaluation:

1. The Women's Issues Branch seek further funding to continue the work of coordinators for an additional period of time to ensure that additional, necessary development activities are completed.
2. The Women's Issues Branch proceed as planned with the Provincial Partnerships in Action Group to organize a second conference with participants from the fourteen networks to address additional training and development needs utilizing the key elements that led to the first successful conference while continuing to pay attention to the needs of participants in both official languages and to provide additional opportunities for networking.
3. The Provincial Partnerships in Action group continue to work on any unresolved network boundary issues.
4. Future work of the Provincial Partnerships in Action group include flexibility for networks at different stages in development.
5. Future work of the Provincial Partnerships in Action group include a focus on issues of family violence in rural communities.

Appendix A: Program Logic Model

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Executive Council Office (ECO) - Women's Issues Branch - Province of New Brunswick
Strengthening NB Regional Family Violence Prevention Networks (VPNs) – Phase 1

VPN Representative/Coordinator Interview Guide

June 15, 2006

INTRODUCTION

Hello. My name is _____ from the Atlantic Evaluation Group. We have been hired by the Women's Issues Branch to conduct an evaluation of the "Strengthening NB Regional Family Violence Prevention Networks" project funded by the Crime Prevention Action Fund (National Crime Prevention Centre). This evaluation is required by the funding agreement.

As part of this evaluation we are interviewing the representatives and part-time coordinators of the fourteen Violence Prevention Networks across New Brunswick. This interview will take approximately 45 minutes. Any information you provide is confidential. Your feedback will not be identified in the evaluation report. Only group results and anonymous quotes will be reported. Would you consent to doing an interview for this purpose?

Do you have any questions about the evaluation before we begin?

ICEBREAKER/BACKGROUND

1. How long have you been involved with the Violence Prevention Network?
Coordinators: Are you still involved with the Violence Prevention Network?
2. What other activities or committees, if any, are you involved in related to violence prevention?
3. How active has your network been in recent years, prior to this project? Do you have an active committee?

CONFERENCE

4. Did you attend the provincial conference in March? If no, skip to next section.
5. What were the most useful aspects of the conference for you?
6. What were the most important things that you learned or gained from participating in the conference:
 - a. Increased awareness of better practices in the province of New Brunswick?
 - b. Increased awareness of the Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre?
 - c. Increased networking skills?
 - d. Opportunity to learn from each other and share resources and lessons learned?
7. How did the conference help meet your training needs regarding your role with the Violence Prevention Network? What skills, information, and tools did it give you?
8. How did the knowledge/skills gained help you in your role with the Violence Prevention Network? How will it help in the future?

9. Are there things about the conference that could have been improved? E.g. networking opportunities, format of the session, length of the session, topics covered, training on specific skills, etc.

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED BY NETWORKS

10. What activities have been completed by your network with the assistance of the coordinator / your assistance? E.g. defining boundaries, mapping service delivery, preparing needs assessment, etc.
11. How helpful have these activities been to the network?
12. Are there other activities that you planned to complete, but did not? If so, why? What is needed to complete these activities?
13. What challenges have been faced in completing these activities? What steps were taken to overcome these challenges?
14. Have any factors or supports assisted the network in completing these activities?

PREPARATION OF THE VIOLENCE PREVENTION NETWORKS

15. As a result of the activities completed, does your network have?
 - a. Increased knowledge of available family violence services/resources in your region and/or in the province
 - b. Increased knowledge of needs for services in your region
 - c. Better knowledge of the boundary of your network
 - d. Better awareness of potential funding sources to sustain your network
16. Do you think the network has been strengthened as a result of these activities? Has its capacity to deliver services in the future been strengthened? If so, how? If not, why not?

PROVINCIAL PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

17. Are you a member of Provincial Partnerships in Action? If yes, how many meetings have you attended so far?
18. In your opinion, have the activities completed under this project helped to meet the needs of Violence Prevention Networks as identified by Provincial Partnerships in Action?

OTHER COMMENTS

19. What other comments or suggestions do you have regarding the “Strengthening NB Regional Family Violence Prevention Networks” project?

WRAP-UP

Do you have any other questions before we conclude this interview?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview and assisting in the evaluation of the project.

Appendix C: Conference Questionnaire

Provincial Advisory Committee

March 29th – 31st, 2006 Skills Development Conference

Evaluation

On a scale of 1 to 5, (1-being worst, 5-being best) how would you rate the following:

1.1) This conference provided me with an opportunity to increase my awareness of better practices in N.B.

1 2 3 4 5

1.2) This conference provided me with an opportunity to increase my awareness of service delivery models in N.B. (i.e., sexual assault services)

1 2 3 4 5

1.3) This conference provided me with an opportunity to increase my networking skills.

1 2 3 4 5

2.1) This conference provided me with an opportunity to increase my knowledge of available family violence services/resources in N.B.

1 2 3 4 5

2.2) This conference provided the Provincial Advisory Committee with an opportunity to increase our knowledge of the boundaries of each family violence prevention network in the province.

1 2 3 4 5

3) What is the most interesting thing you learned at the conference?

Appendix D: Conference Participant Toolkit Table of Contents

SECTION	TITLE	CONTENT
	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agenda
1	Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model for NB Provincial Advisory Committee ▪ The Strategic Planning Process ▪ SWOT Analysis
2	The Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose and Role of the Provincial Advisory Committee and its Representatives ▪ Community Coordinator Responsibilities ▪ Performance Evaluation Community Coordinator ▪ Who's at Your Network Table? ▪ Map of New Brunswick
3	Communication Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication Processes ▪ Letter outlining how to get involved with the Provincial Advisory Committee
4	Showcase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Showcase Notes ▪ Table de concertation pour contrer la violence familiale et conjugale dans la Péninsule acadienne ▪ Coalition Against Abuse in Relationships ▪ Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre ▪ A Better World For Women Action Fund application
5	Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training Resource List ▪ Effective Teamwork ▪ Group Decision Making Process ▪ Candour Rating Exercise ▪ Conducting Effective Meetings ▪ Action Planning
6	Exhibitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exhibitors List
7	Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Relations and Communications Planning ▪ Media Call Sheet ▪ Tips for Recruiting and Retaining Committee Members
8	Susan Aglukark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Susan's Aglukark's Biography ▪ Susan Aglukark - Notes